



STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE OACPS-EU PARTNERSHIP

Meeting of the EESC ACP-EU Follow-Up Committee
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OECD support to the OACPS-EU Partnership on stakeholder participation

- The **new EU-OACPS Partnership Agreement** includes a more ambitious commitment than its predecessor on engaging stakeholders, particularly **Art. 95** about setting up “open and transparent mechanisms for structured consultation with stakeholders”
- The OECD is conducting a **2-year project (2022-23)** funded by the European Commission to help translate this into practice
- It works as **knowledge partner and technical advisor** of the OACPS Secretariat and the European Commission: providing expertise, a platform for discussion, and rigorous data collection and good practices research, analysis and recommendations for a sound stakeholder engagement mechanism / process

The objective is to develop and present a methodology and an instrument facilitating and regulating the participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders within the governance of the new Partnership Agreement



Methodology and approach

OECD Open Government team builds on its **methodology and 20 years of experience conducting** scans, reviews and analyses in the field of open government and stakeholder participation

The OECD also benefits from its **global reach** through long-standing experience working with countries in the MENA region, Sub-Saharan Africa, LAC, Southeast Asia

Participatory approach: involvement of the EU (EC/INTPA, Member States, EP, EESC) and OACPS (Secretariat & MS), JPA, consultation of CSO networks in EU & ACP

Comparative approach: consideration of existing participation initiatives against the OECD Recommendation on Open Government and international good practices

Expertise of the OECD Secretariat complemented by **peer reviewers** from the public administration of OECD member countries (Belgium, Finland and Sweden)



Activities of the project and progress to date

- Review of existing **good practices** of stakeholder engagement at supranational level (over 20 supranational engagement mechanisms studied)
- Collection and evaluation of **data** via **questionnaires** and **interviews**

2 years

- Drafting of recommendations for **strengthening the modalities to engage stakeholders** in the OACPS-EU Partnership
- **Seeking feedback and comments** on the preliminary recommendations from a wide range of institutional and civil society actors
- Development of the **draft text of an instrument**
- Presentation of the draft text to the EU, the OACPS and relevant stakeholders for comments and finalisation of the instrument

 We are here

Wide **dissemination** of the mechanism





Overarching recommendations

- Ensure **high-level commitment** from OACPS and EU authorities to a **common vision and purpose for stakeholder engagement**.
- **Institutionalise the S.E. process**, moving away from ad-hoc consultations to embrace engagement on a permanent basis.
- **Clarify the outputs of the Partnership and expected results of the engagement:** what type of inputs are sought for, on what and how these inputs will be used.
- Engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including **civil society organisations, businesses and individuals**, through a variety of channels including **in person and digital opportunities**.
- **Allocate sufficient resources** to support stakeholders to engage, including for the **facilitation and governance** of the process, **logistics** and **capacity-building**.
- Consult stakeholders **on a rolling basis, ahead of key events**, on **agenda-setting** and when **key documents are conceived and negotiated**.



Build synergies with existing and past processes

- The S.E. mechanism should be dedicated to informing the Partnership dialogue and therefore **its design should be tailored to its structures, rules and thematic priorities**
- **Lessons can be learnt from evaluating prior participation** of stakeholders under Cotonou Agreement
- The new S.E. mechanism would benefit from **avoiding duplication of efforts** by building on and seeking **synergies** with existing processes and structures when appropriate, such as by making joint calls for inputs, pooling capacity-building resources, and providing roles to existing platforms, for instance to map and reach their constituencies. Examples include:



Existing dialogue mechanisms between civil society and EU and ACP countries

Civil society global, regional and national platforms



Youth Conference of the ACP - EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly





Governance options of the S.E. Mechanism

Participation options



Presence of CSO representatives in the official organs of the partnership as participants or observers



Establish a consultative body made only of non-governmental actors which provides recommendations to the official organs



Establish a body with mixed representation from both authorities and stakeholders to discuss recommendations

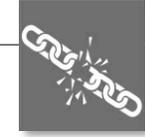


Establish a body or platform of randomly selected citizens to be consulted or provide recommendations about specific areas



Strengths

- ✓ Provides a **seat at the table for CSOs** enabling direct engagement
- ✓ Can include **right to speak, vote, etc.**
- ✓ Full **autonomy**
- ✓ Provides a **space** for stakeholder discussion and coordination
- ✓ Close **coordination** and build **trust**
- ✓ Can enable **technical level discussions**
- ✓ **Inclusion of individual citizens** to complement CSOs
- ✓ Can support dealing with **complex issues**



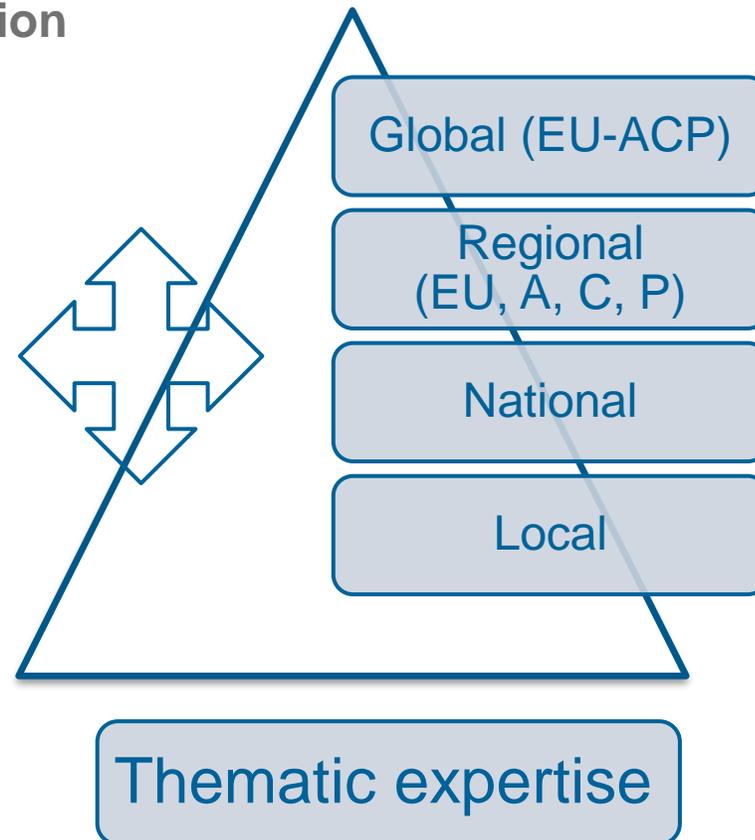
Weaknesses

- ✓ Observer status can have **limited impact**
- ✓ To be complemented by other measures
- ✓ Does not provide a **seat at the table** for CSOs
- ✓ Inputs could be overlooked
- ✓ Does not allow the **independent** development of opinions
- ✓ Not an **official** organ
- ✓ **High cost** of implementation
- ✓ Unlikely to be helpful when presented with **very broad questions**

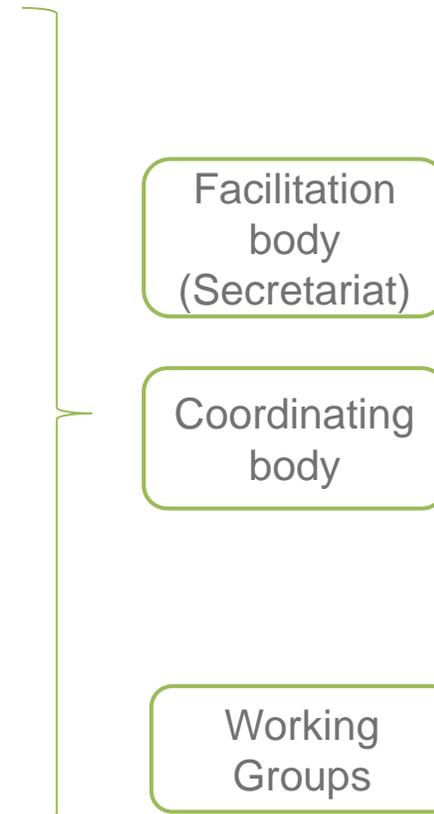


Facilitation and coordination of the S.E. Mechanism

Required coordination



Possible bodies





Recommendations to ensure diversity and inclusiveness of the S.E. Mechanism



Map existing stakeholders avoiding a one-size-fits-all selection process, building on CSO Roadmaps developed by EUD, considering differences in CS structures **across the 4 regions**



Engage in sustained and broad **capacity-building activities** focusing on the **national and local levels** to ensure CSOs are able to participate.



Communicate widely about the engagement process and conducting **outreach campaigns** to involve the most vulnerable and traditionally underrepresented groups.



Use **clear and transparent criteria** to identify stakeholders and enable transparent **self-selection of representatives** by stakeholders. **Create constituencies** of specific stakeholder groups: farmers, consumers, trade unions, women, youth, NGOs, etc.



Invest in the translation and interpretation of documents and events into several **languages**, including local ones for specific processes.



Ensuring meaningful consideration of inputs and improvements to the process over time





Questions for the EU-ACP Follow-up Committee



Your inputs and feedback on the preliminary recommendations?

What concrete role do you envisage for the EESC ACP-EU Follow-up Committee to engage stakeholders within the new OACPS-EU Partnership?

In what ways can the specific characteristics of stakeholders in each EU-ACP region be reflected in the new participation mechanism?



Thank you!



For further information:

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www.oecd.gov/open-government.htm