

# ECDPM submission to the European Commission's Public Consultation on revising the European Consensus on Development

August 2016

Between 30 May 2016 and 21 August 2016, the European Commission [ran an official consultation process](#) on the revision of the [European Consensus on Development](#). The European Consensus is important, as it is the overarching document for the EU and its Member States, laying out common principles in a spirit of complementarity. With the last Consensus put together 10 years ago in a very different geopolitical context, the revision comes at a critical juncture for Europe, development and international cooperation more widely.

As a “think and do tank” specialised on European development policy and international cooperation and as an independent broker of dialogue between Europe and Africa, ECDPM contributed to the official consultation. The following answers, taken directly from our official submission, are based upon a wide range of past analysis and publications and our continuous engagement on external action and development policy, trade, private sector, security, governance and migration. As the format of the consultation was naturally a bit limiting and designed for a specific purpose, this is of course not the definitive statement on the issues raised by the Commission. ECDPM will continue to engage on the revision process through meaningful means, both formal and informal, until the new Consensus is formally adopted.

## European Commission's introduction to the Consultation <sup>1</sup>

*The year 2015 was a strategic milestone for global governance, poverty eradication and sustainable development. It marked the target date of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), offering reflection on the progress made to date and on the challenges ahead in addressing unaccomplished goals. 2015 also saw a series of landmark international summits and conferences over the course of the year (the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#), the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#), the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 [Paris Agreement](#) (under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), which have collectively re-cast the way the international community, including the European Union, will work to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication for many years.*

## European Commission's contextual perspective on: “why a change is needed”

*The EU and its Member States are determined to implement the 2030 Agenda through internal and external actions, as well as contribute to the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change given the strong interlinkages. In this context, our policies should take into account changing global*



Source: Knight Foundation

*conditions and trends, to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose across the time-horizon to 2030.*

*The global landscape has changed significantly compared to the time of adoption of the Millennium Development Goals. While much has been achieved, with more than one billion people having been lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990, great challenges remain and new ones are emerging. At global level, more than 800 million people still live on less than USD 1.25 a day. The world is witnessing multiple conflicts and security tensions, complex humanitarian and global health crises, deteriorations of human rights, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, urbanisation and migration. Migration flows across the world will continue to have important impacts, and present both a risk and an opportunity. The EU needs to address global security challenges, including tackling the root causes of conflict and instability and countering violent extremism. Climate change can continue to amplify problems and can severely undermine progress. Important changes include demographic trends, a new distribution of wealth and power between and within countries, the continuing globalisation of economies and value chains, an evolving geography of poverty and a proliferation of actors working on development. Projections also suggest important challenges are ahead (for example, continuing unprecedented urbanisation, and other demographic challenges including ageing societies for some and the potential for a demographic dividend for others). Continued attention will be given to a democratic, stable and prosperous neighborhood. A revision to EU development policy should take into account these trends (including anticipating those that will remain central in future) whilst retaining a core focus on eradicating poverty and finishing the job started by the Millennium Development Goals.*

*Finally, the EU Consensus needs also to adapt to the Lisbon Treaty, which provides for all external action policies to work within the*

<sup>1</sup> All text in italic are extracted from the European Commission's official consultation document

frameworks and pursue the principles of objectives of [Article 21](#) of the Treaty on European Union. In particular, coherence between the different parts of EU external action and between external and internal policies is crucial. The EU will need to address these new global challenges, many of which require coordinated policy action at the national, regional and global levels. The 2030 Agenda provides a framework that can guide us in doing so.

## Questions of the European Commission consultation – and answers by ECDPM <sup>2</sup>

*There is a range of key global trends (e.g. changing geography and depth of poverty; challenges related to climate change, political, economic, social, demographic, security, environmental or technological) which will influence the future of development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Which of these do you think is the most important?*

The most important trend – amidst many a myriad of interlinked global challenges facing today's world- is the growing inequality between and within countries across the globe. The lack of inclusive development (including in the EU) is affecting the social cohesion and fabric of society, exacerbating migratory flows, undermining the legitimacy and effectiveness of democratic institutions worldwide and creating tensions and conflicts at various levels.

This phenomenon is the result of unbalanced globalization processes, subjected to rules of the game that tend to produce more inequality. At the same time our *global politics and institutions seem increasingly gridlocked and unable to formulate, and above all implement, innovative strategies* for inclusive and sustainable development.

This also applies to the EU as reflected in the profound crisis affecting the underlying integration model. Not surprisingly, a weakened Union is confronted with major challenges to remain a credible global player, enjoying sufficient levels of legitimacy, authority and political support from its citizens.

*How should EU policies, and development policy in particular, better harness the opportunities and minimise the negative aspects of the trend you identified in the previous question?*

The universal 2030 Agenda is yet another landmark document spelling out a comprehensive vision for a better future that leaves no one behind and addresses shared global challenges.

*Yet the political economy conditions for moving ahead with the effective implementation of this ambitious agenda are not favorable*, both worldwide and within the EU.

In order to reverse the negative trends invoked and tackle the overarching issue of inequality, there is above all the need for different approaches to “doing business”. EU external action will have to explore with its partners alternative ways and means to organize international cooperation. The worst scenario would be to reiterate a grand vision for the future of EU development policy / external action without fundamentally adapting mindsets, institutional frameworks, approaches and working methods. It would be a recipe for further increasing the gap between “vision” and “actual practice”

The road will be long and bumpy, but high level political commitment at EU and Member States (MS) level will be key to gradually put in place a much more credible and responsive system of cooperation on global challenges, based on:

1) *The transition from primarily aid-driven partnerships to approaches to international cooperation that are based on mutual interests and accountability.* This will be a politically and technically challenging exercise for the European Union.  
2) *The EU institutions and MS, with African and global actors, should devise coherent, integrated policies.* In particular, the EU should work to deliver a more coherent and integrated external action. There are many issues to be addressed: how can the political partnership between Europe and Africa be strengthened? What can realistically be expected from an EU Global Strategy, the development and implementation of a future EU budget and the revision of the European Consensus on Development as a set of related policy processes? How can synergies with Member states be reinforced so as to pool resources and enhance leverage? These are all questions that the review of EU development policy should take into account. The prevailing political and economic conditions in Europe make it compelling to consider more deeply the internal factors that shape European external action outcomes.

3) *The EU should furthermore work towards modernizing key policy frameworks for managing international partnerships.* How can EU development policy handle at times diverging European and African interests? The EU is faced with the challenge of reconciling its own European priorities in Africa and how this may reconcile with the rhetoric of ‘treating Africa as one’. Development challenges need to be addressed at different levels, i.e. global, regional, national and local and through more effective and mutually beneficial forms of international cooperation. Yet how can the deepening the political partnership with Africa and the coherent integration of North Africa in EU external action relate to the ACP-EU partnership? How will EU development policy support the consolidation of continental and regional processes in Africa in the areas of governance, security, economic transformation and climate?

4) *The EU will need to adapt the ‘toolbox’ for international cooperation.*

- This relates to the pressing need to put in place effective means of implementation that adequately reflects the multi-actor nature of global development agenda.
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are inherently integrated - this calls for EU development policy to also better integrate cross-cutting issues.

## European Commission’s introduction on “Priorities for our future action: what we need to do”

*The implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require sustained EU efforts to promote a more just world, including a strong focus on the need to address gender equality and women’s empowerment. Peace, inclusiveness, equality and good governance including democracy, accountability, rule of law, human rights and non-discrimination will need particular emphasis. The 2030 Agenda also requires recognition of the close interconnectedness between poverty, social issues, economic transformation, climate change and environmental issues.*

*To achieve poverty eradication, EU development policy will need to take into account key demographic and environmental trends,*

<sup>2</sup> The text in blue are the questions from the European Commission and the black text below is ECDPM's answers

including challenges related to climate change, and concentrate effort on least developed countries and fragile states. The EU will also need to strengthen our approach to fragility and conflict, fostering resilience and security (as an increasing proportion of the world's poor are expected to live in fragile and conflict affected states), to protect global public goods and to maintain our resource base as the prerequisite for sustainable growth. Peace and security, including security sector reforms, will also have to be addressed through our development policy, as will the risks and opportunities related to migration flows. Tackling social and economic inequalities (both within and between countries) is a crucial element of the 2030 Agenda as is addressing environmental degradation and climate change. Job creation will be an important challenge in which the private sector has to play an active role. Finishing the job of the Millennium Development Goals requires identifying and reaching those people throughout the world who are still not benefiting from progress, and to ensure that no one is left behind.

To achieve lasting results, EU development policy will need to foster transformation and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Drivers of inclusive sustainable growth, such as human development, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and healthy and resilient oceans should be an important part of our efforts to implement the new Agenda as will efforts aimed at tackling hunger and under-nutrition. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require a multi-dimensional, integrated approach to human development. It will also require us to address vectors of change, such as sustainable urban development and relevant use of information and communication technology. Our development policy will have to engage and identify new ways of partnering with the business in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth, industrialisation and innovation. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda will also require cooperation with partner countries and regions on science, technology and innovation. In all aspects of our external action, the EU will need to ensure that our approaches, including development cooperation, are conducive to achieving the 2030 Agenda's SDGs and that the EU intensifies efforts to promote coherence between our policies and our internal and external action.

#### ***How can the EU better address the links between achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change and addressing other global sustainable development challenges?***

Political problems can no longer be classified as either external or internal - this poses substantial challenges for EU institutions and its Member States and policy making. Individual policies cannot address global threats. (such as terrorism, armed conflicts, communicable diseases or climate change) and opportunities (such as better integrated markets, good health and wellbeing, decent jobs and economic growth). They require joined up responses across a range of external and internal policies. Path dependency across the EU, however, tends to keep areas of external (and internal) action apart, avoiding joint competencies and responsibilities. Institutional barriers and short-sighted policy-making undermine efforts towards improved coherence and collective action. The SDGs in themselves dissolve the artificial boundary between external and internal action. As signatories, the EU institutions and its Member States are required to develop a new quality of inter-departmental and whole of government approaches that encompass all dimensions of EU external (and internal) policy. Individual policy fields or institutions will be unable to promote

the SDGs (and Paris Agreement) regardless of whether they relate to social development, environment, climate, governance or peace and security. Commitment and guidance from the highest level is crucial to assure all EU institutions and Member States prioritise these agendas during policy making, as well as to align various interests and institutions behind them.

What has been lacking is a joint European endorsement of the SDGs and an announcement of a concrete course of action on how the EU intends to implement them - within and outside of Europe. This would have to feature predominately in the review of the European Consensus but also well beyond it.

The above input is based on a [European Think Tank Group report](#) (2016)

#### ***How should the EU strengthen the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in its internal and external policies, and in particular in its development policy?***

Important steps are being taken to redefine the EU's internal and external as part of a unified strategy for the EU in the world. The new EU global strategy advocates for the integration of a variety of EU policies including development cooperation and humanitarian aid, trade, CFSP and this is a good place for the EU in the interests of coherence to draw inspiration for the Consensus from.

The main challenge for the EU for this question is to balance and reconcile the externalisation of internal policies (security; migration) and the internalisation of external policies (resilience and sustainable development; Global Public Goods...), in a way that respects the majority of global commitments and art 21 of the TEU

EU development policy must bridge the gap between EU and external policies, going beyond the mere acknowledgement of the interconnections between internal and external. There is recognition that EU's challenges are global, multidimensional and interconnected. The concepts of resilience, interconnection and complexity are key when defining how the EU will approach these challenges in development cooperation.

The concept of resilience has been increasingly used and entered into the political vocabulary from literature on the adaptability of ecological systems. Ecological resilience emphasises that changes can bring different situations of stability, consequently multiple stable states are possible. Therefore, resilience represents the ability to withstand shocks, but also supplying the capacity for adaptation and renewal. Resilience also offer the potential to bring with it a different way of thinking about change: Thinking in terms of resilience shifts the emphasis to the creation of conditions to foster greater adaptability and innovation. An approach based on 'resilient societies' and change is paramount.

The following input is partly inspired by a [joint IAI and ECDPM joint working paper](#).

#### ***What are the main changes you would like to see in the EU's development policy framework?***

- EU development policy is better integrated in EU external action / EU Global Strategy implementation and European development diplomacy is more effectively utilised (e.g. more effective synergies between EU development policy and practice and other external action domains to pursue global public goods, Europe develops capacities to use development

diplomacy) - yet this is done for the service of the SDGs and a reconciliation of interests and values;

- More effective collaboration between EU institutions and EU member-states at HQ and field levels (e.g. Joint programming and beyond);
- A future proof arrangement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of countries, allowing for strong and mutual-interest-driven partnerships with the respective regions and countries, and allows for effective cooperation on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Reduced gap between EU development policy and its implementation (e.g. programming better represents achievable policy decisions);
- Key African and EU stakeholders are empowered to engage effectively with EU institutions (e.g. African and developing countries actors are increasingly aware about EU development policy discourse and better enabled to engage with the EU at critical moments, with the right information);
- Better politically contextualised EU Development Policy and Practice; (e.g. more effective use and courage to use political analysis in policy and programming);
- More evidence-based EU development policy making (e.g. effective uptake of evaluations, evidence-based, utilization of specialised policy relevant research, etc.);
- More effective multi-actor engagement driving change in EU development policy and implementation (e.g. Change agents in MS, EC, Civil Society, Parliament, African institutions, Africa civil society engaged, working for change and treated with appropriate levels of respect);
- That the EU commits to matching its development policy ambition with access to the human resource expertise necessary to realize this.

*In which areas highlighted above would you expect to see greater consistency between development policy and other areas of the EU external action in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?*

- See also answers to previous questions.

A key challenge will be for the EU to examine why it often proves difficult to effectively implement solid policy frameworks developed with MS (e.g. EU comprehensive approach to conflicts and joint programming). In next decade, the main task is not to formulate a wide range of new policies but to create the suitable political, institutional and bureaucratic conditions to ensure more effective implementation. Evidence of practice has shown that in general despite policy and paper commitments, programming of development has remained largely disconnected from a wider EU external action strategy for the country in question; Joint Framework Documents were not used to their full potential for development outcomes. In the past a top-down approach to programming of EU development cooperation has removed the incentives to use political analysis: *there is scant evidence that the EU programming choices in the past being informed by robust (political) country and sector diagnosis and this would have to change.* The time is also ripe for of the European Consensus on Development to recognise the need to understand and consider the role of culture in the promotion of sustainable development and to enforce effective knowledge sharing and learning from a variety of culture-related initiatives.

Frameworks being developed for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development should engage and involve both, other EU external action areas but also internal areas, in a more meaningful way

and at a higher level than in the past. Joint commitments to achievement of SDGs can assist in this.

*In which areas does the EU have greatest value-added as a development partner (e.g. which aspects of its development policy, dialogue or implementation arrangements or in which category of countries)?*

*International cooperation in the 21st century will be driven by "politics and knowledge" rather than by financial transfers from North to South. As a global player and laboratory of social democracy (with MS each having develop specific answers to common problems) the EU has much to offer in modern, interest-driven partnerships for international cooperation. Yet it will require a change of mindset, away from believing that "money" still is the key factor to be a credible and effective player. In the past, the size of EU's financial commitment may have been its main added value. Yet this is a thing of the past, considering changing power positions worldwide, the financial crisis in the EU and the existence of alternative suppliers of political models and funding. The task at hand for the EU is to fundamentally rethink its added value in a radically different world.*

On the ground the interaction between EU delegations, EU member states and other international parties in third countries can illuminate the dimensions of EU added value in which tends to vary from one country to another, depending on the situation and sectors of engagement. Yet the situation 'in country' cannot be ignored when determining 'added value'.

*How can the EU refine its development policy to better address inequalities – including gender inequality – in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?*

Addressing inequalities is not simply about affirmative action or mainstreaming the terminology but targeting those policy options than can empower marginalized groups, communities. This is as much about diplomacy and political analysis as it is about the use of development resources.

*On gender inequality:*

The EU should commit in the review of the Consensus to adapt its programming documents (Heading IV & EDF) to SDG 5 and the EU's Gender Action Plan (2016-2020).

It should follow recommendations made by the Evaluation of the previous Gender Action Plan to build in-house capacity on gender at the headquarters and EU delegation levels using it as a key reference document for consensus revision.

It should commit update the Toolkit on mainstreaming gender in development cooperation for each policy area and develop credible new incentives and disincentives for progress rather than reiterated tired mainstreaming mantras.

*How can the EU development policy make a stronger contribution to the security of people? How can EU development policy contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility and contribute to security and resilience in all the countries where we work?*

- Much of the EU's response to crisis, conflict and fragility has been ill thought out political firefighting which has not served the interest of the affected citizens or the EU well.
- EU needs to reassert through leadership and practical action its role in conflict prevention with a clear-eyed analysis of why it has been so difficult to realize. This lack of leadership has left creative action mainly to middle-level EU officials who have

done well given the circumstances, but lack the political or bureaucratic authority to drive through the cultural change necessary.

- Despite many policy commitment to comprehensive and integrated approaches too often, the EU's response to conflict and fragility has been less than the sum of its considerable parts, serving no one's interest.
- Good work has been done over the last decade at the mezzo level on everything, from developing EU tools for conflict analysis, early warning and mediation, through to adapting its development aid toolbox for fragile situations. Many of the building blocks so lacking even a few years ago are now clearly in place. Yet, despite a now very tired rhetoric of the EU's unique ability to bring together a range of different actions and instruments across a huge number of policy domains, together the leadership and political impetus to do this has always been lacking. A clear-headed look at interests and incentives for more effective action needs to be given.
- *Peace, conflict and resilience dynamics must be well understood with an investment in not only doing analysis which is occurring but actually using it to inform EU decision making.*
- A more comprehensive EU approach to conflict and crisis need to comprise an effective mix of tailored and well thought through short-term, medium-term and long-term responses. Though mounting crises should not be lead by immediate concerns, alone. Short-term concerns need to be bent to long-term considerations and not the other way around. Conflict prevention should not get overruled or crowded out by crisis management or securitization approaches, which could easily become counter-productive in finding long-lasting solutions.
- A good strategic commitment has been made on Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Resilience in the EU Global Strategy yet the Consensus should not view this either a ceiling that cannot be breached, nor a job already done.
- The EU needs to revitalize its conflict prevention policy which dates from 2001 and while still containing many useful and relevant principles needs updating and revisiting with political sponsorship and the latest thinking. Commitment to engage and responses over the long term are where the EU can add value. The EU needs to devote some energy to look again at conflict prevention, to unpack its different elements and look realistically at what the EU can add.
- The EU institutions are often quite fast in borrowing and adopting norms or best practices developed elsewhere by international bodies or by the foremost EU member states but this needs to be widened and deepened.
- In most cases globally, the EU collectively should be looking to play and further develop its role of 'best supporting actor' while living up to international norms in crisis response and peacebuilding. This means working with global and regional actors.
- Commit to taking context as a starting point not only for understanding the dynamics of peace and conflict but also an effective EU division of labour on responsibilities
- Recognise that small funds when used in a conflict sensitive way can also provide significant gains
- A more effective strategy to deal with the security–development nexus needs to be strongly linked to other policy domains and with the clear goal to prevent conflict and build peace and stability, rather than an end in itself.
- The human resources policy of the EU needs to be reformed to allow for more effective recruiting, retaining and rewarding

excellent and highly knowledgeable staff to work effectively on the security-conflict-prevention-development nexus with a clear eye on prevention.

- Key elements of this institutional reform should address the mandate and resources given to the *EU Delegations*, in particular their coordinating role vis-à-vis other EU Member States representations in partner countries and the collective ability of the EU to understand conflict and fragility dynamics from the ground up.

Responding effectively to conflict may be less about targeting illusive 'root causes' and more about the EU addressing 'salient dynamics' where the context and actors meet the structural and proximate causes of violent conflict, and about investing in more resilient state-society relations. Such aspects as:

- Promoting democratic and economic governance conditions for peaceful societies with a particular focus on the rule of law, the inclusive quality of policy formulation and implementation processes, the existence of a space for citizen voice and participation as well as the respect for political, social and economic rights.
- Fostering territorial approaches to local development and democracy as a strategic tool to reduce inequalities, foster social cohesion and create additional wealth and employment.
- Adopting a longer-term perspective in post-conflict and conflict-prone contexts so as to provide new economic perspectives and prosperity over time: it is therefore about creating jobs, opportunities for more decent living conditions and means of substance, more equitable distribution, and developing sustainable and inclusive productive capacity.
- Deploying more conflict sensitive approaches when promoting economic development, relevant to governments, private sector and international agencies.
- Combining pragmatically context-specific institutional reforms and shaping regulatory frameworks for the private sector with a range of bottom-up support approaches to help the social and economic fabric to grow, stimulating cross-border trade and relationship building between business communities of different origin, to promote peace and economic development.
- Establishing effective business-government platforms for dialogue and advice to support peace and economic growth.

***How can a revised Consensus on Development better harness the opportunities presented by migration, minimise the negative aspects of irregular migration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and better address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement?***

The 2006 European Consensus on Development highlights the objective to make migration a positive force for development and to respect the human rights of migrants. The revised *Consensus should build on the comprehensive understanding developed since by the EU institutions on the complex dynamics between migration, mobility and sustainable development, which are reflected in documents such as COM (2013) 292 final*. It should communicate a balanced message of supporting positive elements of migration for inclusive and sustainable development while minimising risks. It should make reference to the comprehensive agenda on migration governance as agreed in the SDGs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Many of the underlying motivating factors of forced displacement, irregular migration and regular migration overlap and often intersect with each other to influence migration decisions. Migration, including in irregular forms, can also be a way to secure livelihoods, for example in the context of climate change and environmental disasters. Mainstreaming migration aspects in the EU's development cooperation practices in various thematic areas can be a useful way of ensuring that migrants are not left behind and support the migration relevant objectives of the SDGs. The starting point should be sustainable development concerns, underlying drivers of forced displacement and the rights of migrants. Support for migration governance should take place in the context of upholding important principles including a human-centred and rights-based approach, partnership and dialogues, 'do-no-harm', coherence across relevant policy domains, and ownership including at the local level. For this more context-sensitive and politically-savvy analysis and programming that clearly integrate a migrants' rights dimension should be deployed. The principle of local consultation and engagement should be upheld, especially in a context of rapid programming and identification of projects.

Increased coherence and coordination among donors and agencies within and beyond the EU as well as between the humanitarian and development policy communities (including through joint programming and joint analysis) is also essential for addressing the intersecting drivers of forced displacement and irregular migration and maximising the potential of migration. The revised Consensus should highlight the importance of the ongoing integration of EU humanitarian assistance to migrants with longer-term development cooperation activities.

The Consensus should reiterate the spirit of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development in the context of addressing migration opportunities and challenges. EU contributions to strengthening the positives of migration and minimizing its challenges requires engagement of a wide variety of EU policies beyond development cooperation. The Consensus could spell out overarching areas of engagement and policy fields, including EU internal policies, and how these can contribute to achieving the migration relevant targets and objectives agreed in the SDGs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda - in particular migration and labour market policies that support the facilitation of safe and orderly migration as well as the lowering of recruitment and remittances costs. Efforts to enforce part of the EU's migration governance, such as enforcing cooperation in the area of return and readmission, should not come at the cost of a broader agenda focusing on sustainable development and the underlying structural drivers long-term of displacement and irregular migration. A future EU development policy built on the revised Consensus should advocate these principles and address a broad spectrum of migration governance objectives.

### **European Commission's introduction on "Means of implementation: how do we get there?"**

*The principle of universality underpinning the 2030 Agenda will require a differentiated approach to engagement with countries at all levels of development. Official Development Assistance will continue to play an important role in the overall financing mix for those countries most in need (particularly the Least Developed Countries). The EU and its Member States should continue to*

*progress towards achieving their commitments. However, in all countries our development cooperation will need to take account of other sources of finance, including by leveraging other (non-Official Development Assistance) sources of finance for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The delivery of the 2030 Agenda means that our work helping countries raise their own resources (domestic resource mobilisation), the provision of aid for trade, blending<sup>3</sup> and partnering with the private sector should be priority areas of focus. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, provides a framework for our efforts, including for our work supporting the right enabling policy environment for sustainable development in our partner countries. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be closely coordinated given the strong interlinkages. Engagement with middle income countries, notably the emerging economies, will be important to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, considering the role they can play in promoting global public goods, what they can achieve within their respective countries on poverty eradication and sustainable development, and the example they can set within their regions as well as their role in regional processes. Here differentiated partnerships can play an important role (examples include different forms of political, economic, and financial investment as well as cooperation in science, technology and innovation). Specific attention and focus should also be given to Least Developed Countries, as acknowledged by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.*

*The EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity for enhancing consistency between the different areas of the EU's external action and between these and other EU policies (as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and in [EU's Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crises](#)). The EU will continue to pursue [Policy Coherence for Development](#) as a key contribution to the collective effort towards broader policy coherence for sustainable development. In our external action, the EU needs to consider how we can use all policies, tools and instruments at our disposal coherently, in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda.*

### **How can EU policies, and EU development policy in particular, help to mobilise and maximise the impact of the increasing variety of sustainable development finance, including in particular from the private sector?**

- The 2030 Agenda places a much larger emphasis on private finance and investment to address social, environmental and economic challenges. At the same time, the relative importance of Official Development Assistance (ODA) is declining in relation to private financial flows, especially as the incomes of low-income countries rise.
- There is also an overall trend among EU member states and EU institutions to increasingly include own commercial intentions in development cooperation approaches. There are certain specific measures that the EU can take:
  - Fostering the establishment of a more conducive business environment and the design of appropriate policy measures beyond financing
  - Developing mechanisms with cost and risk-sharing objectives as important drive to leverage private finance.

<sup>3</sup> Combining EU grants with loans or with equity from other public and private financiers with a view to leveraging additional resources.

- Actively promoting multi-stakeholders partnerships, and in particular CSO-business partnerships and dialogue, to build on synergy and alleviate financial dependency that usually characterize such partnerships for sustainable development and economic sustainability.

More specifically:

- Development and commercially oriented public instruments to engage the private sector abroad take similar forms that can be roughly categorised as 1) matchmaking services, 2) financial support and 3) technical support, with an increasing use of loans, equity investments and guarantees - rather than grants or soft loans only.
- The similarities between the objectives and means of instruments point to the potential opportunity for synergies and greater coherence between public instruments with commercially-oriented and development-related objectives, and activities that are more inclusive and to the benefit of the poor.
- Dedicated efforts are needed for 1) a more coherent application of sustainability criteria to the instruments, 2) better evaluation and learning opportunities of existing instruments, and 3) increasing transparency through better access to data and achieved impact and results.
- There is a need to more consistently include principles of development and sustainability across commercial and development cooperation matchmaking instruments while ensuring:
  - *Inclusiveness*: that benefits are shared more broadly beyond those directly involved in matchmaking activities
  - *Sustainability*: that matchmaking activities do not only 'do no harm' to social and environmental aspects but more actively promote a green and socially-responsible business behaviour.
  - *Adequate results and measurement indicators*: that activities are monitored not only in economic terms (agreements reached, number of participants and events organised etc.) but also in terms of aspects of prosperity and well-being (better and more jobs created, income increases, jobs moving from the informal to the formal sector, structural change, etc.)

*Given the evolving availability of other sources of finance and bearing in mind the EU's commitments on Official Development Assistance (e.g. Council Conclusions from 26 May 2015 on "A New Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015", and inter alia, paragraphs 32 and 33), how and where should the EU use its Official Development Assistance strategically and to maximise its impact?*

The EU should work towards fine-tuning EU differentiation and aid allocation criteria, taking into account the current global geography of poverty and a more nuanced understanding of sub-national inequalities, including in emerging economies.

There is also the question whether in a broadened SDG understanding of international cooperation, the use of ODA should include support to research, innovation and knowledge-brokering activities that could help emerging (non-aid dependent) economies deliver on the global public goods agenda and this should be addressed.

Despite the declining importance of aid depending on individual country contexts, ODA can play a catalytic role when directed

towards strategic projects for example in the areas of climate resilience, trade finance, health, education, conflict prevention and infrastructure. In particular, ODA can be targeted at sectors which are bottlenecks to productivity elsewhere in the economy. Focusing ODA on weak links in order to remove obstacles to productivity growth would not necessarily involve a radical rethink of donor policies, but would require stronger and more explicit targeting of spending. The efficiency of interventions depends on the institutional and policy framework, specific to each country. *The EU should also be having a real debate on where EU aid fits in within individual partner country strategies for securing their own sustainable development finance in the longer term. There is evidence that EU aid programming is not yet embedded on a solid analysis of sustainable development finance in different country contexts.* This would require a thorough reality check against countries' regulatory frameworks, and how EU aid can best complement and leverage private finance sources for sustainable development.

Blending is not a magic bullet - the EU should adopt a more politically savvy approach to financing through blending and invest in the assessing and addressing the multiple challenges and risks related to financing (often transnational) infrastructure development, including financial, technical, regulatory and governance challenges.

EU support to sustainable development in partner countries may require a different way of programming aid. By pursuing strict sector concentration without taking sufficient account of the country- and sector-specific context, the European Commission may compromise its desire to increase impact, notably by engaging in sectors where there is insufficient traction for reform.

*Delivering high-quality and high-impact aid in a 2030 Agenda context will depend on whether the EU is well equipped to deliver on its ambitions.* The issue of 'doing more with less' needs to be looked at beyond the requirement to reduce costs, at a more strategic level. This means that ambitions may also need to be revised by looking more carefully at how the EU's ODA fits within the EU's broader (and more political and interest-driven) external action agenda in partner countries. Adopting a more politically informed approach will need the engagement of multiple governmental and non-state actors in Europe and in developing countries to robustly hold it to account. This is a precondition to ensure that a more realistic yet politically visionary agenda to sustainable development is pursued, but not one that is driven by the short-term political, economic and security self-interests of the EU.

*How can the EU better support partner countries in mobilising their own resources for poverty eradication and sustainable development?*

Four important reform areas for the EU to ensure better support:

1. Increases the knowledge of real economic and political dynamics (and actors benefitting) within countries, including where EU's own interests undermine the effective mobilization of countries own resources.
2. In reforming domestic policy and finance frameworks: a range of factors can increase tax revenues and make domestic private finance work more effectively. Both domestic public and private finance needs much improvement in the poorest countries.
3. In reforming international public finance: development

effectiveness principles and smarter, more catalytic use of EU ODA can help to improve impact.

4. In reforming the international system. EU engagement in global tax rules will assist Domestic Resource Mobilisation by reducing illicit capital flight, which is currently reducing tax revenue in developing countries. Curbing illicit capital outflows would support financial capacity, economic development and revenue collection in poor countries. Reforming banking rules would reduce the likelihood of financial crisis, which in turn reduces the need for shock facilities. The cost of avoiding a crisis is ten times less than what a financial crisis costs in sub-Saharan African countries. Reforming the international system is a crucial element in the 2030 Agenda. This is where EU's Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development also comes back in.

The following is inspired by work undertaken by ECDPM and partners for [the European Report on Development \(2015\)](#).

*Given the importance of middle-income countries to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, what form could differentiated partnerships take?*

The Middle Income Countries (MICs) are a heterogeneous group covering over half of the world's countries. There is a need to 'unpack' this group in policy terms to ensure a tailor-made approach for the EU's cooperation. The Consensus that may further break down the classification of MIC.

The EU is therefore faced with the challenge of determining tailor-made approaches towards engaging with MICs in a significant EU policy vacuum. This goes beyond a debate on whether countries should be entitled to a particular share of EU ODA. More fundamentally, the EU is to seriously deal with the question of how to formulate and realise a holistic external action policy towards MICs, taking their diversity into account beyond issues of aid differentiation or proximity to the EU's borders.

The diversity of MICs has three important implications policy on how to engage with them:

- *Firstly*, the EU is often pursuing multiple interests (trade, peace and security, energy and migration) in these countries simultaneously, of which development may not be the major EU consideration – this cannot be ignored or downplayed.
- *Secondly*, the MICs themselves may look towards the EU for quite different things - ranging from market access, science and technology collaboration to security engagements in addition to support for addressing poverty
- *Third*, appreciating both of these and the political economy underpinning them is a crucial starting point to ensuring the effective design and differentiated application of (tailor-made) foreign policy instruments with a clear focus on the achievement of the SDGs. It would also ensure that the development dimension is not lost, even if the EU policy instruments used are different from conventional ODA and development policy dialogue. Political economy analysis can also provide a useful reality check for what is within the realm of possibilities for achieving policy objectives in MICs where the EU's leverage is different.

Some additional ideas would include to promote risk-sharing and mitigating mechanisms to stimulate private investments with high sustainability impact

The EU will be required to use creative approaches to development diplomacy with different alliances, involving and engaging MICs dependent on the policy issue at hand.

*Given experience so far in taking into account the objectives of development cooperation in the implementation of EU policies which are likely to affect developing countries (e.g. [Policy Coherence for Development: 2015 EU Report](#)), how should the EU step up its efforts to achieve Policy Coherence for Development, as a key contribution to the collective effort towards policy coherence for sustainable development? How can we help ensure that policies in developing countries, and internationally contribute coherently to sustainable development priorities?*

There is increasingly political pressure for "policy coherence" within the EU yet this is often for the EU's short-term internal security or migration interests rather than "policy coherence for sustainable development". The danger is that "policy coherence" with a narrow EU interest, based on security or migration, may actually significantly undermine progress to achieving the SDGs. This has to be acknowledged and addressed if progress on the SDGs globally and within Europe is to be realized.

The best strategy for the EU to get other actors on board in promoting PC(S)D is to lead by example and show willingness to commit politically to concrete thematic Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) objectives. This includes promoting real accountability with the EU by investing in credible and independent research on the effects of policies, and to what extent policy coherence efforts and inputs have made a difference or not.

Following the agreement on the 2030 Agenda, renewed conceptual discussions have come up on PCD and whether or not it is transitioning to PCSD or whether it should remain as a sub-component of a larger and more encompassing PCSD agenda. While the PCD experience provides a useful contribution to the discussion on SDG implementation in Europe, a wide range of other experiences of coherent policy making should also be brought into the debate. The PCD experience presents many insights into the international impacts of EU policy making, but it remains largely unrelated to the broader work on ensuring internal coherence. This is part of the complex transition to working with PCSD. Policy silos will need to be rethought within a universal paradigm of development.

The single most important lesson from the EU PCD experience is, however, that improving policy coherence is a long-term process that requires strong political leadership combined with efforts that need to be maintained over many years and across successive changes in leadership. A system approach that integrates complementary mechanisms with sustained political will provides a useful way of visualising the tools and efforts required. It would seem that such a system could be adapted to accommodate the shift of mindset required by the SDGs and in particular it could allow for a multi-stakeholder approach to implementation where actors are mutually accountable to achieving progress over the longer term.

Political and technical processes for PCD and PCSD must be strongly connected as disconnections in the past have significantly undermined the credibility of the EU.

The following input is related to [ECDPM's Discussion Paper 163 on PCD](#) in the SDG agenda and [Discussion Paper 197 on SDG implementation](#) in the EU:



## European Commission's introduction on "The actors: making it work together"

*An important feature of the new Agenda is that all governments, developed and developing, will need to work with a wide range of stakeholders (including the private sector, civil society and research institutions) to improve the transparency and inclusivity of decision-making, planning, service delivery, and monitoring and to ensure synergy and complementarity.*

*The EU must continue to work collaboratively with others and contribute to a coordinated approach. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda puts national plans for implementation (including associated financing and policy frameworks) at the centre. To maximise our impact, EU development policy should be based on a strategic and comprehensive strategy for each country, which also responds to the country-specific context.*

*Our partner countries' implementation of the 2030 Agenda will inform our overall engagement and our development cooperation dialogue with them and will help shape our support for their national efforts. The EU should also help partner countries put in place the necessary enabling policy frameworks to eradicate poverty, tackle sustainable development challenges and enhance their policy coherence.*

*There is a need for a renewed emphasis on the quality of development cooperation, including existing commitments on aid and development effectiveness made in Paris, Accra and Busan<sup>3</sup> and through work with the [Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#).*

*An updated EU development policy should also provide a shared vision that guides the action of the EU and Member States in development cooperation, putting forward proposals on how to further enhance coordination, complementarity and coherence between EU and Member States. Strengthening [Joint Programming](#) will be an important part of this. Improving the division of labour between the EU and its Member States in order to reduce aid fragmentation will also contribute to increased development effectiveness.*

***How should the EU strengthen its partnerships with civil society, foundations, the business community, parliaments and local authorities and academia to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (including the integral Addis Ababa Action Agenda) and the Paris Agreement on climate change?***

The EU needs to go beyond providing financial resources to partnerships and viewing partnership through this lens predominately. Often overlooked, intangible resources such as reputation, social network/capital, political support, acknowledgement, access to EU expertise and opportunities for learning are of prime importance for partners. Yet, a sophisticated political analysis is needed to realize this well.

Empowerment of civil society organisations and social movements is by definition a context-specific, endogenous and long-term transformation process driven by the citizens and organisations involved. The SDGs allow for an expansion of 'political' partnership

with societies based on a strategic and direct engagement with civil society organisations, not simply as recipients of donor funding, but as key drivers of development and political and economic transformation.

The EU and member states can build and capitalize on the civil society roadmap process following the 2012 Communication. The key challenge however is to ensure that its operational systems and the funding architecture are suited to deliver on the political and developmental ambitions it sets out for itself. Disbursement pressure and staffing cuts have often led the EU to want to cut the number of partners or disburse larger sums to fewer, limiting the types of relationships it manages. This trend is counter-productive. Descending from the national level, the complexity of development processes increases significantly. Local authorities, particularly in urban areas, are increasingly recognized as key potential development actors and the 2030 Agenda further underlines their role. As is the case with civil society, tapping into the development potential of local authorities requires a change in approach, and to a large extent depends on their cross-sectorial integration in cooperation programmes and initiatives.

Breaking down silos, and empowering local authorities and civil society as decision-makers rather than passive stakeholders in concrete development processes should be a key concern for European development action.

In view of the 2030 agenda, multistakeholder cooperation involving civil society and private businesses is a particularly promising area for EU cooperation.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships can create value and a strong local dynamic. However, they are not just a financing modality. Independent facilitation and brokerage is key to shift the debate from unmet expectations to realistic opportunities for development.

The EU has more than technical skills and money, and when working with community partnerships, especially in high-impact sectors such as mining or agribusiness, they can play an important role in facilitating an equitable and inclusive access to the benefits of private income such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives for business development, while addressing the sensitive topic of local governance and citizen oversight on these operations.

A key requirement however is that these multi-stakeholder partnerships with the private sector are no longer confined to the 'private sector engagement' or 'public-private-partnership' silo, but are connected with existing and future local governance and civil society initiatives as part of a larger local development strategy.

***How can the EU promote private sector investment for sustainable development?***

The EU's potential value added in supporting the private sector for development relates to its economic scale and business potential as an economic actor, its role as the main provider of development cooperation assistance in the world, and its network of institutions that might be used to support these towards the creation of more and better jobs. EU support to both the developing country private sector and EU businesses investing in developing countries needs to be better linked and coordinated for the EU to reach its full, value-added potential. While the EU has

3 See [Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action](#) and the [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

the potential to become a major player in promoting the role of the private sector in fostering sustainable development, working more with the private sector ultimately requires a change in instruments and approach and, but perhaps more fundamentally, a different mindset about development.

For the EU to get the maximum development potential out of engaging the private sector ideas include:

- Establish coordination mechanisms to facilitate inter-institutional coherence and cooperation
- Focus on a facilitating role, based on key development principles and building on domestic initiatives within the EU and developing countries
- Favour coordination and exchanges of information (on opportunities, practices, modalities, monitoring) and contribute to setting commonly agreed guiding principles (and possible operational frameworks)
- Build on domestic initiatives and facilitate political engagement to foster a better pro-development business environment.

The growing interest in development partnerships with the private sector has been accompanied also by a concern about the impact of such approaches. This relates both to the need to minimise the harm that comes when private interests override social and environmental concerns, and the opportunities for maximising development impact.

Examining the lessons learned and the evidence of current practices of PPS shows that the PPP concept has evolved from a narrow definition, based on a contract for public service delivery by private sector partners to pool investment and share risks, to cover a variety of cross-sector collaborations. These differ widely depending on the types of actors involved, the division of role, the objectives and the operational modalities. In general, the two concerns raised most frequently regarding development PPPs are additionality and transparency. The first concern is about defining, ensuring and measuring the additional impact that is being achieved due to the public finance component. The latter related to the availability of reliable information on the negotiation, the design, the implementation and the results of PPPs. More commitment to sharing this kind of information would offer the best avenue for ensuring more developmental PPPs.

Two basic questions need to be addressed when evaluating a PPP. Firstly, is the PPP the best tool to address the identified needs in a specific context, in comparison to the alternative options? Secondly, does the PPP deliver what it promised? To answer these requires a thorough and transparent mapping, analysis, evaluation and comparison of all the different policy options to address a specific need. What does the public partner actually gain from a PPP and how does this compare to the other options? As it is now, the argument for a PPP often gets stuck in the assumption that there are no real other options, and wishful thinking on how a PPP will draw in additional private resources and expertise. For the latter question it is suggested that a stronger emphasis on the power dynamics and how they are affecting provisions regarding payment, accountability and monitoring is needed.

### *How can the EU strengthen relations on sustainable development with other countries, international financing institutions, multilateral development banks, emerging donors and the UN system?*

The EU needs to prioritise development diplomacy much more so than in the past so it can listen and engage with potential partners better and make alliances to further the SDGs

A range of policies can help the EU can work together with other countries, international financing institutions, multilateral development banks, emerging donors and the UN system to improve on support for sustainable development finance. These can work at the global, regional, national and sub-national level. Five general policy areas (or principles) include:

1. The ability to implement, manage or facilitate finance effectively requires the presence of sufficient national and local public capacities.
2. The design and implementation of public and private standards facilitates the effective use of finance
3. An appropriate and clear regulatory framework allows competition and provides better incentives for the diffusion of technology in addition to directed finance
4. Improving transparency, information and accountability contributes to the effective use of finance
5. Policy coherence towards specific development objectives is vital to ensure the effective use of finance.

The above input recalls messages from the European Report on Development (2015).

### *How can the EU best support partner countries to develop comprehensive and inclusive national plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?*

Again, the *first principle is that the EU itself develops a good understanding of the political dynamics in the country that may impact upon the inclusiveness and comprehensiveness of national plans* – this requires investment and action.

The EU continues to abide by the internationally agreed development effectiveness principles to ‘deepen, extend and operationalise the democratic ownership of development policies and processes’ (Busan, 2011). Ownership is a fundamental principle of the development effectiveness agenda yet must extend beyond government to government cooperation. It features prominently in the EU instructions and guidelines for development cooperation, according to which national development plans are the basis for programming of EU aid if deemed adequate by the EU.

The instructions for EU development cooperation require EU delegations to conduct dialogue with partner governments and consult with local stakeholders (including civil society and private sector) at key moments throughout the programming process, integrate their input and report to headquarters on these interactions. It is imperative for the EU to continue to promote, champion and invest politically and other resources in such practices.

Unfortunately, evidence from practice reveals that in many cases the EU’s own policy priorities superseded agreements based on dialogue at partner country level, where in-country consultations with partner governments and member states have

been overruled. This top-down approach to programming EU development cooperation has diluted the European Commission's commitment to country ownership and the division of labour, and needs to be redressed.

Overall, putting the commitment to democratic ownership into practice has important implications for the EU as a development actor. It places the governance dimensions of international cooperation at centre stage, in particular the critical role played by

However, this approach remains a work in progress and there is still some way to go. This applies particularly to the EU's understanding of the political economy of what really drives change and what the realms of possible are. There are concerns that the EU is still reluctant to fully embrace the consequences of an increasingly politically informed approach to development cooperation including supporting national development plans. The following input is informed by [ECDPM Discussion Paper 18o on the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF programming process](#):

*What are the best ways to strengthen and improve coherence, complementarity and coordination between the EU and the Member States in their support to help partner countries achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development?*

In a more globalised and competitive world the need for more effective international and development cooperation has only become more urgent and consequences of inaction more apparent. To meet the SDGs all actors, including EU actors, will have to 'raise their game' to work together better. The European Union's institutions and services and its Member States, have the potential to have a stronger influence in international cooperation through Joint Programming. With a more systematic adoption and application of Joint Programming documents in partner countries, as the result of joint programming processes, they could be even stronger. Reimagined as Joint Cooperation Strategies, joint programming could be a key method to deliver the European Consensus on Development matching the new global agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite an established track record, there is some fatigue with Joint Programming and significant need for revitalised political support for this modality as Joint Cooperation Strategies. Some Member States doubt its benefits or 'return on investment', misinterpreting its transformative power or being simply disillusioned by the EU institutions' instrumental rigidity which they see as not empowering joint programming. Therefore, a real political commitment is needed for institutional changes to take place.

In addition, EU Delegations (EUDs) are a potentially huge strategic asset for the European Union and the achievement of a more coherent, visible and effective external action and significant investment and empowerment of EUDs is needed to implement a revised Consensus..

The effective fulfillment of these roles depends on EU delegations' interactions with other EU institutions (at HQ mainly), with member states and with partner countries:

- Some tensions have been identified in EU delegation relations with HQs, particularly in relation to programming of EU aid and the prescriptive, top-down approach adopted by HQ/ DEVCO. EU delegation's contextual knowledge and dialogue efforts should be leveraged successfully.
- The access and interaction between EU delegations and

thematic DGs is also important, for example in mobility and migration negotiations, as well as trade or fisheries. Capacity issues must be considered if a two-way relationship with other line DGs should be continued simultaneous to the substantial work that EU delegations undertake for their own DGs (DEVCO but also EEAS).

- EU delegations are valued for being 'information hubs' and producing political and economic reports which give smaller member states access to information and analysis they may not otherwise have that can also help with coherence.
- EU delegation's ability to 'be in the lead' and effectively and efficiently fulfill its coordinating role may depend on a number of indicators including:
  - The EU delegation's ambition and influence in agenda setting when chairing EU coordination meetings
  - Effective leadership in the coordination of EU bilateral and multilateral aid.
  - The ability of the EU delegation to create a collaborative trend among member states.
- The image given by a EU delegation in a partner country is also a dimension not be neglected. It is sometimes seen as the most important donor, a strong and biased political actor, an agency at the service of member states, or alternatively, as a more neutral and reliable partner in comparison to some of them. At times, in Africa the EU struggles to move beyond being seen through the lens of the colonial legacy and as a donor, despite the efforts by the EU delegation. For an effective implementation of a new European Consensus that would have to be addressed.

The following input is based on [ECDPM Discussion Paper 183](#) on EU joint programming, and [Briefing Notes 62](#) and [70](#) on EU delegations:

*How can EU development cooperation be as effective as possible, and how can we work with all partners to achieve this?*

- *Better politically contextualised EU Development Policy and Practice; (e.g. more effective use of political analysis in policy and programming and more political and highest level support for this);*
- More evidence-based EU development policy making (e.g. effective uptake of evaluations, evidence-based, specialized yet independent policy orientated research etc.);
- EU development policy is better integrated in EU external action / EU Global Strategy implementation and European development diplomacy is more effectively utilised (e.g. more effective synergies between EU development policy and practice and other external action domains to pursue global public goods, Europe develops capacities to use development diplomacy);
- More effective collaboration between EU institutions and EU member-states at HQ and field levels (e.g. Joint programming starts to work better, and delivers results) ;
- Reduced gap between EU development policy and its implementation (e.g. EDF programming better represents effective, relevant and realistic policy decisions);
- Key African and EU stakeholders are enabled to engage effectively with EU institutions and Member States (e.g. African actors are increasingly supported to be aware of EU development policy discourse and better enabled to engage with the EU at critical moments, with the right independent information and analysis);
- More effective multi-actor engagement driving change in EU

development policy and implementation

- EU invests in expertise and a human resource policy that provides realistic incentives and incentives for change

Collaborating with partners to make development cooperation more effective *requires a high degree of trust-building*. Achieving a better understanding of situational and cultural differences and gaps can be a way to build this trust.

- Europeans need to make more of an effort to know not only other cultures better, but also to spot their own implicit biases due to their own cultures, in particular Managing cultural and power asymmetries is achieved by developing self-reflexive critical consciousness. Learning intercultural communication helps to move away from the denial of cultural differences and towards conscious mutual adaptation and integration.
- Intercultural experiences and expertise from EU internal programmes – like ERASMUS, Youth in Action, and SALTO – can be a source of learning for those working on external relations and development. Specialists in intercultural communications can provide the EU staff in charge of development programming and implementation - as well as external action - the necessary toolkit to communicate with the partners to promote mutual creation of meaning.
- Working with “champions” or “European cultural ambassadors” that have intercultural skills is also another path towards a new type of European engagement with others.

#### *What further progress could be made in EU Joint Programming, and how could this experience be linked with other EU joined-up actions in supporting countries’ delivery of the 2030 Agenda?*

If the collective ambition of the EU is still to work better together for development effectiveness then there is a need to move beyond Joint Programming to Joint Cooperation strategies.

Joint Cooperation Strategies could replace Joint Programming as an essential tool for the EU to enhance its international cooperation and external action. Joint Cooperation Strategies would fit well under both the 2016 EU Global Strategy and a revised European Consensus on Development aimed at the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite a waning interest in the application of development effectiveness principles, revamped joint action could also help addressing long identified and persistent problems of coherence and complementarity EU and its Member States. Indeed Joint Cooperation Strategies can be a tangible way to make the Consensus actually tangible at the country level.

To this end a number of initiatives could be undertaken including:

- Under the leadership of the High Representative/Vice President and Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, inclusion of Joint Cooperation Strategies in a revised European Consensus on Development and other relevant sub-strategies. Renewed public commitment made by Member States and EU institutions to systematically mutualise joint analyses and adopt Joint Cooperation Strategies.
- Merge Joint Programming with programming processes in Mid-Term review of European Financial Instruments upcoming in 2017, and consider its central place in the next EU financial instruments post-2020.
- Commitment to frank and high-level assessment by Member

States and EU institutions of feasible change to promote progress on practical capacity, instrumental flexibility, institutional coherence towards Joint Programming/Joint Cooperation Strategies in their own organisations.

- Carrying out a specific reflection, at the EU institutions and member state level, early in the policy cycle in order to provide operational direction on how Joint Programming can assist in delivering an effective division of labour, and a more strategic EU approach to achieve the SDGs. A first seminar bringing together SDG and joint programming technical experts could be organised.
- Inclusion of Joint Cooperation Strategies seminars in the rotating EU Presidency agenda to socialise the concept and engage relevant staff more frequently.
- Set-up of a virtual ‘lessons learnt’ mechanism on Joint Cooperation Strategies hosted and promote co-working on Joint Programming documents through secure web platforms to make such processes less bureaucratic, more efficient and user-friendly

The following input is based on ECDPM’s [Discussion Paper 183 on EU Joint Programming](#).

#### **European Commission’s introduction on “Keeping track of progress”**

*The EU will need to contribute to the global follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda. Keeping track of progress in a systematic and transparent way is essential for delivering the 2030 Agenda. The EU is actively contributing to the setting up of a Sustainable Development Goal monitoring system at global, regional and national level. Demonstrating results and impact from our efforts and the promotion of transparency will be important priorities for EU development policy, as part of a wider move to strengthen accountability, follow-up and review at all levels.*

#### *How can the EU strengthen its own use of evidence and analysis, including in the development field, to feed into its regular review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the UN?*

Research and evidence support

- EU should find new modalities to support genuinely independent policy relevant research related to the SDG and global development challenges facing Europe. Existing Commission modalities either favour an academic approach which is not always policy relevant or operationally savvy, or one compromised by its proximity to vested interests within the development sector, including within EU actors themselves. This provides more consultancy services than the necessary independent yet policy and operationally relevant analysis.

SDGs and PCSD

- The EU has not yet published any kind of mapping matching the SDGs with EU priorities and objectives at the overall level. This should be a commitment. However, Eurostat has indicated that it has undertaken a thorough mapping of the goals and targets of the SDGs against the EU sustainable development indicators used for monitoring the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and this can provide some background and sobering reflection on the realms of the possible.
- To ensure EU credibility and leadership on SDG implementation, it will be paramount for the EU to make

a clear announcement of its priorities, actions and the assigned roles and responsibilities for implementation and monitoring. An integrated approach that takes into account the coherence across levels, goals and internal and external dimensions of implementation will be key.

#### Adaptation of the Results Framework

- DG DEVCO has made efforts to revamp its approach to managing for results, in response of both taxpayers and member states for greater transparency in and accountability on public spending, as also to address the shortcomings of past evaluation systems. The new Results Framework is a major achievement, attaining a high-priority political objective in a context of limited resources. The main concern now is to maintain quality standards and match ambition with capacity: professionalisation is not something that will take place overnight, nor will the necessary changes in mentality and procedures. DG DEVCO will need to make major efforts to ensure that EU delegations have a critical mass of people ready to adequately feed into the new results framework. So commitments to this in the Consensus should be retained
- DG DEVCO's ambition to become a knowledge-based learning organisation is laudable. However, a new Learning and Knowledge Management Strategy, a new Results Framework and a new strategy for optimising the use of aid modalities and resources will not suffice if HR capacity does not match vision and ambitions for external action and development cooperation, particularly if the EU's main development policies commit it to supporting and assisting domestic reforms in partner countries where greater understanding of local political economy will be paramount.

#### Better use of Strategic Evaluations

- Much of the evidence generated by 'strategic evaluations' has not been effectively due to lack of involvement and awareness of EU staff that would have benefited from those learnings. With insufficient capacity and leadership, the opportunity presented by evaluations – seeing the bigger picture of how to better deal with today's global problems – are more often missed opportunities.
- Achieving a more systematic use of evaluations requires making them a key part of EU development practice, rooting the use of rigorous analysis into the "corporate culture" and decision-making processes of the EU, and having them sufficiently independent to be credible but linked to decision-making structures in the relevant policy domains.
- What is needed now is political leadership and a management coalition that takes up this vision, and an appropriately senior positioning of the evaluation unit within the EU's external action architecture.

*How can the EU help to ensure the accountability of all actors involved in implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the private sector? How can the EU encourage a strong and robust approach to the Follow Up and Review of the 2030 Agenda from all actors?*

The EU should welcome credible independent analysis and research even if it is critical and should adopt a process of constructive engagement rather than being defensive or dismissive. The working method of implementation of the 2030 Agenda is particularly important for this. This could be defined in a roadmap for all EU stakeholders, specifying the opportunities for action and accountability mechanisms.

A bottom-up participatory cluster approach, favouring the volunteer engagement of EU institutions, national organisations, private sector and other actors around some key sustainability initiatives that have real traction could be one option. Also the EU PCD experience offers some insights into accountability and monitoring of SDG 17 on means of implementation where PCSD is specifically highlighted:

Despite the reiterated political commitments and institutional frameworks and mechanisms, challenges prevail in clarifying and measuring the real impact of EU policies on developing countries. Especially in policy areas where the EU and its member states have strong interests, it has not always been easy to reconcile policies with international development objectives. PCSD in the 2030 Agenda will necessarily involve complex and difficult negotiations and interaction between a whole range of actors and stakeholders. This is confounded by the methodological challenges of quantitatively measuring progress on PCD, which are also likely to arise in PCSD discussions.

The experience has shown that a 'PC(S)D systems' approach may be an important way to involve several mechanisms and actors working in a complementary fashion. Particularly in terms of bringing in outside knowledge and assessments, involvement from a wide range of actors from civil society and academia is helpful to provide in-depth analysis on policy coherence. An example of this has been the EU PCD Report, which presents a detailed narrative update on the EU PCD thematic priority areas. The production of this report has prompted shadow reports from, for example, the CONCORD network of CSOs and an independent EU PCD report and, in that way, involves a range of actors in the debate to keep the conversation around PCD going.

The following input is informed ECDPM's [Discussion Paper 197 on Implementing the SDGs in the EU](#) and internal ECDPM discussions on the topic:

*How should EU development cooperation respond to the regular reviews on progress of the partner countries towards the 2030 Agenda goals?*

See also answer to the question on page 12: How can the EU best support....

- The EU should adopt a politically savvy and not just a technocratic approach to the review of progress in partner countries. Also the EU should not impose standards that it itself can't meet in terms of monitoring progress on SDGs
- The EU should share experience – including its own difficult experiences and failures of monitoring progress in terms of achievement of SDGs of their best experts within governments and specialized agencies particularly those beyond the traditional international development sector in their own statistical agencies, line Ministries etc.
- The EU should take into account results of reporting in own programming exercises and reviews of cooperation.

## Selection of Relevant ECDPM Resources

ECDPM's answers to the consultation questions drew on a wide range of publications produced in the last few years. Here is a selection of relevant publications. A full back catalogue (including publications not mentioned) is available from ECDPM's website at: <http://www.ecdpm.org/>

### EU Overarching Development Policy and External Action

Basnett, Y. et al. 2014. [European Report on Development: Post-2015 Global Action for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future](#).

Deneckere, M., Mackie, J., January 2016. [Galvanising action for the Global Goals: Challenges for EU-Africa relations in 2016](#). Challenges Paper No. 7

Helly, D., Venturi, B. June 2016. [A new EU strategic approach to global development, resilience and sustainability](#). Istituto Affari Internazionale.

Helly, D. May 2016. [Development diplomacy in the EU Global Strategy: No slip of the tongue](#). Talking Point blog.

Helly, D. April 2016. [Intercultural integration and communication: An agenda for Europe](#). Talking Point blog.

Helly, D., Galeazzi, G., July 2016 [Culture in EU development policies and external action: Reframing the discussion](#). Briefing Note 92

Herrero, A., Knaepen, H. 2014. [Run-up to 2015: A Moment of Truth for EU External Climate Action?](#) Briefing Note 67

Keijzer, N., Krätke, F., van Seters, J. February 2013. [Meeting in the Middle? Challenges and Opportunities for EU Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries](#) ECDPM Discussion Paper 140

Knoll, A. June 2014. [Bringing Policy Coherence for Development into the post-2015 agenda – Challenges and Prospects](#). Discussion Paper 163

Krätke, F. June 2013 [From Purse to Policy to Practice: Six Initiatives to Future-proof EU Development Cooperation for 2014-2020 and Beyond?](#) ECDPM Briefing Note 51

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ECDPM welcomes feedback and questions on this contribution and these can be directed to Head of the European External Action Programme – Andrew Sherriff: [as@ecdpm.org](mailto:as@ecdpm.org), and Annabelle Laferrère: [al@ecdpm.org](mailto:al@ecdpm.org) who, along with Cecilia Gregersen, compiled and edited this contribution with some input from Jean Bossuyt. ECDPM staff of course have additional perspectives on the issues raised than those articulated in this official submission.

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