

# INDIA'S GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENCE AND ENGAGEMENT OF INDIAN CIVIL SOCIETY

Organised by



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## *WORKSHOP REPORT*

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## 1. Background

During the past decade, India's global presence has been acknowledged in various multi-lateral and bilateral global arenas. India is seen as a rapidly rising global power by virtue of being the largest democracy and having younger demographics, and is one of the top five economies of the world today. As a member of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Asian Development Bank, India has increased its stakes and influence following the global financial crisis of 2008. In new multi-lateral mechanisms like G-20, IBSA and BRICS, India's influence is increasingly being felt. Indian business enterprises (both public and private) have been expanding their presence around the world. Indian investment abroad in 2012 was higher than foreign investment in India. However, most Indian civil society organisations (CSOs) have largely remained domestically focused in their development efforts. A recent study on "Civil Society @ Crossroads" (PRIA was a part of the consortium that conducted the study) suggested that most Indian civil society actors have not come to terms with this changing global reality, except in respect of rapidly declining international funding for their domestic programmes.

India's official development cooperation also seems to have increased during the past decade. In order to streamline the growing programme of development cooperation, the Ministry of External Affairs has created a separate unit – the Development Partnership Administration (DPA). Senior officials of DPA have shown an interest in interacting more regularly with Indian CSOs, especially those having experience in overseas programmes in developing countries. RIS (Research and Information System for Developing Countries) convened a meeting in January 2013 to explore this interaction between DPA and Indian CSOs and academia. Following that meeting, a Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) was launched.

In this context, a workshop on India's Global Development Presence and Engagement of Indian Civil Society' was organised by PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) in collaboration with RIS on 31 May 2013 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The objectives of the workshop were:

- To develop a deeper understanding of India's global development presence bilaterally and multi-laterally in G-20, IBSA, BRICS, etc.
- To explore approaches and modalities of broad-based cooperation between Indian civil society and DPA, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
- To evolve a set of mechanisms that can support on-going and critical engagements of Indian civil society with India's global influence in bilateral and multi-lateral fora.

The workshop was attended by more than 50 civil society leaders and representatives from different parts of the country.

In order to unfold the objectives, four sessions were organised. The day began with an overview of India's global development presence. This was followed by discussions on the approaches and modalities of broad-based cooperation between Indian CSOs and DPA. The third session focused mainly on experiences of Indian CSO engagements in G-20, IBSA, BRICS and other multi-lateral fora. The concluding session attempted to chalk out some supportive mechanisms for on-going and critical engagement of Indian civil society organisations with India's global influence in bilateral and multi-lateral fora.

## 2. Perspectives on India's Global Development Presence

Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA gave a background and rationale behind the workshop. He said, over the last few years many of us in the Indian civil society are talking about or doing something in different ways for India's influence in the global arena. He said the positioning of India in the global context as well as the role of India's policy, investments, international activities have dramatically changed during the last few years. Referring to Finance Minister's 2003 budget speech, he said the Finance Minister announced that India is a big donor and a figure of a billion dollars a year was mentioned. But the concern is who is receiving it? Where it is going from? And what purpose it is serving? He said though collectively we are concerned about the declining support for the Indian CSOs for development activities but we are not collectively focused on the 'impact of India outside India'. Hence it is important for the Indian CSOs to find a way to effectively and critically engage with what Indian government and private sector is doing internationally.

Ashok Khosla, President, Development Alternatives mentioned that the real way to make relationships is to support NGO activities in other countries by which a deep relationship with the societies of those countries could be made. Opportunities exist for India's foreign policy to make use of the resource which Indian civil society has in terms of knowledge and expertise – a resource which is the result of accumulation of years' of experience. It is important to put all experiences together to develop a better understanding on how India should plan its presence in the international arena. On the issue of India's global development presence, he said that Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has been for the last 50 years providing scholarship and financial assistance to friendly nations in order to deepen the bilateral relationships.

Biswajit Dhar, Director General, RIS shared that India is marking its global presence. Hence it is important for us to come together and share those experiences collectively that where and how India is contributing to the global development. He said that the West often uses



'new partners' or 'new donors' as a term to describe India and other emerging economies in the global development partnership. However, when we look at the experiences of countries like India and China, we may recognise that these are not new initiatives e.g. ITEC was initiated in 1964 and has grown tremendously. It is almost six decade long involvement of India in development partnership and it is growing overtime. During the past decade there is a significant scaling-up of what we have been doing. Most of our influences are in the immediate neighbourhood like, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan etc. There are different forms of assistance we are providing but the principles on which this assistance is provided is largely 'demand driven'. This is the official position and underlying principle on which we participate in development assistance programme in different countries. More recently when India went on to Africa in 2008, India's profile as a development partner expanded. He also pointed out that in 2011 India offered 5 billion dollars of soft lines of credit to Africa. However, when DPA tried to find out figures to what extent India was contributing to the global development partnership pool, these numbers were not readily available. Even these numbers are also not available with the Govt. of

India. He further added that currently sectoral ministries are working in silos and often do not share information with each other in systematic manner.

He said the emergence of the developing economies like (IBSA, BRICS) on the global stage has resulted in significant change in development assistance discourse. The legacy of the OECD/DAC is characterised by aid conditionalities, the donor-recipient relationships and imposition of pressures by the donors on the recipient countries. OECD/DAC has always insisted upon 'aid effectiveness' and the effectiveness of aid was assessed from the point of view of the donors. Aid effectiveness framework is reinforced in 2005 when DAC convened a high level forum on aid effectiveness and came up with the 'Paris Declaration'. In 2011 (after global economic crises), the aid effectiveness meeting was held in Busan where the 'aid effectiveness' narrative was changed into 'development effectiveness'. Thereafter, 'development effectiveness' has been seen as a benchmark in relationships between donors and recipients. However, the contribution of countries like India is not quite as much as it is required. We are still reacting to something put on the table by advanced countries. Being India's position in world community the status which is required is still missing, our proactiveness is not there. In post-Busan period the dynamics of important forums like post-Busan framework is missing. The current MDGs are also constructed by OECD and it is a donor driven agenda. He strongly advocated for such forums to engage on development discourse. Currently we are looking at what we are doing? But, we also need to look what we could do? We need more such coalitions to take it forward.

Bibek Debroy, Research Professor, Centre for Policy Research highlighted India's potential as global economic power. He said that according to OECD India is the third largest economy in terms of PPP after USA and China. He mentioned that there is a significant amount of private capital

flight from India, part of which is historical in nature as India has been investing abroad since years and part of it is recent because of the growth in competitive pressure in post 1991 era. However, in the last few years capital is flowing out of India due to the push factor. Overall, there has been an increase in out flow of capital from India in countries like Africa. He also pointed out that as compared to the quantum of private capital outflow from India the Indian foreign aid is peanuts in size. He further added that none of India's foreign aid is classic in nature, but it is lines of credit. More so, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in India is grossly understaffed and there is a lack of coordination among MEA and Ministry of Commerce. Furthermore, there is not any significant think-tank in India working on foreign policy strategy. In other words, there is a vacuum so far as intellectual engagement in foreign policy is concerned. He also stressed on developing a consultative mechanism so that conversations can be initiated with the government on matters related to India's global development presence. If the government continues to be distrustful about the NGO sector as whole, then it will be very difficult to form any such consultative apparatus.

It was argued during the deliberations that as compare to global scenario Indian aid is minuscule. It is never thought in terms of volume as compared to private investment and aid is to make friends. With reference to global development presence of India, it is argued that first we need to look into what are the outcome indicators of development investment from the point of view of national diplomacy and only then we can see the role of civil society. It is also questioned that what exactly the civil society is doing? And what are the areas in which civil society can provide credible support? Right now civil society doesn't have realisation and clarity of its role. Civil society should be very clear that whether it represents people or it is in facilitator's role? It is suggested that regarding the engagement of civil society with the global development processes, civil society needs to be a

little cautious. Its experiences are not good so far with the Govt. of India as well as bilateral institutions like UNDP etc. Referring to Planning Commission's consultations with civil society and UN consultations on post MDG's, it is argued that they are continuously engaged with civil society through consultations but when it comes to incorporate recommendations of civil society these are least visible in the final policy documents. Hence, it is important for civil society to engage with government on foreign policy but equally important is to engage with people at the same time.

### 3. Civil Society Experiences of Engaging with New Multilateral Entities

In the session on 'Experience of Indian Civil Society Engagements in G-20, IBSA, BRICS and Other Multi-lateral Fora' panellists shared varied experiences.

To give overview of civil society's engagement and experiences, George Mathew, Chairman, Institute of Social Sciences said that presently governance is moved beyond government or government controlled organisations. In other words, governance is too important to be left to governments alone; it is due to deepening of democracy. This happens because of unprecedented empowerment of citizens. Hence, civil society has a major role in deciding the governance agenda. He added that, since civil society is gaining strength and presence, we saw many positive changes as well and these positive changes are global as well as national. These are recognised in terms of empowerment of women and marginalised, gender justice, inclusive politics, climate changes and sustainable development. The most important of this is the development at local level. The critical issue is strengthening local governments. In the last 20-30 years a critical issue has come forward is south-south cooperation. Here IBSA Local Governance Forum (LGF) came to the forefront. So people



who are working in India on the issues of local governance, they are very eager to know about what is happening in Brazil and South Africa and to learn from their experiences. Similar is the case of people who are working in these countries. Referring to recently concluded IBSA meeting in Delhi, he said that it shows the real need for development from below with people's participation. He also shared that there is a charter for IBSA LGF in which many CSOs are active.

Pradeep Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International said that credibility of Indian CSOs to effectively partner at international level is the main deciding factor. The critical point is the credibility and the track record of the CSOs. Governments though have distrustful attitude towards the CSOs. He also said that CSOs are not elected bodies, so they do not have obligations; the accountability of CSOs is always questioned and CSOs cannot become part of the government, though in a sense they can influence governance. World is becoming multi-polar with a shift in focus from the West to the East; overall, rise of East Africa, the fascinating economic growth of China – all these factors are leading to this power shift including development of a number of multi-lateral forums; but Indian government is not always as vociferous as we expect. By design or by default, there is a lack of information sharing on forums like G-20, IBSA etc. It is understood that in these forums the expectation from India is quite high as India is not seen just as country, but as a voice representing many other developing

countries. There is a need to translate, disseminate and demystify the issues that are discussed in the multi-lateral forums inside India; this will help in mobilising players like media. CSOs should be entrusted with greater responsibilities to fill these gaps. CSOs should be engaged in a right-kind of research including economic and trade researches related to WTO, etc. and put it in the hands of the policy-makers. Civil society is not a monolithic entity and divergence of opinion is quite common within civil society but it is important to find out how to work together with a common approach. Some specific questions which become pertinent in this respect are how inter-governmental agencies are viewing the civil society and who controls the multi-lateral forums?

Harsh Jaitli, CEO, Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) referring to his experiences of G-20 summit held in Paris, France, shared that a delegation of CSO representatives met with President, Sarkozy. During the discussion an issue was raised by the CSO representatives that G-20 generally defines growth and development purely in economics sense and why don't you use human rights, democracy etc. for that? Sarkozy replied that we are interested to incorporate these but India and China may have objection to this. He also shared his experiences of poor coordination and response of the Indian delegation participating in the summit with the civil society representatives and media. He said in case of India's participation in such important events and summits, there is a complete lack of information in the public domain, poor media coverage, no accountability in the parliament and even no information in the government system expect with few officers on key positions in respective ministries. He also shared that there is a very high level of expectation from India in such platforms/forums. In these forums, India is seen as a voice of under-developed and developing countries. But, India is not able to meet these expectations. So the question is how we can make our government accountable to stand which they take? How we

can ask them to make information available in public domain? If we fail to monitor what is happening in G-20, it will also become purely inter-governmental agency.

Referring to the experiences of recently held civil society conventions in VANI, he said that Indian civil society was also not able to connect to itself with such issues. This is because we are not being able to articulate that what impact the conversations in G-20, BRICS etc. would have on grassroot organisations or marginalised people in the country. This gap has to be filled and civil society should closely watch what is happening inside these forums and we must translate, demystify and disseminate those issues/ information in our country so that we can mobilise people, voluntary organisations, media and Member of Parliaments to ask the questions in the parliament. We also need to think of bringing out position papers in different areas on the basis of experiences and learning's within the country as a continuous process. We also need to think of tracking G-20 not only as an event but as a continuous platform for engagement.

Kaustuv K Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA talked about the engagement of civil society with BRICS. He said that Civil Society-BRICS engagement initiative undertaken by PRIA is not yet a full-scale official engagement with BRICS but still an effort to find out what is happening in the BRICS. BRICS as a multi-lateral entity has an ambitious agenda. It has the potential to significantly change the established norms and practices of international development and cooperation which is largely established by the OECD/DAC. It has the potential to change the architecture of global governance institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organisations etc. In addition, as the Indian government intend to spend a significant amount of resources in other developing countries it is pertinent to ask questions like 'how these decisions are taken? What values and norms would guide such decision-making?' Information on these is

available in a very limited manner. There is a need for the CSOs to engage with BRICS in a more constructive manner. Need to inform the local CSOs and to consult with CSOs and academics in other BRICS countries, thereby bringing these actors together to understand and form a uniform position, wherever possible. BRICS Summits have talked about broadening cooperation between the BRICS countries beyond the respective governments to include people to people cooperation through sports, cultural exchanges etc. BRICS academic forum has been formalised through 'BRICS Think Tank Council'. But there has been a conspicuous omission of civil society in the whole process. The consultations organised under BRICS-Civil society engagement initiative it has been decided that civil society should engage with BRICS on its own terms to know more about how things move within BRICS. Under this initiative, there have been interactions with the BRICS officials in China and Brazil who have responded positively so far as engagement with civil society is concerned. There is a need to brainstorm on what will be the value-addition of civil society in BRICS. It is important to bring forth the contribution of civil society through dialogues and talks. Civil society interventions in last few decades in India have successfully shaped many social policies, be it in the sector of health, education and so on. It is important to acknowledge civil society contributions in innovation and applications of development methodologies particularly in the context of local diversities. There is also an additional dilemma for civil society to engage with foreign policies or even to encourage the government to spend money outside the country because the country itself is characterised by a huge list of domestic problems, which also simultaneously needs to be addressed. It is very urgent to create/ generate an information hub through which information on BRICS related development could be accessed. Also there is no information on what is actually happening in BRICS Bank. Even the Durban Summit could not provide any coherent articulation on this. It is not easy to establish

credibility in the eyes of the government; demonstrating the credibility of civil society and educating the government on the contribution of civil society in an on-going basis is very crucial. Need to foster dialogues between civil society and BRICS policy makers. Also, there is a need to foster dialogues between the domestic and the international civil society so as the former could take lead in engaging with the BRICS policy makers. The governments in China and Russia are often critical about the non-BRICS international civil society engaging in the BRICS process. We need to engage more with academic community as many of them have official access to BRICS by which they can bring relevant information. Thus, engaging with the academic community needs to be done in a more concretised way.

R. Iniyam Ilango, Coordinator, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative spoke about their work in IBSA. They were looking at the political coordination between three IBSA countries. He said that business angle is more prominent in IBSA meetings as compared to other issues. And this is the common concern for all of us. Referring to IBSA Trust fund, he said though it is a small fund but that there is not much information that how that money is spent and how the projects are decided? He said this money is given to UNDP for execution but the information is also not available on UNDP website. Summarising his experiences he said that there is a need for democratic values and ideals to become stronger. He said IBSA has a lower profile and after BRICS there is a big debate that whether IBSA is still relevant or not. Referring to the Brazil experiences, he said that there is an opportunity for civil society to learn from civil societies in other two countries especially on the issue of engaging with government on foreign policy issues.

During the deliberations it is strongly felt by the participants that there is a need for CSO to engage in these forums in a constructive manner. Hence, it is important to constantly engage in dialogues with the civil society of the other BRICS

countries, as well as the BRICS policy makers so as to bring forth the civil society contributions in all these countries. Also, engagement with the academic community can prove to be crucial as they have official access to BRICS and can bring relevant information.

The challenge is how to mobilise civil society partners for such global development platforms. Panellists suggested creating an information hub. It was also suggested that a meeting of civil society on foreign policy should be coordinated. Capacity building programme for civil society on diplomacy was also necessary. Probably before sending representatives to the international forums from civil society, there is a need to conduct pre-summit meetings focusing on what should be the approach of civil society in such forums. There is also a need to build the capacity of Ministry of External Affairs to influence other ministries.

Questions were also raised on how to engage parliamentarians and media in such processes. Civil society could also prepare/give an agenda for discussion in such forums. The platform available in the form of parliamentary standing committees should be explored. It was strongly advocated that the process be institutionalised so that even if people in the ministry change, the dialogue continues.

#### 4. Approaches and Mechanisms for Broad-Based Cooperation between Indian Civil Society and DPA

The session on 'Approaches and Modalities of Broad-based Cooperation between Indian Civil Society and DPA' discussed India's presence in the area of development assistance.

Kumar Tuhin, Joint Secretary, DPA, provided information related to the functioning of DPA and its role in development assistance. He shared that DPA was established in early 2012 for increasing



the efficiency in Government of India's interventions abroad. It has been designed as the implementing arm of MEA. DPA has three divisions: Division 1 manages lines of credits as well as grant projects going to the African countries. Division 2 is the nodal department for managing capacity building programmes and disaster relief as well as grant projects in Latin America, Eurasia, and South East Asia and so on. Division 3 deals with grants projects in the neighbourhood countries. In the past one year, DPA has tried to put some procedures in place and has developed capacities of the government staff. Since a large number of grant projects are handled by DPA, it is not fully-equipped at the moment to handle everything effectively. Hence, there is a need to hire consultants or skilled people (which can also be from the civil society). He mentioned that given the existence of a strong and vibrant civil society in India, with some of them having experiences of working in abroad as well, there is a sufficiently large opportunity to learn from the civil society as well as to share the DPA views. Overall, it is important to initiate a dialogue on development policy between DPA and the Indian civil society. While talking about approaches and modalities, he recalled the meeting organised by RIS in January 15, 2013 following which FIDC was constituted. He said that only through participating in more and more meetings and workshops, it will be possible for DPA to identify civil society skills or gather information on civil society activities in India. He felt these seminars can not only come up with a lot of case studies representing the work of the civil society, but also be apt platforms to discuss South-South cooperation and development

effectiveness in the post 2015 times. Overall, he said modalities can also grow based on the manner in which mutual conversations between DPA and civil society are handled in the coming few months, which is going to be very crucial.

On the issue of South-South cooperation, Sachin Chaturvedi, Research Fellow, RIS said that it is not aid. It has five features: grants, technology transfer, trade, lines of credit and investment. India was the first country in the world in 2008 to announce a quota free trade to Least Development Countries. It was stressed that the North needs to learn from the features of South-South cooperation, which is real partnership for development. How can we make a new framework of global partnership? Is Indian civil society willing to develop its own indicators for South-South cooperation?

Following this detailed session on the mandate, functioning and possible collaboration of DPA with the civil society, Rajesh Tandon mentioned that in a seminar organised by DPA and RIS in April 2013 the idea to prepare profiles of Indian NGOs working outside India was mooted. This can act as a knowledge bank so that all information relating to the same could be clubbed, articulated and made available to DPA on civil society in a hassle-free manner.

Jagadananda, Information Commissioner, Odisha State Information Commission shared that DPA is new and looking for ideas and programmes. Since India can be considered as the future power centre, so it is important to reengineer and reorganise the missing bits. India's presence in global processes, its innovation, values, experiences, argumentative minds – all these are the country's assets. Similarly, civil society in India is quite matured and has demonstrated skills in redressing complex issues of poverty and under-development. He felt that DPA and the government of India should recognise the value of a strong and vibrant civil society existing in India at the moment. The need for capacity building, more so south-south capacity building has been

well-addressed by Indian CSOs for understanding and learning social accountability, participatory mechanisms and so on. CSOs are also taking part in global processes through various global platforms. He felt that at present the Indian civil society is capable enough to multiply its activities inside and even outside the country.

This is very positive. Quoting South-South capacity building efforts through International Forum on Capacity Building processes, CIVICUS, SAARC Poverty Commission, etc., he said that civil society in India is very mature and has demonstrated its capacities. India's Self Help Group model is a leader in the world and many Latin American countries would like to have it. On water and sanitation, CSO models for activating local government has demonstrated substantial engagement between government and CSOs and it is possible to replicate this elsewhere. Civil society could engage in a watchdog role; but it needs to become actors, collaborators and engage with the government. In the current setup, Foreign Contribution Regulation Act and Income Tax laws do not support this. Indian CSOs should be able to participate in DPA's call for proposals. He also felt that domestic research needs to be conducted regarding south-south cooperation, apart from dialogues which should be continued and converted into programmatic plan of action in the coming few months. Civil society could support DPA by providing information and capacity building on specific experiences throughout the country. A mechanism to share the information through networks needs to be created. This may directly meet the demand as well as become a mechanism to articulate that demand.

Participants also argued that there is a split within civil society in the country. Though civil society is maturing, there is also confusion about the positions being taken. Probably we need to go beyond instrumentalities of engagement and showcase the work of the Indian civil society which has addressed complex societal problems



and created deep-rooted impact. At the global level, it is not only the instruments of engagement but also the ethos of development that is important. It was strongly advocated that civil society needs to deploy its 'values'. The trust on civil society needs to be institutionalised. Civil Society in India simultaneously needs to go beyond the system of contracting and service delivery, needs to redefine the spirit of partnership and needs to be viewed as agencies to be invested in.

A major argument which emerged from the discussion was the issue of changing the legal framework. How it will enable Indian CSOs to work outside in a legitimate way; probably civil society needs to work with DPA in this regard.

In general, it was discussed that at the global levels, there is a lack of coordination between the government and civil society and if this gap can be addressed through interactions with DPA. Probably, there is a need to project the relationship between the government and the voluntary organisations at least at global scale in those countries which are in the government's priority list. On the other hand, in the government delegations outside India, possibilities to include a component of development sector alongside the industrial sector could make a major difference in setting government's priorities at the global stage. Furthermore, institutional cooperation between civil societies in India and other countries facilitated by the government can also prove to be crucial. It is also drawn from the discussion that

CSOs could support DPA by providing information and capacity building on the specific experiences throughout the country through periodic structured discussions. At the same time, it is important for DPA to understand the concerns of Indian CSOs. DPA should also engage civil society experiences related to community based projects. Mechanism to share the information through networks needs to be created. These may be directly meeting the demand as well as mechanisms to articulate that demand in a structured manner.

In the last session on exploring supportive mechanisms for engagements of civil society, Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA kicked off the discussion by posing a question what Indian civil society can do collectively?

Mini Bedi, Executive Director, Development Support Team said that India has a long history of civil societies' role and contribution to the development. But, internationally India is on the receiving end for long. She said aid comes without people's participation is meaningless. It is very important to remind policy makers that whatever aid is coming should have to be meaningful to people and timely. If this has to be meaningful, civil society needs to come forward and makes this process sustainable. It is important for civil society to find out alternative strategies which should evolve from the demand side. She gave many examples like Karnataka model of sheep breeding programme to remind role of civil society in meaningful utilisation of aid with participation of beneficiaries.

Nafisa Barot, Executive Trustee, Utthan addressing the issues of civil society engagement raised very pertinent questions. She said is there any common vision between the government and civil society? Can there be a scope of evolving a common vision? This is needed mainly because in the absence of a common vision, it will be extremely difficult to arrive in any coherent articulation of issues. Thus, it is crucial to have a common vision, strategy and joint monitoring

mechanisms to see how the partnership between government and civil society is working. She also questioned that what are the implications of international interventions for civil society? She said there is a need for civil society to prepare itself how to intervene at a global platform and there is also a need to make civil society understand the micro-macro linkages. This requires greater consultation, orientation and understanding. There has to be a linkage between what civil society is doing inside India and what it has been doing outside the country. This organic link is very important for change. Again, it is important to analyse whether we are looking towards the cooperation for economic benefit or just for striking a change. How are we understanding the demand and from where it is coming? It is important to understand this as alternative strategies should evolve from demand. To get few people as potential leaders and train them, so that they can take Indian CS forward in the international arena. We need to identify proper networks from among the existing pool. Priorities will differ so far as national, intermediary and community level subsets of organisations are considered.

Subrat Das, Executive Director, Centre for Budget & Governance Analysis (CBGA) shared that they are doing research in a way that provokes discussion around the issues in public discourse. He said that government's attitude towards civil society needs to be addressed and legislations like FCRA need to be discussed. With regard to India's development partnership agenda, there should be some institutional mechanisms for sharing and dissemination of information about what's the government is engaging with? What's in their agenda? What kind of issues they are addressing? And there should also be some institutional mechanism for participation by civil society in those efforts. Also, the role civil societies can play in capacity building efforts has to be highlighted. He mainly focused on how is the Indian civil society likely to respond to these opportunities of engagement. When we look at the international

NGOs, CBOs and People's movements, their priorities are going to differ in this particular area. We also have to keep in mind whether we will be able to influence their priorities, whether they would pay more attention to these issues of India's development partnership globally, also the extent of awareness and sensitisation about these things. And in this context maybe we can make a distinction between the two subsets- one is India's development aid or assistance to other countries and the other is India's role in forums like G-20, BRICS and IBSA. He said, with regard to the first one I am not be very optimistic about being able to influence the priorities of Indian civil society right away. He further added that we haven't understood lines of credit adequately. So we need to understand the implications of lines of credit better to figure out what we are going to convey to the larger civil society. But the second area of India's role in global development discourse may appeal to Indian civil society more. Referring to the points on the agendas of G-20, BRICS and IBSA he said that several of these are very relevant to the work of civil society in India. These agendas include, enhancing food security and addressing price volatility on the G-20 agenda; climate change and sustainable development on all these forums; addressing unemployment, social protection policies, fight against corruption, reforming international financial architecture, Millennium development goals, south- south cooperation are the issues which are not only important but also much easier for us to convince our civil society partners that their engagement on these issues in global policy discourses can reinforce their policy advocacy efforts within the country at the national level. If the support mechanisms we are thinking of are actually create opportunities for sharing of knowledge, experiences among both state and non-state actors from developing countries on relevant issues like inequality, urban poverty, local governance or domestic resource mobilisation policies are more relevant. So, in our efforts we need to keep in mind both, what we should expect from the government in terms of

support mechanisms and what appeals to Indian civil society more in the near future and lastly what are the issues on which we need to develop our own understanding?

During the deliberations major argument that came up is to keep alive the consultative mechanisms through platforms like workshops, seminars etc. in order to ensure information dissemination in proper time as well as creation of a space for the civil society representatives to come and exchange ideas and views. At the same time, civil society needs to prepare itself so as to properly intervene in global forums and to understand more minutely the micro-macro linkages. In the process, few leaders of civil society could be identified and trained so that they can further take this forward effectively.

Furthermore, it should be recognised that aid is an instrument of real politics and is not just given out of altruism. Probably, there is a need to find out what India's vision of giving aid is and what values India is following in this respect. There is a need to have common vision between CSOs and government. A joint monitoring mechanism need to be evolved. What we are doing domestically must be linked to our work outside India. Technology transfer needs to be interrogated and the process of endogenous problem solving needs to be promoted. There should be some institutional mechanism to disseminate government's agenda. There is a strong need to understand India's role on global forums. Only then it would be easy for us to convince our civil society partners for future engagement. There is a need to create opportunities for sharing of knowledge. It is very important to keep in mind that what civil society should expect from the

government and what are the interests of civil society. An idea was mooted to use the forthcoming IBSA Summit to be held in India as a larger platform to initiate a discussion on how to engage civil society in India, Brazil and South Africa through IBSA.

The workshop concludes with the agreement on the following broad agenda for future:

- Dialogue with MEA for jointly defining the vision of India's development policy.
- Modalities, mechanisms for institutionalisation of such dialogue processes with civil society.
- Creating mechanisms for sharing of information and inform civil society on the same.
- Mechanisms for rigorous assessment and review of India's development partnership programmes.

Overall, it was clear from the discussions that there is a need for a collaborative and critical engagement with the Indian government on the part of the civil society so far as India's global development presence is concerned. The possibility to form a Joint Review Mission to review not only the existing bi-lateral policies but also to articulate the expected impact of India's global presence should be explored. On the whole, it was stressed that the leading CSOs in India should come forward and demand engagement with the government not only through the understanding of the Ministry of External Affairs, but also probably by using the values and principles which the civil society in India has been championing for decades.

## PROGRAMME

<b>Time</b>	<b>Sessions</b>
09.15 am to 09.45 am	<b>Registration</b>
09.45 am to 10.00 am	<b>Welcome and Background of the Workshop</b> - Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA
10.00 am to 11.00 am	<b>Session 1: India's Global Development Presence: An Overview</b> <b>Chair:</b> Ashok Khosla, President, Development Alternatives, New Delhi <b>Speakers:</b> - Biswajit Dhar, Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries, New Delhi - Bibek Debroy, Research Professor, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi  <b>Open Discussion</b>
11.00 am to 11.20 am	<b>Tea/Coffee Break</b>
11.20 am to 01.00 pm	<b>Session 2: Approaches and Modalities of Broad-based Cooperation between Indian Civil Society and Development Partnership Administration, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India</b> <b>Chair:</b> Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA <b>Speakers:</b> - Kumar Tuhin, Joint Secretary, Development Partnership Administration, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India - Sachin Chaturvedi, Research Fellow, Research and Information System for Developing Countries, New Delhi <b>Discussant:</b> - Jagadananda, Information Commissioner, Odisha State Information Commission, Bhubaneswar  <b>Open Discussion</b>
01.00 pm to 02.00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
02.00 pm to 03.30 pm	<b>Session 3: Experience of Indian Civil Society Engagements in G-20, IBSA, BRICS and Other Multi-lateral Fora</b> <b>Chair:</b> George Mathew, Chairman, Institute of Social Science, New Delhi <b>Discussants:</b> - Harsh Jaitli, Chief Executive Officer, Voluntary Action Network India, New Delhi

- Pradeep Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International, Jaipur
- R. Iniyan Ilango, Coordinator, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi
- Kaustuv K Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA, New Delhi

**Open Discussion**

03.30 pm to 03.50 pm : ***Tea/Coffee Break***

03.50 pm to 04.50 pm : ***Session 4: Supportive Mechanisms for On-going and Critical Engagements of Indian Civil Society Organisations with India's Global Influence in Bi-lateral and Multi-lateral Fora***

***Chair:*** Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA

***Discussants:***

- Mini Bedi, Executive Director, Development Support Team, Pune
- Nafisa Barot, Executive Trustee, Utthan, Ahmedabad
- Subrat Das, Executive Director, Centre for Budget and Governance Analysis, New Delhi

**Open Discussion**

04.50 pm to 05.00 pm : **Summary and Closure**

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## List of Participants

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