

Be There Be Heard

The Challenge

With lasting and rapid economic growth in the past two and half decades, China has also seen the rapid development of CSOs, which is increasingly regarded as essential to promoting equitable and sustainable development. Meanwhile, CSOs are still facing numerous challenges that hinder their development. These challenges include issues such as lack of a coherent regulatory framework from the government; low capacity of CSOs in strategic planning, organizational management and service delivery. More significantly, the lack of capacity and opportunity for CSOs to be engaged in legislation and policy making process limits CSOs voice in society. In spite of rapid growth of CSOs in China, there is low public awareness of the role of CSOs. This has a strong impact on CSO development regarding staff recruiting, fund raising and policy advocacy through effective participation.

The Response

This project is designed to address, on a pilot basis, key challenges that CSOs are facing in China, such as how to be more effectively engaged in the policy-making process concerning their role, and how to generate more support from the public. Through case studies, reports with policy recommendations, dialogue with the government and capacity development of CSOs, this project aims to enhance CSO participation in legislation and policy making process, to highlight CSOs' contributions and positive roles in responding to development issues, and to increase CSO capacities in communicating with the public and dialogue with the government. Ultimately, this project will contribute to creating a more favourable social and legal environment for CSOs and thereby promote democratic values and human rights in China.

Achievements

The project has been formally launched in June 2009 and expert team and working group have been established to start project activities.

Focus have been given to the vulnerable groups through case studies in six areas including gender, poverty alleviation, disabled persons, environment protection, HIV/AIDS and disaster prevention. Two case studies on CSOs have been completed in Guangdong and Beijing regarding the CSOs engaging in service delivery to disabled persons and their families. Two training sessions with 60 participants have been conducted on CSO capacity building after needs assessment survey within 100 grassroots CSOs.

Investigations are continuing in the Wenchuan earthquake area in regards to the contributions and roles of CSOs.

The project has also been promoting the dialogues between CSOs and Government through workshops, consultations among CSOs, experts, academia and government institutions.

At A Glance

Start Date: March 2009

End Date: March 2011

Implementing Partner(s): China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE)

Project ID: 00062414

UNDAF Goal: Social and economic policies are developed and improved to be more scientifically-based and human-centered for sustainable and equitable growth.

MDG:

CPAP Output: Poor and disadvantaged groups empowered to seek remedies for injustices, and justice institutions enabled to be responsive to claims, consistent with international human rights norms.

Website: www.undp.org.cn

Total Budget: US\$ US\$ 400,000

Project location(s): Beijing and other pilots

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