

Oromia Bureau of Finance and Economic Development

NGOs/Charities Affairs Core Work Process

**NGOs Projects Coordination and
GO-NGO Partnership Forums**

1. Introduction

- Oromia BoFED started coordinating NGOs projects over four years ago
- It was FSDPPC that had the mandate to coordinate
- Now BoFED is the **Entry Point** for all NGOs/Charities projects in the State
- Projects were signed at regional level only, but now at zonal level as well- 18 zones and 4 urban centers
- For the time being, no projects are signed at district level

2. NGOs Projects and their Coordination

Major duties :

- Appraisal, approval and signing of NGOs projects in line with the regional development priorities;
- Monitoring and evaluation of NGOs projects;
- Conducting handover of projects with concerned line bureaus & other stakeholders;
- General service rendering including support letters, such as **duty free**, renewal of work permit, **bank account**, and plate numbers (cars & motorcycles)

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- There are now close to **300 NGOs** legally operating in the region with about **700 On-going projects** and budget of over **6.3 billion birr**;
- The total budget of the NGOs in the region was **less than half** of the current amount five years ago;
- However, there is **unfair distribution** of NGOs/Charities projects in the Region where by the most accessible zones take the lion's share.

3. GO-NGO Forums In Oromia

- Four GO-NGO regional meetings have been held by BoFED since the mandate transfer in 2007;
- The first GO-NGO meeting held in the region with the coordination of Oromia BoFED was over four years ago to introduce the Bureau to NGOs regarding the new arrangement of NGOs projects coordination in the Regional State;
- The second GO-NGO Annual Meeting was in 2009 and was mainly aimed at forming a **GO-NGO Forum** at regional and zonal levels of the region.

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- **The annual meeting of 2009 elected steering committee members to do the following assignments for the next meeting:**
 - **Revise the existing guidelines based on and in line with the new CSO proclamation;**
 - **Develop a binding document so as to create a favorable working environment for the two parties (the government and the NGO) for sustainable development endeavors.**

Members of the elected Steering Committee:

- The GO-NGO Partnership Forum SC has 15 members
- BoFED, CCRDA and NeCSOO (Chairperson and Secretaries)
- Six Government Sectors
- Six NGOs (Three each from Local and International)

Activities:

- Conducted monthly meetings for the first six months of its formation to develop the Guidelines and CPA;
- Now quarterly and as need be;
- Emergency meetings- Humanitarian interventions;
- Facilitated trainings abroad (Bangladesh and Israel) on experience sharing and projects management for both GO and NGO experts;
- Re-elected for two more years in 2010 to continue with its on-going activities.

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- **Similar meetings were also held at 8 locations in Oromia forming Zonal GO-NGO Forums;**
- BoFED in collaboration with the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA) and Network of Civil Society Organizations in Oromia (NeCSOO) prepared the third Annual Meeting/GO-NGO Forum in 2010;
- The endorsements of the final GOs-NGOs Guidelines and the Collaboration and Partnership Agreement (CPA) document were among the issues discussed in 2010.

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- **The GO-NGO Forum conducted in 2010 was on September 13 & 14 covering the following major topics:**
 - **Annual Activity Reports of BoFED;**
 - **Report of Surprise Visits/Monitoring to NGOs Projects;**
 - **Activity Reports of CCRDA & NeCSOO;**
 - **Experience Sharing of Selected NGOs Projects;**
 - **Briefings on the Final Guidelines;**
 - **Briefings on Collaboration & Partnership Agreement (CPA) and ;**
 - **The Five-Year Growth & Transformation Plan.**

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- The steering committee did the following:
 - Collected comments, suggestions from member NGOs by the two organizations (CCRDA & NeCSOO) and from government sectors by BoFED; and incorporated these into the guidelines;
 - Developed the GO-NGO binding document called “ Collaboration & Partnership Agreement (CPA)”.

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The Collaboration and Partnership Agreement (CPA) has three parts:

- **Part one:**
 - **General**
 - **Principles of collaboration & partnership**

- **Part Two:**
 - **Establishment**
 - **Objectives of the forum**
 - **Power, duties & responsibilities**

Part Three:

- Administrative Organs of the Forum;**
- Members to the Forum;**
- Rights of Members;**
- Obligations & Responsibilities of Members;**
- Meeting, Election and voting procedure;**
- Responsibility of the General Assembly;**
- Responsibility of the Steering Committee;**
- Sources of Funding;**
- Meeting Place;**
- Dispute Settlement;**
- Amendment,**
- Effective Date**

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- This year's GO- NGO Forum (January 10 &11, 2012) discussed on the following major issues:
 - Annual reports by government and networks,
 - Sharing of local and foreign experiences,
 - Population and Development;
 - NGOs/Charities proclamation, regulation and directives;
 - Some thoughts about policies and partnerships and;
 - Mainstreaming of Gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment in NGOs projects, and other related issues like formation of district and thematic forums in the near future.

4, Contributions of GO-NGO Forums

- A GO-NGO Forum creates a strong relationship between the government sectors and NGOs/Charities through building a mutual understanding between the two, as both work for development;
- Experience sharing activities (local and international) through forums benefit both the government and NGOs/Charities in their future project planning and implementation, as they can learn from each other;
- NGOs/Charities have been observed and practically seen that they can play a great role in a region's development in all aspects if given the chance and treated as partners rather than mere gap fillers.

5, Challenges Encountered

- Budget constraints to conduct some activities;

Example: CCRDA could not fully cooperate with us this year in conducting forums at zonal level like it did in the previous two years

- Lack of conducting regular meetings due to unforeseen problems and other urgent commitments as of recently;
- Frequent turn over of focal persons (from both GOs and NGOs) of the SC members;

6, The Future Directions/Plans of the GO-NGO Partnership Forums in Oromia

- There is a need to establish forums at district level in those districts with significant number of NGOs projects;**
- Thematic forums formation is also necessary to avoid duplications of efforts to use the available resources wisely;**
- The current regional and zonal forums will continue being mediums of discussions on issues related to development and experience sharing among NGOs and from other countries.**