



Work plan 2018-2019

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes	FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific	GACSA	Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture
AFET	EU parliamentary committee on Foreign Affairs	GIZ	Germany's Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
AGA	African Governance Architecture	IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture	ICT	information and communications technology
AU	African Union	IDA	International Development Association
BEC	Board Executive Committee	IDDRI	Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations
BOAD	West African Development Bank	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung	IFC	International Finance Corporation
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme	IPSS	Institute for Peace and Security Studies
CAR	Central African Republic	ISS	Institute for Security Studies
CFS	Committee on World Food Security	IT	information technology
CFTA	Continental Free Trade Area	KM	knowledge management
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	LQS	Learning and Quality Support, ECDPM unit
CSA	climate-smart agriculture	MFF	multiannual financial framework
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy, EU	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
CSO	civil society organisation	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development, AU
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa	NGO	non-governmental organisation
DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development	ODA	official development assistance
DEVE	EU parliamentary committee on Development	ODI	Overseas Development Institute
DFI	development finance institutions	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
DFID	Department for International Development, UK	PEDRO	Political Economy Dynamics of Regional Organisations, ECDPM project
DIE	German Development Institute	RECs	regional economic communities
EAC	East African Community	SADC	Southern African Development Community
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
EDF	European Development Fund	TDB	Trade and Development Bank
EEAS	European External Action Service	ToC	theory of change
EFSD	European Fund for Sustainable Development	UK	United Kingdom
EIB	European Investment Bank	UN	United Nations
EIP	External Investment Plan, EU	UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
EPA	economic partnership agreement	WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
EU	European Union	YIP	Young International Professionals, ECDPM programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations		

1. INTRODUCTION

As the European Union (EU) enters its seventh decade since the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and the second decade of its Joint Strategy with the African Union signed in Lisbon in 2007, the context of ECDPM's work appears increasingly volatile and unpredictable. The EU itself has been mired in an 'existential questioning', prompted first by the financial crisis in 2008 and then by the growing refugee influx which peaked in 2015, alongside the rise of anti-EU populist movements and the British decision to exit. There have of course been also moves to strengthen the Union. Merkel, Macron, Juncker, and other European leaders have stressed the opportunities the current environment creates, emphasising the need for European integration processes to continue. Certainly such optimism will be called for in 2018, a year in which the EU will face a number of key debates on external affairs. Two in particular will be crucial for ECDPM's work in the year ahead: negotiation of a new agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states and drafting a proposal for the next EU budget, the multiannual financial framework (MFF).

This Work Plan spells out Centre activities in these and other areas in 2018-2019. This will be the second year of ECDPM's 2017-2021 strategy. That strategy, and all of the Centre's work, hinges on four key areas of impact:

- Effective international cooperation frameworks
- Legitimate and accountable institutions
- Peaceful societies
- Sustainable economic transformation

ECDPM provides politically-informed, evidence-based, and practical policy advice and acts as a broker to facilitate uptake and seek common ground between public, private, and civil society actors in both Europe and Africa. Our added value rests on several assets, which position the Centre for effective engagement:

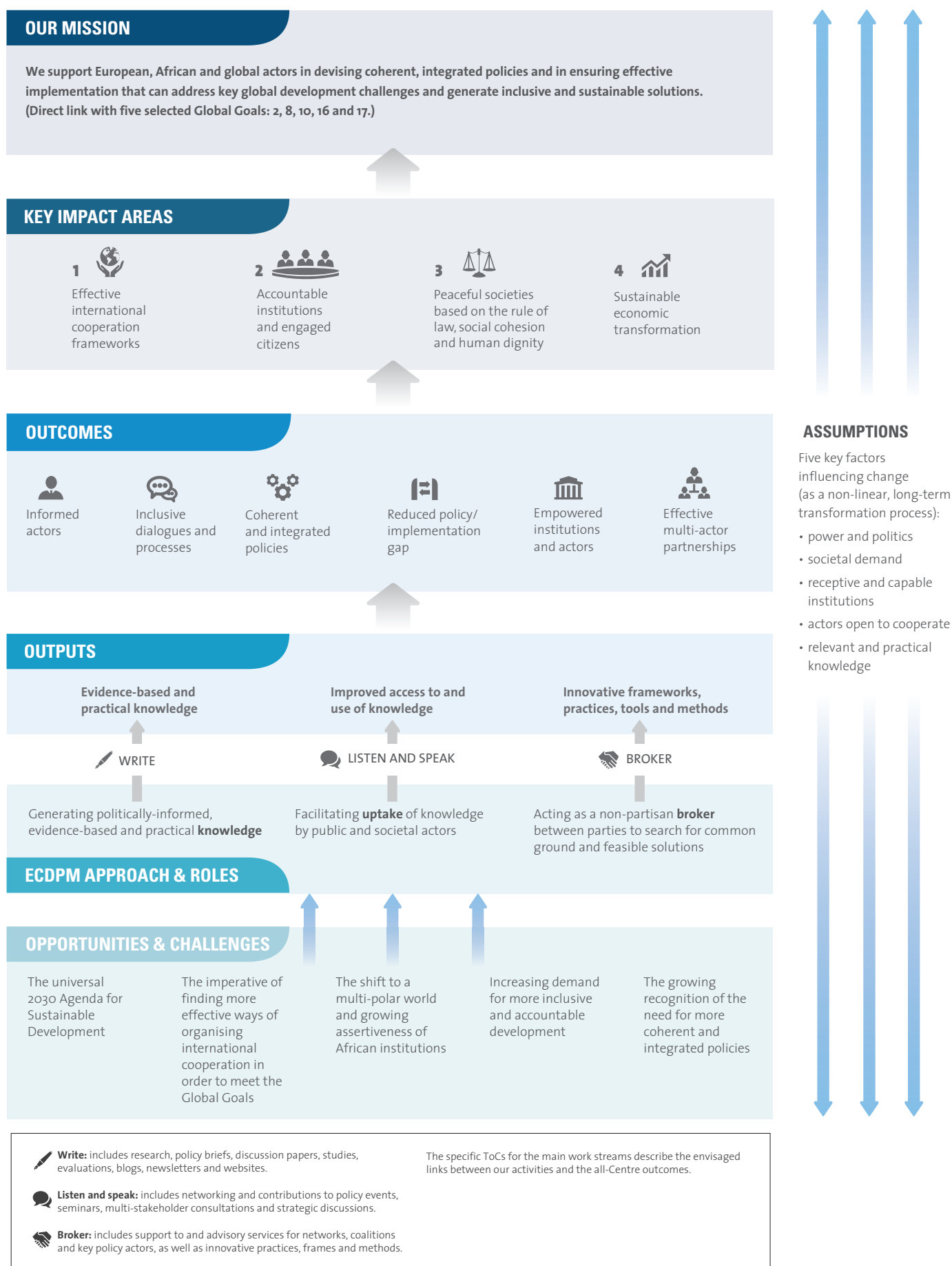
- Strong links with and expertise on European and African states and institutions, the business community, civil society, and development partners
- In-depth knowledge and a track record in providing actionable insights and recommendations
- A wide network of partners and privileged access to key stakeholders and policymakers in the foreign and development policy communities of Europe, Africa and beyond
- A highly-visible multidisciplinary team, experienced in facilitating synergies across policy areas, fostering multi-stakeholder dialogues, and promoting coherence across different levels of intervention, while navigating complex institutional and political environments
- Internal quality processes that encourage the use of common analytical frameworks or cross-cutting issues such as political economy, gender and climate change.

THE ECDPM STRATEGY AND THE 2030 AGENDA

Box 1 ECDPM's strategy is geared mainly to five of the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals:

- **Goal 2** Zero hunger
- **Goal 8** Decent work and economic growth
- **Goal 10** Reduced inequalities
- **Goal 16** Peace, justice, and strong institutions
- **Goal 17** Partnerships for the goals

FIGURE 1: ECDPM THEORY OF CHANGE



For a greater clarity of thinking and sense of purpose, the Centre has devised theories of change for the Centre as a whole (Figure 1) and for each of our main work streams during our strategy process in 2016 (Box 2). In 2017 the latter have been rechecked for continuing relevance, and some have been renewed in light of new information and lessons learnt. In 2019, all Centre theories of change will be fully reviewed in preparation for the mid-term review of the strategy.

ECDPM'S THEORY OF CHANGE APPROACH

Box 2

ECDPM's Centre-wide theory of change visualises how our work contributes to the four key impact areas identified in our 2017-2021 strategy. In addition, each of our main work streams formulates its own theory of change, with more detailed choices aligned with the specificities of the different work streams. These keep our work on track as we move forward and learn lessons. They ensure that our efforts remain closely aligned with our goals and envisaged outcomes.

ECDPM's engagement, activities, and outputs centre on three core roles:

- We undertake policy research and analysis – 'Write'
- We provide policy advice – 'Listen and Speak'
- We bring policy actors together – 'Broker'

We combine these roles, keeping a watchful eye on implementation to ensure that policies work. This requires consideration of power relations (including gender), political and economic interests, and incentives, alongside the bridging of policy domains, given the mutual impacts, overlapping and competing interests. ECDPM engagement through these roles constitutes our pathway to change, contributing to our key outputs: evidence-based and practical knowledge; improved access to and use of knowledge; and innovative frameworks, practices, tools, and methods.

ECDPM facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogues and partnerships to address complex policy issues. We provide politically-sensitive analyses; and we document our knowledge and expertise and communicate these to stakeholders across different policy and practitioner communities in Europe and in Africa. This serves to align the actions of multiple public and private stakeholders towards politically-feasible and coherent goals at different levels of intervention.

Chapter 2 of this Work Plan outlines our programme work. Chapter 3 presents the task forces that ensure cross-programme links and two transversal units, for communications and for learning and quality support. These ensure that programme efforts achieve their full potential. Chapter 4 describes the work and challenges ahead for the Centre's management, including institutional relations, finances, and human resources.

A number of risks can be identified for the year ahead. First, the funding environment continues to be unpredictable. Institutional funding has held up, and this seems likely to continue for another year. There have also been several important programme and project fundraising successes, yet, we have also had a number of disappointments in this latter area over the past year. We will continue to make efforts to strengthen this in the coming years. Other risks, which we will seek to minimise throughout our work, relate to a possible loss of interest in, or reduced appeal of, EU-Africa relations, leading to diminished relevance, resources, and capacity; loss of access to EU and European policymaking circles due to leadership changes, mistrust, or lack of political backing; and lack of access to the African protagonists in Europe-Africa relations, leading to a Eurocentric approach. Also, given current dynamics on the international stage, demand from external stakeholders to develop

timely policy analysis on complex issues may exceed our capacity to deliver. We could find ourselves drawn into excessive externally-funded project contracts, which may conflict with the Centre's overall goal of acting as a policy broker and facilitator between different policy and practice communities. Staffing is another area in which risks can manifest themselves quickly. To minimise these, we must provide opportunities for our employees to take on increasing responsibilities, while remaining prepared to fill staffing gaps quickly if they emerge.

Management is confident, however, that ECDPM has made a good start on its 2017-2021 strategy, particularly in obtaining support from institutional partners and getting the new programmes operating smoothly. For 2018, the central task is solid delivery, as we consolidate each programme's work and move towards the mid-term review of the strategy in 2019. This will also put the Centre in a strong position for a year of political change and renewal of the Union institutions, with Brexit, the appointment of a new College of Commissioners, and the European Parliament elections all occurring in 2019.

2. PROGRAMMES

2.1 EUROPEAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Aim and expected outcomes

This programme focuses on European external action, particularly in relation to international development and Africa. In the next two years, we will pursue the following outcomes:

- Politically informed and adaptive policymaking processes in Europe and Africa
- More inclusive European policy dialogues and international cooperation processes
- More effective, coherent, and integrated European policies to tackle global challenges
- A reduced gap between policy commitments and actual implementation
- European institutions, member states and non-state actors that are better equipped to operate in the EU's established legal, financial, and policy frameworks and effectively contribute to the 2030 Agenda

Context

As the timetable for the UK's exit from the EU accelerates and the official MFF negotiations start, the EU's legitimacy and ability to effect change will be repeatedly challenged. Domestically, EU external action, development, and security policies will continue to be influenced by the reviving but still mixed economic growth within the EU, alongside the challenge of accommodating and resettling refugees, the continued threat of terrorist attacks, and the increasing pressure on NATO. Whether Germany and France will again function as the main motor of European integration is unclear. Internationally, the EU and its member states have seen their influence diminished in a burgeoning multipolar world and in the context of weaker multilateralism and the fallout from the Trump presidency in the United States. Instability and conflict on Europe's doorstep is expected to dominate the EU foreign policy and security agenda into and beyond 2018, with knock-on effects on development policy and spending. EU external action frameworks and tools will need to be continuously adapted and renewed to address these and future challenges. In such a challenging environment, the EU will need to pursue a stronger, more interest-driven agenda abroad while concurrently implementing or at least incorporating the SDGs into EU policy.

In terms of key actors, the programme will seek to engage with relevant EU institutions – such as the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO), the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU delegations, the EU parliamentary committees on Development (DEVE) and Foreign Affairs (AFET), the EU presidencies, and EU member states – while also interacting with other European, African, and global partners.

ECDPM's engagement

The programme's specific added value consists of two elements, which together provide a solid basis for the Centre's support in strengthening EU external action:

- Our in-depth knowledge of EU external action systems, processes, and inter-institutional relations and our track record in providing actionable insights and recommendations
- Our multidisciplinary expertise in areas vital to EU action in Africa, such as foreign policy, diplomacy, governance, development, finance, migration, and conflict prevention

The onus to deliver on our planned outcomes lies with the programme. However, where appropriate we will undertake our activities in partnership with other institutes, especially colleagues at other think tanks, including our fellow members of the European Think Tanks Group.

We have identified the following risks for the programme, which we will seek to minimise:

- Lost or reduced interest in EU development cooperation and foreign policy analysis, leading to diminished programme relevance, resources, and capacity
- Disruption of European external action by Brexit or other internal European difficulties, making planned analytical work difficult to adapt

Focus areas

The programme will focus on three main areas of activity in 2018: integrated EU external action, EU development policy and practice, and the future of ACP-EU relations post-Cotonou.

Integrated EU external action

We will work with stakeholders in pursuit of more coherent and integrated EU external action. Focus areas will correspond with major milestones, such as the outcomes of the 2017 EU-Africa Summit, implementation of the EU Global Strategy and European Consensus on Development, and particularly, the initiation of negotiations on the new EU MFF. We will also follow the European Neighbourhood Policy. We will analyse how political change in Europe impacts policy and funding priorities and focus on challenges preventing more united EU external action for sustainable development, particularly in Africa, seeking to identify potential responses and improvements in EU policies and actions. Our inputs will be designed to strengthen inter-institutional relations among, for example, DEVCO, EEAS, the service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), and EU delegations, as well as the work of EU member states. We will aim to promote better coordination between EU headquarters, delegations and member states.

In terms of geographical focus, we will seek to capitalise on previous work in the Sahel and West Africa, while exploring opportunities to contribute in the Horn of Africa, including through cross-programme collaboration within ECDPM.

EU development policy and practice

Our work in EU development policy and practice will be geared towards achieving higher-impact aid and closer monitoring of policy implementation, to ensure that the new European Consensus on Development is increasingly evidence-based and culturally and gender sensitive. We will pay particular attention to the development-security-humanitarian-migration nexus and the impact of the refugee crisis and terrorist attacks on official development assistance (ODA). We will look at ODA as a resource that is essential but insufficient for financing development, and expand to the wider set of financial and non-financial tools that the EU and member states have to offer for delivering on the 2030 Agenda. We will continue our work on EU programming, including joint engagement of EU institutions and member states. We will closely follow the MFF negotiations and offer evidence and advice on key issues, including traditional funding instruments and new modalities (e.g., trust funds, blending, and the EU External Investment Plan, EIP), also in collaboration with ECDPM colleagues and external partners. In particular, we will focus on opportunities the MFF offers to modernise EU relations and sharpen EU tools for middle income and least-developed countries.

The future of ACP-EU relations post-Cotonou

Drawing on expertise throughout ECDPM, the programme will seek greater understanding of how the changing ACP and dynamics within Europe – such as the EU budget, global and regional preferences, and Brexit – will affect the future of the ACP-EU relationship. We will also look at the feasibility of the changes currently being discussed. Our work will draw on previous analyses and develop new insights, while deepening our engagement with stakeholders to facilitate inclusive discussions and advance the debate based on sound evidence and analysis, as the EU and ACP embark on the difficult negotiation process towards 2020.

2.2 AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS

Aim and expected outcomes

This programme supports strategic African actors in building stronger and more responsive institutions for implementing coherent policies, especially in governance and development. We focus on the capacity of institutions to translate policy into practice, on partnerships, and on financing to empower actors to carry out their agendas. We seek to deepen understanding of how these three dimensions interrelate and influence African actors' abilities to effect change. We also explore responses to resilience challenges, by engaging with actors in Africa and on the EU and international stage. We envisage several outcomes for the upcoming plan period:

- Stronger links between the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) alongside a better grasp of how Africa can tap into financing sources to fund its agenda both regionally and nationally
- Greater ability of African continental and regional institutions to clear bottlenecks in policy implementation through a better understanding of the political economy factors that impede implementation of pan-African governance standards, with a focus on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the AU Commission
- Greater space for dialogues in which actors share perspectives and engage on the three dimensions that are the programme's focus

Context

In 2018, the international spotlight will shine again on the role of effective institutions in managing complex changes in Africa, especially on governance and development. With new leadership in the AU Commission, recent or upcoming key elections, and developmental challenges that threaten democratic consolidation, the need for policy implementation remains high. It will therefore be important to understand what enablers can facilitate implementation of the current ambitions, at the regional and national level. A number of processes will shape Africa's ability to act. One of these is the ongoing reform of the AU. Here, two areas are expected to be particularly key: (1) the link between peace and security and governance to promote stability and (2) improving access to adequate financing to support implementation of both security and development agendas. Our work will address the role of international actors in supporting these processes, including EU partners, which remain key strategic allies for Africa.

ECDPM's engagement

ECDPM's added value in the areas covered by this programme stems from the following:

- Our team's deep tacit and acquired knowledge of the operational context and political dynamics that shape African institutions
- Our strong network in Africa, including a diversity of actors working on the issues we address and the strategic partners we rely upon to strengthen our impact

To achieve the outcomes envisaged, we will build alliances with African think tanks with strong links to African policymakers, such as ACCORD and the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), while partnering with foremost African institutions such as the AU Commission.

The programme faces an array of risks. Two of these will need to be managed particularly carefully to achieve impact:

- The tendency of the current donor landscape and priorities to focus on immediate, politically pressing concerns, which may impact our ability to raise funds for our activities
- The absence of an ECDPM presence in the field in Africa, as our 'do' work will inevitably be affected by lack of proximity to the actors

To mitigate the risk of being perceived as 'too distant', we will rely on partnerships. Our lack of a field presence could affect our fundraising efforts as well, especially when we seek to move beyond research.

Focus areas

In 2018, programme activities will focus on three areas: promoting effective responses to governance challenges in Africa, financing, and partnerships.

Promoting effective responses to governance challenges in Africa

We will seek deeper understanding of what enables governance policies and what hampers their implementation in Africa, particularly to benefit continental actors and

regional institutions and the donors that support governance initiatives in Africa. These activities aim to reduce the implementation gap. Our engagement will hinge on two complementary initiatives. The first is the production of a series of governance studies, some with partner organisations, such as the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). These will analyse the complementarity and coherence of policies formulated at different national, regional and continental implementation levels. The second activity is to stimulate dialogue between the African actors and international partners involved in a chosen policy process. This will involve, on the African side, the AU, the regional economic communities (RECs), civil society coalitions, and think tanks and, on the European side, European institutions and bilateral donors. Our aim here is to stimulate formulation and promote uptake of informed and effective external support strategies that incentivise implementation. Results of this work will form a bridge between our policy engagement and our ambition to broker effective partnerships between African and European actors.

Financing

The programme will do exploratory work on the financing dimension of African policy implementation at both the continental and national level. We will aim to provide regional organisations in Africa, especially the AU, as well as EU partners, knowledge to concretely support the financing agenda in Africa. We will produce politically-informed analysis on the follow-up to the 'Kaberuka Report', on resource mobilisation. Nationally, we will partner with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to investigate the coherence of country policies and institutional responses in the fight against illicit financial flows. These studies will use tested ECDPM methodologies and analytical tools, especially political economy analysis and policy coherence for development.

Partnerships

Our research will delve into the structures of partnerships between Europe and Africa, focusing specifically on the links between policy frameworks, their objectives, and locally-driven initiatives. Whether the topic is financing or coordination of responses, we will seek to better understand the impact of EU-Africa partnerships on achieving agendas set by local actors themselves.

2.3 SECURITY AND RESILIENCE

Aim and expected outcomes

This programme promotes better crisis response, conflict prevention, conflict management, and peacebuilding by the EU and African regional organisations. We focus on conflict-prone and fragile environments and situations of protracted crisis on Europe's doorstep and in Africa. Our work concerns the policy frameworks and institutional arrangements in Europe and Africa for responding to immediate, emerging, and protracted crises. In the coming two years, we will pursue the following outcomes:

- European and African institutional and non-state actors that are better equipped, politically and operationally, to respond to fragility and conflict
- More inclusive and better informed crisis response processes, with enhanced European and African dialogues and cooperation to reduce fragility and prevent conflict
- More effective, coherent, and integrated European policy frameworks for preventing crisis and conflict, particularly in Africa
- More effective partnerships between European and African actors in crisis response, conflict prevention, resilience, and peacebuilding

Context

Nearly half of the world's violent conflicts were in Africa in 2016, and there is little indication of any significant drop in 2017 and 2018. Casualties and deaths did decrease in some crises, such as the Boko Haram-fuelled conflict around Lake Chad. But others experienced a resurgence, such as the conflict in Central African Republic (CAR). Others continue and show little sign of abatement, such as those in Somalia and South Sudan. This mixed and volatile picture underlines the importance of well-honed responses to crises and improved peacebuilding approaches.

Instability in Africa, fuelled by political unrest, governance deficiencies, terrorism, radicalisation, climate change, and migration, continues to concern politicians, policymakers, and practitioners on both continents. Protracted instability raises questions about how policy frameworks and financing instruments can be improved and how security can be linked to development and humanitarian aid. Attention to gender in fragile and conflict-affected areas is another pivotal element in facilitating transformations to stability. Research shows that rape and gender-based violence are particularly widespread in countries with high-intensity conflicts, such as Sudan, South Sudan, CAR, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, prompting the programme to place increased emphasis on gender.

The wider context for this work is also shaped by the UN's 2030 Agenda, the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EU-GS), the EU MFF and external action financing instruments, and the implementation of the APSA as set out in the 2016-2020 APSA Roadmap.

ECDPM's engagement

The added value of the Security and Resilience programme rests on two assets:

- Our solid knowledge of European and African frameworks, approaches, and instruments for dealing with fragility and conflicts, including mediation, peace

support operations, and military and civilian CSDP missions

- Our wide network of European and African stakeholders working on security issues, humanitarian questions, resilience, and development and their interlinkages.

These enable us to engage effectively in policy discussions and hands-on work. Our partnerships with a range of institutes and implementing organisations in Europe and Africa will further enhance our work and outreach.

Focus areas

Our 2018 activities will centre on two broad areas: (1) promoting comprehensive EU approaches to the full conflict cycle and (2) monitoring and assessing APSA implementation.

Promoting comprehensive EU approaches

We will focus on development and implementation of more comprehensive EU frameworks, policies, tools, and financing mechanisms, including partnership modalities and methods of crisis response, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. In particular, in the MFF debate, we will follow closely the question of financing for security in conflict-prone countries. Part of this effort will be geared towards the functioning of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the future role of CSDP missions and operations in EU external action. For this the programme will build on its contribution to the successful Horizon 2020 funded Civilex project from last year. Another area of attention will be the EU efforts on conflict prevention work in line with the EU-GS, that is expected to be on their agenda in 2018. This work has a bearing on all four key impact areas set out in the ECDPM strategy.

Monitoring and assessing APSA implementation

In Africa and internationally, monitoring and evaluation is understood to be a cornerstone for promoting implementation of the APSA Roadmap and facilitating its use as a basis for policy dialogue and achievement of the APSA objectives. Through our trilateral cooperation with the Addis Ababa-based IPSS and Germany's Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), we will focus on development of monitoring capacity within the IPSS and seek to broker better understanding of the APSA's successes and challenges. Working with credible partners in Africa will provide a good foundation for bringing this monitoring and assessment work into the domain of AU policy dialogue and create opportunities for complementary engagement with and around African regional organisations, such as the RECs. Informed dialogue will open new avenues of learning, bringing new perspectives on APSA implementation and better insights among African and international partners on how conflict prevention, resolution, and recovery can best be addressed.

Both focus areas offer scope for deployment of ECDPM's political economy analysis, a focus on gender, and application of ECDPM's research and evaluation expertise. We are already approaching the APSA work from a gender-sensitive perspective, to extract observations and inform policy debates on mediation in conflict situations. Cross-Centre collaboration will continue, especially concerning our work in fragile environments in which all ECDPM programmes have an interest.

2.4 ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

This programme promotes simultaneous progress towards a range of economic, agricultural, and food systems goals across different areas of intervention. ECDPM's largest programme, it encompasses four linked work streams: (1) trade, investment, and finance; (2) food systems and agricultural transformation for food security; (3) private-sector engagement, and (4) regional integration.

(1) Trade, investment and and financing for sustainable development

Aim and expected outcomes

This work stream focuses on the development and implementation of trade, investment, and financing policies by European and African states and regions. The overriding objective is to understand the role of public and private development finance in stimulating initiatives for inclusive, sustainable, and gender-sensitive economic transformation and creation of decent jobs. Three outcomes are envisaged:

- Greater coordination, coherence, and synergies among initiatives and instruments in trade, investment, and development financing, such as the European External Investment Plan (EIP) and the economic partnership agreements (EPAs)
- More effective and inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder approaches linked to the governance of industrial and artisanal mining
- Stronger contributions of European economic diplomacy to sustainable development

Context

The EU's EIP, launched at the 2017 EU-Africa Summit, is intended to help achieve the SDGs while tackling some of the root causes of migration in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood. The EIP seeks to mobilise sustainable financing for economic and social development and to strengthen public and private partnerships. Complementing this are actions by EU member states, such as the German Marshall Plan with Africa. Development finance institutions (DFIs) and multilateral development banks are also actively involved, including the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the African Development Bank, and the World Bank/International Finance Corporation (IFC). Other African development banks have indicated interest as well, such as the West African Development Bank (BOAD), the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), and the Trade and Development Bank (TDB), alongside other international and African initiatives for economic transformation, such as the G20 Compact with Africa.

The coherence and complementarity of approaches, among actors, between instruments and across policies, notably for improving the governance, institutional and regulatory environment as envisaged in the EIP, will be critical to achieve the expected leverage on sustainable, inclusive, and transformative development. For this it will be critical to harness the potential of trade and regional integration as with the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) in Africa foreseen in 2018 and EPA implementation. Another key aspect is promotion of sustainability and gender equity in value chains and EU free trade areas, including for example, in the extractive sector. The review of the EU Aid for Trade Strategy and the emergence of a new EU economic diplomacy offer further opportunities to increase the coherence and complementarity of EU policies and instruments for sustainable and inclusive investment and private-sector engagement.

ECDPM's engagement

ECDPM has a strong reputation and extensive network on trade, investment, financing, and extractive resources policy issues. ECDPM is also working to establish close partnership with a set of African think tanks and private-sector organisations. Besides its extensive network, ECDPM is well respected for its non-partisan and knowledge-based approach, which is critical on issues as contentious as economic interests and globalisation. Risks relate to the potential for institutional rivalry, which could further fragment the EU approach. Institutional and political conservatism is another risk, as it could block opportunities for change.

Focus areas

This work stream has several priorities that can be pursued depending on levels of stakeholder interest and uptake:

- Identifying the development potential and challenges of the EIP. This relates particularly first to the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) and its linkages with other European and international initiatives and second to the synergies between the EIP's three pillars (EFSD, technical assistance, and business environment) and complementarity with other EU policies and instruments
- Understanding and facilitating dialogue on the emerging EU economic diplomacy in terms both of coherence among EU policies and of combining promotion of European commercial interests with geo-economic strategic concerns
- Analysing opportunities and challenges for promoting coherence between EU trade policies and other European external and development policies of both EU institutions and EU member states, as part of a Horizon 2020 project with top European universities and think tanks
- Identifying and facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues on ways that the private sector could better take advantage of trade agreement opportunities (especially along international value chains) at the regional level in Africa and in association with the EPAs in order to make trade more effective, inclusive, sustainable, and gender-sensitive
- Explore how best to inform and engage in policy processes and solutions for natural resources extraction (particularly mining: e.g. gold) that offer transformative dynamics and more inclusive governance at the sub-national, national, and international levels. These could be of particular value in territorial development and mining based industrialisation involving multiple stakeholders.

(2) Food systems, agricultural transformation, and food security

Aim and expected outcomes

This work stream supports the efforts of African stakeholders and international partners to formulate and implement coherent policies and investments for agricultural

transformation and improved food and nutrition security. Focusing on western, eastern and southern Africa, we envisage four outcomes:

- Synergy and coherence between regional initiatives for food security, nutrition, and sustainable food systems
- Regional organisations and value chain stakeholders are better informed on the implications of food-related policies and practices and productive participants in policy processes such as regional and national CAADP initiatives
- More effective multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration between public and private sectors, through establishment of inclusive partnerships between value chain actors, including the most vulnerable, that is, smallholders and women
- Better understanding of the knowledge, policies, and incentives required for more nutritious, sustainable, and climate-resilient food systems in Africa

Context

Eradicating poverty, feeding the world's population, and adapting to climate change require simultaneous and coordinated action on multiple fronts. Improved production and processing will have to go hand in hand with, for example, facilitation of trade between food surplus and deficit areas, greater food systems efficiency, more nutrient-rich diets, and more inclusive climate resilience policies. Effective regional cooperation could make an important contribution, together with better and more inclusive partnerships between public and private stakeholders.

One lesson ECDPM learnt during its 2012-2016 strategy period is that effective multi-actor partnerships and reduced policy implementation gaps can be achieved only by focusing on specific value chains, countries, and regions. Key actors, factors, and processes differ from value chain to value chain, and from one country or group to another. Our work on CAADP and regional integration led to a better understanding of bottlenecks to sustainable and inclusive agricultural value chain development and intra-regional trade, that can be used to help resolve bottlenecks in western, eastern, and southern Africa.

Development cooperation, economic diplomacy, and multilateral sustainability frameworks are increasingly linked. However, we still lack assurance that regional cooperation and public-private partnerships for food security are effective, not only for boosting productivity but also for maintaining food systems sustainability. We will thus continue our new line of work on nutrition and on the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of food value chains in Africa. This will touch on, for example, climate-smart agriculture (CSA) and involve support for key food and environmental multilateral organisations and processes. We will seek, in particular, to foster the application of realistic and inclusive approaches to trade, investment, and public-private partnerships.

ECDPM's engagement

Our value added for effective engagement in these processes lies particularly in our partnerships and networks. We will be consolidating our long-term partnerships with NEPAD, the African RECs, regional farmer organisations, private-sector organisations, development partners, and others, while seeking new collaborators, especially for the more innovative sustainable food systems work. For these, we will partner with, for example, universities, the CGIAR research centres, the Rome-based UN agencies, and specialised environment and climate think tanks.

We will continue to use and refine proven methodologies, such as political economy analysis, policy coherence for development, and gender-sensitive approaches. Women are key in decision-making on agriculture and food systems, yet access to resources, such as land, money, and other assets still tends to be unequal. We will integrate gender perspectives into our research, dialogue, and partnership-building activities around food security, value chains, and sustainable agriculture. For example, we will be more explicit about existing gender imbalances and we will seek to address them in the policy measures we propose and the dialogue we facilitate to promote their uptake.

Focus areas

In 2018 we will focus on three principal areas of work:

Sustainable food systems

This will include assistance to governments, RECs, farmer organisations, and other private-sector organisations, as well as development partners, to integrate economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and climate-smart options into food policies. We will investigate incentive systems for small-scale farmers, SMEs and larger companies, to stimulate them to scale up investments in CSA. We will continue to support the sustainable food systems processes of the Rome-based agencies – particularly the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA), FAO and IFAD. In a consortium with Italian universities, we will work on multidisciplinary research and multi-stakeholder policy dialogue around better integration of neglected and underutilised species in East African food systems, to enhance their sustainability.

Regional value chains in West Africa

We will strengthen the inclusive development dimension of regional trade facilitation by seeking synergies with regional agricultural value chain programmes led by organisations like ECOWAS (e.g., its ‘rice offensive’). We will facilitate frank, regionally-oriented, public-private dialogues that bridge policy areas in a bid to make infrastructure corridor initiatives work better for inclusive food value chains and intra-regional trade. We will advise key development partners on how they might proactively support sustainable value chain development in West Africa, for example, through ODA, financial instruments for private-sector development, and engagement of the European private sector.

Regional value chains in eastern and southern Africa

We will support the design and implementation of multi-stakeholder platforms for regional value chain development. These platforms will target trade and investment bottlenecks in order to stimulate real buy-in from the private sector. This work will build on lessons from the dairy sector in East Africa, where special effort was made to foster ‘local’ enablers to drive multi-stakeholder initiatives. We will support COMESA in finalising and implementing its CAADP Regional Agricultural Investment Plan. Finally, we will broker informal dialogues with development partners on support for regional investment programmes via ODA instruments, such as the 11th EDF.

(3) Private-sector engagement

Aim and expected outcomes

This work stream seeks to enhance the potential of private sector actors to contribute to sustainable development in Africa. Through engagement and research, it fosters and facilitates more effective European and African policies, approaches, and instruments for leveraging private initiatives for Africa. Three key outcomes are envisaged:

- Evidence-based practical insights enabling actors to (re)design and implement effective private-sector engagement policies, approaches, and instruments
- A reduced gap between policies for private-sector engagement and their implementation
- More effective multi-stakeholder dialogues and collaboration for sustainable private-sector development

Context

The 2030 Agenda emphasises the role of private actors as a development partner and source of funding. In line with this, African and European policymakers have developed new policy frameworks and instruments to support private-sector engagement for sustainable development.

Many African governments seek to improve their business environment and attract domestic and foreign investment to create more and better jobs. This is part of national economic transformation and development strategies, and is also reflected in regional policies and the AU's Agenda 2063.

The EU and its member states have in place a range of development cooperation and commercially-oriented instruments to stimulate inclusive and sustainable investment in Africa. In some cases, these are framed as part of strategies to address the root causes of migration. With the new European Consensus on Development the EU and its member states committed to further increase their cooperation with the private sector, particularly through the EIP, and to support responsible business practices and management of supply chains, while also helping to create a more business-friendly environment that respects international standards of human rights.

In this context, stakeholders have pushed for the further implementation, development, and improvement of private-sector engagement tools. Our engagement in this arena will consider the diversity among actors, from African and European policymakers and SMEs, to large multinationals and CSOs that operate at different levels of value chains.

ECDPM's engagement

ECDPM is uniquely positioned for a key role in knowledge generation and sharing in this field, which is still often dominated by ideological and institutional divides, lack of evidence, insufficient policy coherence and donor coordination, and implementation challenges. Furthermore, we are strongly placed to help stakeholders understand and take into account

political economy dimensions in private-sector engagement efforts. We will capitalise on our growing reputation as experts in this field, both within Europe (e.g., among the EU institutions, EU member states, and non-state actors) and among African stakeholders.

Focus areas

This work stream will focus on key issues in private-sector engagement, such as: (1) identifying and measuring results, (2) ensuring additionality, (3) harnessing synergies and linkages between private-sector engagement approaches and instruments, (4) analysing the diversity of private-sector actors' capacities and needs (including power imbalances within value chains), and (5) strengthening public-private dialogue and cooperation to promote socially and environmentally responsible business practices and a more enabling and sustainable business environment.

In 2018, particular attention will be paid to multi-stakeholder approaches to responsible business conduct. This will build on previous ECDPM work on business-CSO partnerships. Our engagement will cover different levels, from local, in-country partnerships to higher-level partnerships involving the EU and EU member states. The work will help actors effectively engage in and back such partnerships, in line with the new European Consensus on Development and the Council Conclusions on the EU and Responsible Global Value Chains.

Our work related to the business environment in Africa will explore how public-private dialogue can inform regulatory reforms. This will involve, among other things, closely following implementation of the EIP, in particular, its third pillar, which targets the business environment.

We will integrate, but not focus on, gender issues, given the often distinct roles, opportunities, and challenges of men and women in economic sectors. This work will help key stakeholders promote gender-sensitive private-sector engagement policies, approaches, and instruments.

(4) Regional integration

Aim and expected outcomes

This work stream centres on the political economic realities of regional integration and cooperation in Africa. It focuses on both regional organisations and on regional market integration dynamics through regional value chains and corridor development. Two outcomes are expected:

- Thematic policy briefs and 'deep dives' on topics related to trade, regional corridors, and regional value chains
- A shift in discussions on regional integration from broad regional strategies to more politically feasible and targeted approaches

Context

The need to apply political economy thinking in development policy for regional integration is increasingly recognised but hard to achieve. Most work on trade facilitation, corridors, regional integration, and industrial policy has focused on the technical aspects of policy design. There is little explicit acknowledgement of the tensions between local, national, and regional economic imperatives, government commitments, elite interests, and the role of donor support. This has undermined policy effectiveness. Applying the political economy approach requires frameworks for systematising information as well as detailed analyses of the actors and factors that affect regional dynamics, including the gender dimension. Discussion around these issues also needs to be facilitated.

The target audience for this work stream is policymakers working on regional integration in Africa, whether from a country or a regional perspective. It will also involve external partners supporting regional initiatives and practitioners promoting the application of political economy thinking to development policy more widely.

ECDPM's engagement

Beyond analysis, ECDPM's five-lens political economy approach offers added value in our brokerage role. Political economy analysis training for donor organisation staff (e.g., the European Commission and the Capacity4Dev platform) and CSOs has refined our approach as a workshop tool. The key objective now is to bring that approach to organisations in Africa, building particularly on relations from on-going efforts within all ECDPM programmes and work streams.

A risk associated with political economy analysis is that studies may be perceived as overly critical. Our process-based approach aims to reduce this risk, as analyses are aimed more at triggering discussion than at seeking validation.

Focus areas

Because this work stream aims to change policymaker thinking and behaviour, its pathway to impact is difficult to define precisely. We will seek openings in both ongoing and future projects to conduct research that can serve as a basis for discussion and facilitation to change mindsets.

The major activity for 2018 remains the continuing 'PEDRO' project, on the Political Economy Dynamics of Regional Organisations. Focusing on 17 African regional organisations across multiple policy areas, the project's more than 30 studies investigate the political traction of these organisations, their member states' interests, and specific sectoral issues. The coming year will also see completion of the so-called 'deep dive' analyses of the CFTA, regional value chains, and the regional water-energy-development nexus. Additional work will feed into donor dialogues around regional trade facilitation in West Africa and the SADC regional industrialisation process through work for the World Bank, as well as for the SADC Secretariat itself. The work in this stream is in synergy with other weak streams, particularly those looking at agriculture in West and East Africa.

2.5 MIGRATION

Aim and expected outcomes

This programme focuses on the governance of migration and mobility, aiming to maximise migration's development potential and address the challenges these concerns pose within Europe-Africa cooperation. The programme envisages four main outcomes:

- An improved understanding and evidence base for addressing migration-related development challenges and opportunities, to inform European policy and partnerships with the AU, the RECs, and African countries
- Enhanced links between the different sectors and policy domains that touch upon migration strategies in the context of Europe-Africa relations
- Politically-informed policymaking processes on migration and displacement governance in Europe and in Africa
- A shift away from the current short-term, security- and crisis-oriented approach to managing migration, towards a more positive narrative and forward-looking policies embedded in global development frameworks

Context

The complexity of migration underlines the strong interdependence between development challenges and domestic concerns in Europe and in Africa. Migration has become a top priority in the EU. This is demonstrated by the profusion of strategies and action plans adopted, such as the EU Agenda for Migration, the EU Action Plan on Return, the Valletta Action Plan, the EU Trust Fund for Africa, and various migration compacts. Migration has also emerged as a prominent theme in the post-Cotonou, and the European budget discussions. One challenge has been to fully inform these processes with migration realities and balance competing security, development, and humanitarian demands. Moreover, European and African actors differ in their narratives, approaches, and perceptions of migration. Bridging these differences is important to strengthen partnerships and craft strategies and policies that exhibit a 'good fit' in Europe-Africa engagement. Moreover, engagement between Europe and Africa on migration is taking place against the backdrop of negotiations at the UN on a Global Compact on Refugees and a Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and a number of continental and regional African policy processes addressing migration and displacement.

ECDPM's engagement

We are a small programme with multidisciplinary expertise and unique knowledge of the approaches and views on migration among actors in Europe and Africa. In our work on migration and mobility, we will seek collaboration with partners such as the European Think Tanks Group and other research entities, as well as other in-house programmes.

We identify four risks, which we will seek to minimise:

- Narrow prioritisation in migration and refugee issues reflecting short-term interests that give little scope for influencing knowledge and situational understanding
- Narrow focus or diminished public support in EU circles could undermine funding for broader work on migration and development
- Lack of visibility could undermine our recognition as a legitimate actor in work on migration and its development dimensions
- Political tensions and obstacles could hamper progress

Focus areas

We will continue to focus on three main themes, on which we will strengthen our engagement and lay groundwork for future endeavours:

EU international cooperation on migration

The programme will monitor and analyse migration's impact on European aid, development cooperation, and aid programming practices. We will address the coherence of EU external action on migration, particularly integrated approaches of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in situations of displacement. We will also look at implementation of EU migration compacts, the Partnership Framework, and the Valletta Action Plan.

Migration and development agendas in Africa

We will conduct research on institutions, policy processes, and practices related to migration and development in Africa, including the AU and RECs. We will also touch upon the potential of regional integration and migration-related cooperation for fostering economic development. We will examine how migration and displacement issues connect to and are integrated with different policy sectors. The outcomes of these activities will be relevant for both European and African actors and promote comprehensive and balanced approaches to migration on both continents.

The global agenda on migration

We will explore the engagement of EU and AU institutions and member states in discussions at the UN. A particular focus under this theme will be the role of migration in relation to other themes that are part of the global agenda, such as food security, trade, private-sector development, climate change and gender. This will feed into policy-relevant research products and policy dialogues to foster debate.

3. CROSS-PROGRAMME WORK

3.1 TASK FORCES

Europe-Africa Relations task force

The Europe-Africa Relations task force provides internal reflection and coordination of ECDPM's many activities with a bearing on Europe-Africa relations. In the coming period, the task force will follow up the Fifth Africa-EU Summit in 2017, supporting implementation of some of the key priorities emerging from the key themes of the Summit, including: youth and employment, governance, peace and security, resilience and investment.

The position of Africa in the post-Cotonou negotiations that start in late 2018 will be a major area of work where the Centre can build on its expertise on both EU-Africa relations and on the ACP-EU Partnership. Potential for further ECDPM activities and products on this will be reassessed after the AU-EU Summit and the AU's own Summit in January 2018. Equally the question of how EU-AU cooperation will be supported from the future EU Budget (e.g. pan-African instrument) and/or EDF (e.g. Africa Peace Facility) will be an important aspect of the Centre's work on the MFF that will cut across several of the Centre's programmes.

North Africa task force

The North Africa task force (NATF) seeks to capitalise on ECDPM expertise in knowledge brokerage and dialogue facilitation, our knowledge of the EU context, which will help us better understand the drivers behind EU policies and approaches in North Africa, and our ability to foster informed debate, both in partner countries and in Europe, on their effectiveness.

We know from experience that a multi-dimensional pathway needs to be followed to effectively deliver on our objectives as a knowledge institution. So we will rely on a mix of approaches:

- Close collaboration with local partners to deepen our knowledge of the local context and help key partners translate knowledge into policy instruments (e.g. through joint knowledge production, joint events, and networking with partners like the Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission)
- Use of tested political economy analysis and other methodologies for dialogue facilitation
- Contributions to purposeful EU external action in the region at key policy moments

Over the period up to the Centre's mid-term review of strategy in 2019, the NATF aims to establish and deliver a solid portfolio of work that brings together initiatives across all ECDPM programmes. The prime objectives are:

- To encourage and support European engagement strategies that are better informed, connected to local dynamics, balanced, and result in mutually beneficial cooperation with the countries and citizens of the region
- To support local actors in managing and effectively using multi-stakeholder processes
- Where appropriate, our support will cover EU policy frameworks seeking to strengthen linkages between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa

Gender task force

The Gender task force was established for an initial period of two years (2017-2018) to support implementation of a Centre-wide strategy for integrating gender across ECDPM's work and operations. The task force will support implementation of this strategy at the institutional and organisational levels.

At the institutional level, the task force will help the programmes integrate a gendered approach, identifying key topics on which gender-sensitive analysis is paramount. It will provide examples of policies that relate to or integrate gender equality and gender mainstreaming and point out development interventions that have led to transformational and sustainable change. Finally, it will build staff capacities to engage critically with issues of gender and gender mainstreaming through training, events, and publications.

At the organisational level, the task force will implement gender-sensitive practices, for example, in human resources, and promote external initiatives contributing to gender equality.

3.2 LEARNING AND QUALITY SUPPORT

To maintain the excellence of Centre outputs, ECDPM needs strong linkages between its different areas of work, as well as the capacity to adapt to opportunities and challenges in its environment. The Learning and Quality Support (LQS) unit has three cross-Centre functions:

- Supporting the strategic planning, theory of change, monitoring, and evaluation cycle
- Providing practices, processes, and technologies to capture and share knowledge for efficient and effective programme work
- Providing expertise and horizontal quality support within the organisation

Horizontal quality support will consist of the following:

- Providing in-house support for thinking and working politically by integrating a political economy approach in projects and programmes and promoting it among external partners
- Encouraging multi-stakeholder approaches including a role for civil society where appropriate in Centre activities
- Facilitating the work of the Gender task force

- Strengthening the skills that underpin the three core roles of the Centre ('write', 'listen and speak', and 'broker') in collaboration with other units and the programmes
- Encouraging in-house efforts to mainstream climate change

LQS hosts two work streams of value to the Centre as a whole:

- The *policy coherence for development* work stream enhances the conceptual solidity and operational effectiveness of activities related to integrated policy and policy coherence for sustainable development as a means to achieve the 2030 Agenda
- The *territorial development* work stream promotes effective external support strategies for locally-owned development dynamics, building on past work related to decentralisation, local authorities, and the agency of civil society and local governance in development

Focus areas

The Centre has introduced a systematic approach to learning about the complex change dynamics it engages in. All work streams have developed a 'theory of change' on their expected contributions to change trajectories and assumptions about outputs and outcomes. Over time, these assumptions will be tested and the theories of change reviewed.

* The International Aid Transparency Initiative seeks to publish data on development cooperation in a standard format in one online catalogue to improve the transparency of aid.

In 2018, LQS will support the internal review and learning processes envisaged in the theory of change approach. This process will form the basis for the Centre's annual reporting and ensure that results are adequately communicated to stakeholders, including in a manner compliant with the standard of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).*

At the organisational level, a new contacts database and revised Intranet will be introduced, as well as more structured identification of lessons learned across the Centre. With the programmes, we will work towards integrating knowledge management into individual projects. We will also provide expertise to partner organisations regarding communities of practice and knowledge management strategy development.

On innovation, LQS will operationalise the newly-established Innovation Fund, to promote experimentation beyond the Centre's planned work streams. LQS will work with staff to develop Innovation Fund proposals and support those approved by management in implementation.

Box 3

EMBRACING POLITICAL ECONOMY AS THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

Development practitioners and international relations experts have come to appreciate the importance of power and politics in development. They increasingly question overly technocratic and aid-centric responses to development challenges that are in fact deeply political in nature. Technocratic approaches seek to transplant 'best-practice' institutions and policies associated with good governance, rule of law, multi-party democracy, and free markets from rich countries to poorer ones. Such transplants typically fail. ECDPM analyses how distributions of power and institutions interact with the incentive environment of different actors – especially political elites – to shape state-society relations and bargaining. The Centre promotes a dual political economy agenda. First, it supports efforts to think politically about development challenges and change dynamics. It does this by tool development, participating in the Thinking and Working Politically Community of Practice, and engaging in policy-to-practice research programmes. Second, it emphasises the need to alter ways of 'doing development'. One major ECDPM work stream that illustrates the Centre's

political economy approach is that on regional organisations and regional dynamics in Africa. ECDPM has created space within the organisation to effectively implement this dual agenda. It recognises that there are organisational and institutional hurdles to overcome within the Centre and among development partners, sponsors, and partners, for a host of reasons. In-house political economy work will involve personalised training to staff, as well as assistance to programmes to support more politically-informed approaches in work with partners. Some of the hard work involves interrogating unrealistic assumptions about political and developmental change. This implies revising down ambitions and embracing non-linear ways of developing politically smart engagement strategies; that is, strategies that prioritise locally-led efforts to find solutions to domestically identified problems.

3.3 COMMUNICATIONS

Aim and strategy

Effective communication is a critical part of shaping policy and practice. It ensures that relevant information gets to the right people on time. We share all of ECDPM's original research through a variety of channels to a mainly European and African audience. Four principles guide Centre communications:

- *Coherence.* ECDPM communications are in line with the Centre's overall strategy and complement the work done throughout the Centre
- *Bespoke.* We develop programme communication strategies to target the specific needs and audiences of the individual programmes
- *Integration.* Communication efforts are integrated into the research process from the start
- *Long-term.* Our communication activities are planned and analysed with a medium- to long-term policy change perspective.

We will translate each principle into a specific approach and series of activities that increases the effectiveness of our work, particularly in the areas we hope to have the most impact. To this end, between October and November of each calendar year we will begin careful selection of Centre and programme priorities for the following year. This selection will help us focus our activities. We will devote a substantial portion of our efforts to projects and publications that are instrumental in achieving priority outcomes.

Focus areas

The communications and publications team will

- Strengthen the ECDPM brand and ensure that it is consistent throughout our activities and products
- Re-evaluate our website, publications, magazine, blogs, and social media to ensure that our work represents the ECDPM brand and strategy
- Create and implement targeted communication strategies for each programme
- Strengthen our planning and monitoring practices to ensure that communications is an integral part of ECDPM research
- Develop a new media strategy with a regional and topical focus in which we pay particular attention to African media
- Build strategic partnerships with other organisations, media, and institutions to increase our visibility and secure new sources of funding Work with the LQS and IT teams on development of a new contacts database
- In cooperation with other departments, we will strengthen internal communications, continually assess organisational needs, and develop a new Intranet.

4. CENTRE MANAGEMENT, COMPETENCIES AND SUPPORT

4.1 INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Aim and expected results

The Institutional Relations and Partnerships unit helps the Centre increase and diversify 'smart' multi-annual funding resources, strategically aligned to our mandate and with a strong results and impact potential. It also facilitates partnerships, networks, and alliance-building with governmental and non-governmental entities in Europe and Africa and beyond. In the coming period we will work towards three outcomes:

- Increased recognition of ECDPM as a non-partisan facilitator of dialogue and source of practical research and analysis in Europe, Africa, and the ACP and on the global stage
- Partnerships and alliances equipped to address and accomplish the complex and ambitious 2030 Agenda
- A solid institutional culture for fundraising within ECDPM, with diversified institutional funding and programme and project funding that enables the Centre to consolidate and strengthen its roles and impact.

Context

ECDPM has done relatively well over the years in attracting flexible multi-annual institutional funding from a number of EU member states (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Sweden) and Switzerland. This support has enabled us to act as an independent 'think and do' tank and broker of EU-Africa and EU-ACP relations. It is our ambition to preserve this unique funding structure, while remaining aware that in an increasingly volatile funding context, characterised by growing Euroscepticism, 're-nationalisation' of development cooperation, more conditional support, and increasingly bureaucratic accountability requirements, a diversification of partnerships and sources of funding is necessary.

External partners

We will seek to expand and strengthen our partnerships and networks with a range of actors:

- The AU, African RECs, the AfDB and African think tanks, policy research institutes, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- The EU institutions, including the EU Commission, EEAS, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, EU member states, and a variety of European NGOs
- The EU presidencies: Bulgaria and Austria in 2018 and Romania and Finland in 2019
- Global players including the UN agencies, the Organisation for Economic

Cooperation and Development (OECD), Australia, BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), Canada, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and the United States

With these partners, we will profile ourselves as a relevant and informed partner on global and European international cooperation and Europe-Africa relations.

Focus areas

Our 2017-2021 strategy aims to appeal to a more diverse group of funders, to bWe will also explore relationships with new institutions such as the AfDB and the German Federal Ministry for Development (BMZ). Through the Department for International Development (DFID), we will step up our actions to keep the UK on board as a major programme funder in the context of Brexit. We will continue to invest in diversification of our external funding base with funding from new donors, including bilateral executing agencies, DFIs, foundations, and research funds. Last, we will seek improved access to a wider selection of EU funding from the European Commission – particularly via DEVCO and the DGs for Trade and Research – among other promising EU institutions.

Institutional funding

Our privileged, multi-annual institutional partnership with nine EU member states and Switzerland has been the cornerstone of ECDPM's way of working. Our longstanding partners fully subscribe over multiple years to ECDPM's mandate, five-year strategy, and work plans. This enables us to perform our role as facilitator, information and analysis provider, broker, capacity builder, and networker. The earmarking of a small envelope for tailored service delivery has contributed to the success of this formula. It helps us build solid partnerships that go beyond 'donor-recipient' or 'consultant-client' relationships, while increasing the Centre's policy relevance. We will strive to consolidate this smart funding modality and optimise its alignment with our core business. For the 2018 budget and in the subsequent years of our 2017-2021 strategy, we aim for a funding package with this flexible element of at least 50%.

Supply-driven funding

ECDPM will invest more in accessing programme and project funding based on our own offerings. This 'second best funding option' requires us to prepare a regular 'pipeline' of research and brokerage proposals for submission to potentially interested donors. By doing so, we will more systematically target specific departments or thematic units within donor agencies, alongside specialised funding agencies and development foundations. We aim to ensure supply-driven programme and project funding of up to 25% of our annual budgets in the 2017-2021 period.

Demand-led funding

We will better equip ECDPM's programmes to take advantage of demand-led funding opportunities. Here, donors set the terms and conditions via, for example, tenders for evaluations, studies, and facilitation work. We aim for demand-led programmes and

4.2 YOUNG INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONALS

The Young International Professionals (YIP) programme provides talented Africans the opportunity to join ECDPM for one year and gain experience and exposure to international cooperation policy and practice. The YIP programme will contribute to the Centre's mission by building a pool of African professionals well versed in EU-Africa cooperation, by providing African perspectives to enrich Centre analyses, and by fostering stronger collaboration with partner institutes and peer organisations.

In 2018, we will develop and implement a targeted YIP programme fundraising strategy. The programme selection process, cooperation agreements, and communication strategy will also be put in place. Two or three YIPs will join the Centre during the year. A collaboration with the Advanced Master in International Development programme of Radboud University Nijmegen will be explored.

4.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

To retain staff, the Centre must cultivate an environment of inspiration, teamwork, and personal growth. For this, we have identified a number of human resources objectives for the coming period:

- Succession planning within the leadership team and middle management. The Centre will promote advancement of staff over external hires. We will look at the internal pipeline and formulate development and training plans to enable promotions whenever opportunities arise
- A review of our location policy and employment conditions and contracts, to respond to staff requests to be based in Brussels whilst balancing the needs of the Centre and other requirements
- Enhancement of our already modernised competency-based management system, including a continuous feedback loop to fully embed it within the organisation
- Design and introduction of a system to prevent accumulation of unspent leave days, carefully balancing the needs of our staff with financial liabilities
- Further enhancement of our effectiveness by seeking optimal IT tools, reviewing agreements with external vendors, and maintaining an ongoing dialogue with staff, providing support and coaching where needed.

4.4 MANAGEMENT

Improving Centre management continues to be a priority. We will continue to invest in the two main fora for management: the Management Team and the Programme Management Group to ensure these operate efficiently and effectively, and encourage new management talent in the Centre.

In the coming years senior management roles will need to be taken over by younger staff as a consequence of retirement and reduced working hours. The foreseen succession plan for leadership positions will be taken further and developed so that steps can be taken towards a smooth transition. A parallel aim of the process is to demonstrate to talented staff that internal mobility is available, for encouragement and motivation.

Management has set a clear ambition to promote more flexible and cross-programme work. All programmes are encouraged to link up with others in their activities. The Centre's three task forces also bring together the various disciplines in house to achieve specific results. The relevance and effectiveness of these flexible working modalities will be further strengthened in 2018 and 2019.

The Head of the Finance and Operations will complete the ongoing review of the Centre's finance and administration processes in the plan period. The newly appointed external auditor will assist, where possible, in this process and advise management on best practice.

Following the Board performance review in 2017, improvements will be made in Board and BEC proceedings where required. We will seek ways for Board members, with their expertise, authority, and networks, to become even more engaged with the programme work of the Centre. This will increase the value of the programmes and the Centre overall.

Finally, based on work in previous years, we will conclude the discussion on establishing an ECDPM office in Addis Ababa to strengthen the Centre's relevance and support to the AU and institutions such as the African RECs.



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