

Pre-Forum Side Event 1

Civil Society and Business, a partnership for impact

9 June 2026 – from 08h30 to 10h00 – Room 2

Summary

This session will focus on the role of civil society and its articulation with the private sector in achieving common objectives supporting economic development, such as the ones that the EU Global Gateway Strategy supports. The session will explore how Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and business can work together across the investment and project cycles to ensure that interventions are inclusive, sustainable and locally legitimate, while strengthening transparency, accountability and “social licence” to operate.

Context

In 2021, the EU and its Member States adopted a joint Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Mozambique (2021-2027), based on broad consultations with over 300 CSOs and aligned with the Samoa Agreement's call for informed, consulted and empowered civil society participation. In 2024, this engagement was further consolidated through the establishment of a Structured Dialogue mechanism between the EU, its Member States and civil society.

Global Gateway (GG) is the EU's overarching strategy for international partnerships, combining hard and soft infrastructure and is guided by principles such as democracy, good governance, equal partnerships, sustainability, security and mobilisation of private investment. In Mozambique, the strategy focuses on energy and climate, digital and education, with transport included at regional level, and is being implemented through several interventions. Because these initiatives are expected to carry important social, environmental, governance and community-level implications, meaningful CSO participation is essential to help ensure that projects reflect local needs, support sustainable development and mitigate risks. As such, the implementation of Global Gateway requires strong civil society engagement.

Dialogue with CSOs on GG intensified in 2026 to discuss the role of civil society and the challenges and opportunities linked to GG implementation in Mozambique. These consultations highlighted that GG implies a shift to private investment and strategic projects that need local legitimacy, inclusion, impact and sustainability, which is impossible to obtain without the involvement of CSOs.

What kind of articulation is therefore needed between CSOs and the private sector businesses to implement responsible investments such as those supported by GG? CSOs and private sector actors are often interdependent. Businesses may see civil society as a useful partner for understanding and engaging with communities, as well as for managing certain risks. In turn, CSOs may recognise that responsible private investment can create opportunities and benefits at the local level. Some positive examples already exist, for instance where CSOs support companies in implementing corporate social responsibility initiatives that benefit communities. At the same time, CSOs and private sector actors have

different roles, interests, and ways of working. These differences can sometimes lead to misunderstandings and limit the scope of collaboration. As a result, partnerships often remain confined to corporate social responsibility, rather than extending to broader efforts that could help improve the overall business environment.

CSOs have called for regular, structured dialogue spaces involving civil society, government, the private sector and communities, and for the involvement of business associations and public authorities in multi-stakeholder dialogue. They also stress the need to safeguard civic space, preserve CSO independence and invest in technical and financial capacities so that CSOs can engage effectively, including in relation to ESG, human rights due diligence and grievance mechanisms.

Against this background, the Mozambique-EU Business Forum and this side event provide a timely opportunity to reflect on how to build partnerships for impact between civil society and private sector business actors, including in the context of the implementation of Global Gateway in Mozambique.

Objectives of the session

- Present and discuss CSO and business views on their respective priorities and roles in supporting Mozambique's development, including opportunities, challenges and minimum conditions for meaningful and mutually beneficial collaboration.
- Explore how civil society and business can build concrete "partnerships for impact", moving to more strategic cooperation on community engagement, social and environmental safeguards, human rights, accountability and transparency, and enabling business environment at large.
- Identify practical avenues to strengthen multi-stakeholder dialogue and articulation between CSOs and the private sector in implementing and monitoring investments, including regular dialogue platforms, as well as feedback and grievance channels.

Session format

The session will last 90 minutes in total and will run as follows:

- Introduction by moderator: 5 minutes
- Key speech by keynote speaker: 10 minutes
- Debate with panellists: 40 minutes (including 5 min. introduction each)
- Q&A from audience: 30 minutes
- Conclusion 5 minutes

Moderator

- **Mrs. Alima Hussein Sauji** – *Founder & CEO of Brand Solutions MZ, Founder and host of Podcast "Para Elas", President of the Department for Women, Young Entrepreneurs, SMEs and Entrepreneurship of the Confederation of Economic Associations of Mozambique (CTA)*

Keynote speaker

■ **Dr. Pedro Couto** – Mozambique's Bar Association

Business enabling environment requisites, and the role of civil society and business in making investments sustainable, inclusive and rights respecting.

Pedro Couto is Chairman in the Law Firm CGA – Couto, Graça & Associados, Lda., with over two decades of experience in the legal field, he has been involved in numerous tasks related to the energy, and oil and gas sectors.

Panel

■ **Mr. Stiven Ferrão** – Secretariat of the Civil Society Platform for the Extractive Industry

Case Study on CSO-private sector collaboration, a perspective from a civil society organisation

Stiven Ferrão is a senior member of the Association for Legal Support and Assistance to Communities (AAAJC) and a member of Mozambique's EITI Coordinating Committee, with over 16 years' experience promoting human rights and good governance in the extractive industries.

■ **Mrs. Regina Macuacua** – Deputy Country Manager, Kenmare

Case Study on CSO-private sector collaboration, a perspective from a private company

Regina Macuacua is a community development specialist with over 18 years' experience leading community relations and corporate affairs in the extractive industry.

■ **Mrs. Fidelia Chemane** – Executive Director of the Civil Society Learning and Training Center (CESC)

Enabling business environment, safeguards and leaving no one behind

Fidélia Chemane is a prominent Mozambican human rights advocate and civil society leader with over 18 years of experience in governance, women's empowerment, and rural development.

Conclusions

- Participants enhance their understanding of the added-value, at different levels, of an enhanced collaboration between CSO and private sector operators.
- Participants define possible steps for establishing/reinforcing sector collaborative platforms between CSO and private sector aimed at joint collaboration for monitoring relevance, safeguards, implementation and impact of interventions.
- Participants discuss opportunities for direct collaboration on existing and upcoming investments and establish relevant contacts/networks