

**Block II: Who do we partner with? Working with state partners and civil society**

<b>Workshop description</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Strengthening civil society</b>
<b>Focus and Key questions</b>	<p>Fragile and conflict-affected / post-conflict contexts are characterized – among others – by a weak civil society and a lack of participatory systems to influence social, economic and political agendas. Furthermore, more and more countries in which SDC is working become authoritarian: space for civil society and independent media is shrinking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to strengthen civil society in fragile contexts?</li> <li>• How to protect civil society and human rights defenders?</li> <li>• How to enable media to work for transparency and protection of rights?</li> </ul>
<b>Examples from the field</b>	<p>Laos (Vesna Roch / Photong Siliphong): “SDC’s support to the civil society in Lao PDR - current engagement and challenges.”</p> <p>Grands Lacs: civil society – social accountability. SDC support to CSOs where space is tightly controlled, in contexts of failing states or strong states (Caroline Tissot / Marie-Louise Issanda/ Dona Nshimirimana).</p> <p>Gaza &amp; West Bank (Terry Boullata) tbc</p>
<b>Resource person / coordination</b>	Vesna Roch
<b>Workshop procedure</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	<p>Choose among the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange and learning without documentation</li> <li>• Exchange and learning with individual video statements</li> <li>• Written key messages of findings for F2F documentation (used in video / report / page flow)</li> <li>• Written key messages of findings and suggestion for a work-stream / working group discussed on Day 3 of the F2F</li> </ul>