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Round table 4

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Challenges faced by civil society, good practices and possible CSO contributions

Challenges

1. In comparison with other development sectors, there are a very small number of CSOs working on ageing and development, hence the overall CSP capacity on ageing is somewhat weaker.

2. CSOs find it difficult to implement programmes on ageing in remote areas due to distances and rural conditions/setting, and social and cultural diversity make communication and dissemination of centralized messages very challenging.

3. Lower literacy levels among older people lead to limited awareness of policies and programmes, especially among older women.

Good practices

Multiple good practices exist within the region related to ageing and development, mainly implemented by CSOs. Few examples are:

- Successful models on strong older people groups across the region such as Older People Associations (OPAs), Intergenerational Learning Groups (ILGs) and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and others.
- Effective interventions on care including home-based care, self-care, community eye-care.
- Older people led climate change adaptation programmes such as focused on drought mitigation and natural resource management.

CSOs’ possible roles for future

In the action on ageing, CSOs can play very effective roles in the following and more:

- Connecting the dots between ground realities and policies and programmes by bringing in older peoples’ voices.
- Strengthening older peoples’ agency.
- Facilitating data collection, documentation and implementation research for evidence-based advocacy

**Recommendations for future engagement of CSOs**

**Broadly**, it is desirable that:

- More partnerships are formed which have strong CSOs representation
- Older People led groups (OPAs, ILGs, SHGs etc.) and their capabilities, potential to be fully utilized in community development and Govt welfare schemes

**Specifically**, the aim should be on-

- Forming a regional working group with a measurable plan and agenda, that has adequate CSOs representation and ensures intergenerational participation
- Urgent steps to be taken to bridge digital divide to avoid exclusion of older people and of smaller groups, CSOs from the dialogues