

## **Pre-LDC IV African Civil Society Forum (LDC IV-ACSF)**

*Wednesday, 3 November 2010, Arusha Tanzania*

### **Background and Context**

The Fourth UN Conference on LDCs will be held in 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey. Such Conferences are held once every decade to discuss developmental issues faced by Less Developing Countries and chalk out a programme of action for the next ten (10) years. The inter-governmental preparatory process for LDC IV has started. Although UN agencies have recognized the importance of civil society actors, there is currently no forum that facilitates their participation in the LDC IV preparatory process and addresses the advocacy gaps. CSOs in African LDCs are well connected to the grassroots and can bring useful knowledge and expertise to the LDC IV preparatory process through LDC IV-ACSF and at the same time boost the inclusiveness of related processes and outcomes. Moreover, such a Forum will give an opportunity to these CSOs to interact with each other, learn from their experiences, take back the knowledge to their respective countries, and build networks and relationships that will continue in the future.

The Fourth high level United Nations Conference on LDC will be organized in Istanbul Turkey during the year 2011 and is expected to suggest special measures in favor of LDCs taking into account the weaknesses realized during the implementation process of the Brussels Program of Action for the decade of 2001-2010 that was adopted at the United Nations Conference on LDCS held in Brussels in 2002. The intergovernmental preparatory process for LDC IV has started. This is done in association with the Office of the United Nations High representative for the Least Developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing countries (UN-OHRLLS) that is coordinating the preparations for LDC IV. Other associates will include the African Union, UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and LDC Watch.

In dealing with the existing gaps with a view to substantially contribute to the intergovernmental preparatory process, CUTS International with support of the Commonwealth foundation has commenced on the plans to organize this Pre-LDC IV in Africa Civil Society Forum.

### **The Forum will have the following objectives:**

1. To provide a platform for CSOs from African LDCs to discuss the implementation of the Brussels Program of Action
2. To contribute to better understanding of CSOS from African LDCs issues related to LDC IV thus enabling them to contribute more substantively towards a successful LDC IV.
3. To reduce the "advocacy" gap on developmental challenges faced by the LDCs and
4. To prepare appropriate recommendations for the consideration of LDC IV.

### **Conference Outputs**

The LDC IV-ACSOF conference is designed to positively influence the preparations for the LDC IV by making them more inclusive and substantive and reaffirming the global commitment to addressing the special needs of LDCs, in particular the needs related to sustainable development. Success will be measured by active participation of African LDC CSOs in LDC IV and by the incorporation of their recommendations in the final outcome of LDC IV. This should stimulate long term sustainable economic growth of African LDCs by: contributing to the development of a programme of action for the next decade that is linked with grassroots and has a stronger local ownership; and, better implementation of the LDC IV outcome through multi-stakeholder collaboration and networking.

The Forum report will be shared widely with CSO partners to facilitate their own advocacy. Moreover, the background studies and papers will be published and disseminated to share the knowledge and insights. The follow-up will be through and comprises of the following key elements and initiatives: establishment and functioning of an African CSO e-network which will also inform the participating CSOs regarding all the relevant developments regarding the UN LDC IV; the involvement of the CSO participants in other CUTS activities and projects related to the sustainable development of their countries; and an e-survey after the LDC IV to assess how their participation in the conference is enabling them to advance sustainable development in their own countries. Besides, CUTS will continue to work with UN-OHRLLS to facilitate the incorporation of African LDC CSO inputs into the LDC IV.

### **Participants**

The Forum will bring a number of stakeholders into contact with each other since it will be attended particularly by representatives of CSOs from African LDCs and other relevant development organisations. This will facilitate networking and sharing experiences, a practice that can be continued during the coffee breaks, dinner and informal parts of the programme. Knowledge and information will be shared during plenary sessions based on thematic background papers. Ultimately, the publication of the report of the Forum, with key advocacy messages, that will be widely circulated among all stakeholders.

The CSO networks developed during the Forum will continue not only in the run up to the UN LDC IV but also beyond to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and focused work on the developmental challenges faced by LDCs.

### **Venue and Date**

The conference will be held in Arusha, Tanzania on Wednesday, 3 November 2010.