

## All for One or Free-for-All?

### Early experiences in EU joint programming

Greta Galeazzi, Damien Helly and Florian Krätke<sup>1</sup>

Joint programming, an ambitious programming modality of the European Union's (EU) collective development aid<sup>2</sup>, is being launched in the middle of an enduring economic and financial crisis in Europe. The EU is struggling with its global image while its aid is being put under pressure with member states' governments also increasingly forced to show results of aid spending to their own national constituency. In such a context, joint programming it could be argued present some evident benefits: it is aimed at ensuring better coordination between the EU institutions' and the member states' development aid, thus reducing duplication and fragmentation of aid and increasing its effectiveness. Developing one country strategy document for the EU donors' assistance can furthermore contribute to forging a more coherent and coordinated EU external action post-Lisbon – beyond the practical benefits of such, this sends an important political signal that the EU institutions and its member states seek to draw on their shared strengths and similarities in engaging with third countries. The initiative, already trialled in Haiti and South Sudan in previous years, is being implemented in a number of other countries with Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Laos and Rwanda as notable early examples, and will be replicated in over forty other countries during the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020).

Joint programming is still in its initial stages, but is experiencing significant momentum since the last two years, which offers opportunities to assess the benefits and limitations of the initiative, test its added value and explore opportunities for stakeholders to shape the process. This Briefing Note looks at the rationale of joint programming, and what this means in practice at headquarters and country level, based on a limited number of interviews<sup>3</sup> with key stakeholders and an analysis of key documents. It identifies incentives and obstacles encouraging or discouraging EU institutions and member states from engaging in it, with the caveat that the process is given shape by country conditions. An overview of the role and reactions of partner countries to joint programming is also provided. The note ends by pointing at the main challenges ahead for joint programming.

### 1. Why joint programming?

Joint programming is a process through which the European Commission (EC), the European External Action Service (EEAS), and EU member states jointly determine a development response strategy for a particular partner country and draft a joint country strategy document, ideally to replace bilateral country strategies. The process also involves decisions on 'who does what' through a division of labour of sectors among donors which takes into account the EU donors' commitments to concentrate their aid in a maximum of three sectors in each developing country they choose to support, agreed back in 2007. Joint modalities for

<sup>1</sup> The authors are grateful for feedback and inputs received from Andrew Sherriff, James Mackie, and Jeske van Seters yet any opinions and errors remain those of the authors.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this Briefing Note, 'EU donors' is used to describe the EU institutions and the member states.

<sup>3</sup> Interviews were carried out with fourteen stakeholders from the EU institutions, member states and civil society in field and headquarters positions during the period from March to May 2013.

delivering aid, including pooled funds, co-financing or delegated cooperation, are not necessarily part of the joint programming exercise.

The concept was first mentioned in the Report of the EU Ad Hoc Working Party on Harmonisation<sup>4</sup> (2004), in the European Consensus on Development<sup>5</sup> (2005) and in the Council Conclusions on the Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness (2009)<sup>6</sup> and was already trialled in Haiti (2010)<sup>7</sup> and South Sudan (2011)<sup>8</sup>. Joint programming is being promoted as it is seen as a modality that can contribute to the implementation of the aid effectiveness agenda and to meeting the commitments of the 2005 Paris Declaration<sup>9</sup>. In particular, having one strategy for the EU donors in lieu of multiple strategies is expected to enhance the partner country's ownership through better donor alignment to the country's development objectives and plan, as well as to ensure better cost-effectiveness by reducing bureaucratic procedures for the partner government and EU donors alike. Joint programming is also envisaged to promote the division of labour among EU donors, with the aim to avoid duplication and fragmentation of aid and promote complementarity. Beyond this, the joint strategy has the potential to ensure a coherent engagement of the EU and member states' with the partner countries according to a shared set of priorities.

Development being an area of shared parallel competence<sup>10</sup> with the member states, a notable challenge for the European Union has been to ensure the coordination of development aid activities of the EC and the member states. This was the focus of the 2007 Code of Conduct on Complementarity and the Division of Labour and Complementarity, the Operational Framework, and the subsequent Fast Track Initiative on the Division of Labour (FTDoL) which aimed at implementing the Code. While it helped create a basis for EU aid coordination and some reprogramming of donors' assistance was noted in those countries, the latter was often driven by headquarters' decisions on aid portfolios rather than in response to the donor mapping and division of labour exercises<sup>11</sup>.

In response to the financial and economic crisis, some EU donors have sought to reduce their aid spending while concurrently maximising its effectiveness and impact – there is thus new momentum for donor coordination and joint programming to reduce aid transaction costs and increase aid effectiveness<sup>12</sup>. This is reflected in the position agreed by the Council of the European Union for the 2011 Busan Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which emphasised EU joint programming as a means to contribute to the internationally-agreed aid effectiveness goals<sup>13</sup>, and the EU's new policy framework for EU development and cooperation<sup>14</sup>, the Agenda for Change, endorsed by the member states in May 2012 2012 albeit nuancing the Commission's vision which mentioned also joint operation implementation modalities.

## 2. EU joint programming: what it is and how it works

As it is set out in the Council position for Busan, joint programming includes:

1. An analysis of and response to the partner country's development strategy and situation;
2. A division of labour of sectors between the donors;
3. Financial allocations per sector and per donor.

<sup>4</sup> See Ad Hoc Working Party on Harmonisation (2004).

<sup>5</sup> Joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union. 2006.

<sup>6</sup> See Council of the EU (2009).

<sup>7</sup> See République d'Haïti – Union Européenne. (2012).

<sup>8</sup> See South Sudan (2011-2013).

<sup>9</sup> See OECD (2005)

<sup>10</sup> Article 4(4) of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU) recognises that in the areas of development cooperation and humanitarian aid "the Union shall have competence to carry out activities and conduct a common policy; however, the exercise of that competence shall not result in Member States being prevented from exercising theirs". See European Union (2007). See also [http://europa.eu/lisbon\\_treaty/faq/](http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/faq/)

<sup>11</sup> See Buercky and Knill (2009).

<sup>12</sup> See Bigsten et al (2011).

<sup>13</sup> See Council of the EU (2011).

<sup>14</sup> See European Commission (2011).

Joint programming was launched in early 2012 in a first generation of five countries – Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Laos and Rwanda<sup>15</sup> – and has started more recently in other countries. These countries were selected on the basis of the reports of the EU Heads of Missions<sup>16</sup> – a joint assessment of the feasibility of the exercise by EU delegations and member states – and building on the findings of a 2011 study on joint programming commissioned by the EC<sup>17</sup>. The study placed four of the above countries (Guatemala was not surveyed) among those displaying high or moderate potential for joint programming according to the EU donors' ability to participate in the initiative. The study looked at the EU donors' ability to synchronise their programming cycles and to align them with the partner country's strategy to match aid contributions to the partner's priorities – synchronisation is a guiding principle of the current programming guidelines. Feedback from the reports of the EU Heads of Missions helped identify specific 'windows of opportunity' such as the launch of a new development strategy by the partner government to align the programming to the partner's priorities.

Further assessments of the potential for joint programming might lead to the exercise being replicated in over forty countries. While launched at the same time as the programming of bilateral EU institutions' grant aid through the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF and the DCI and ENI for 2014-2020, the two processes (joint programming and 11<sup>th</sup> EDF/DCI/ENI programming) are proceeding on parallel yet separate track in some of the early cases. As per the programming guidelines for the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF and DCI for 2014-2020, EU delegations are no longer required to write Country Strategy Papers (CSPs)<sup>18</sup>. A reference document, such as a country's poverty reduction strategy or national development plan, can be used as the basis of the programming. The document is the object of an analysis on which the EU's and member states' response is built. Multiannual Indicative Programs (MIPs) are still required and should be drafted according to the prevalent division of labour among the EU donors. Concise CSPs might still be prepared for countries and regions where no reference document is available or can be used.

As joint programming is a country-level process, EU delegations and member states' embassies and country offices are the main actors. While the Ambassadors or Heads of Missions of EU member states present oversee and guide the process, the bulk of the work is done by the Heads of Operations of the EU Delegations<sup>19</sup>, Heads of Cooperation of the member states' embassies and/or Country Directors<sup>20</sup> of the member states' aid agencies, and their respective Cooperation Sections staff<sup>21</sup>. The involvement of the Political Sections of the EU Delegations appears to be limited so far but can happen on a case-by-case basis. Relevant units and desks at headquarters level (both in the EEAS and the EC's Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation, DEVCO-EuropeAid, as well as in member states) also have a role in the exercise.

In its ideal form, the process would have the EU delegations and member states' embassies and/or their aid agencies develop a joint analysis of the country including through the standard-practice consultations with national stakeholders (government, civil society, private sector, etc.). Like-minded donors can also take part in the initiative. Once the joint programming document is agreed on by the donors, it would then be transmitted to the headquarters and capitals for endorsement, as well as to the partner country government for information. Following the individual endorsement procedures at EU headquarters level, the document is finalised by the EU and member states country offices. Afterwards, the final version would be sent to the headquarters and capitals for final adoption, if needed (each donor being responsible of adopting its respective parts). Lastly, the document would be translated into a MIP with allocations and detailed specifications of EU interventions in particular sectors. Figure 1 presents a graphic representation of the ideal joint programming process.

<sup>15</sup> Mali had also been selected as a first wave country for 2012 but the initiative was delayed given developments on the ground, yet the commitment to undertake joint programming was restated in February 2013. See European Commission (2013).

<sup>16</sup> EU Heads of Missions are the EU Head of Delegation and the member states' Ambassadors.

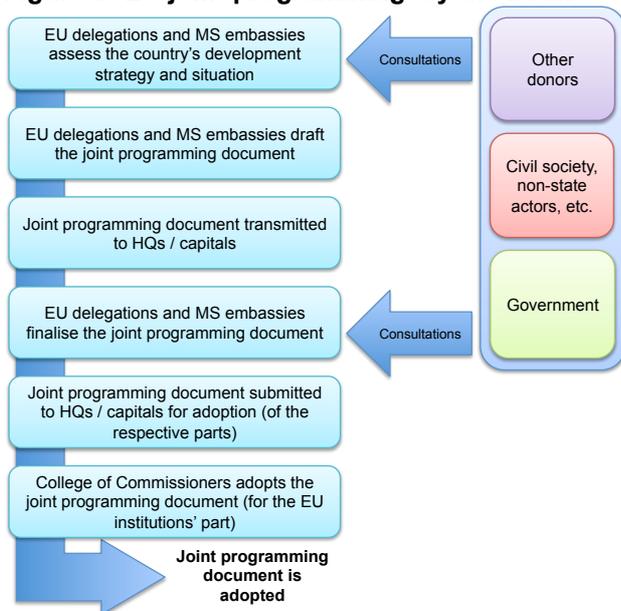
<sup>17</sup> See HTSPE (2011).

<sup>18</sup> For an overview of changes in the programming of EU development cooperation; see Görtz and Keijzer (2012).

<sup>19</sup> At the EU delegations the title of 'Head of Operations' is used instead of 'Head of Cooperation', which most member states adopt.

<sup>20</sup> In some member-states' aid agencies the Deputy Director is tasked with EU coordination.

<sup>21</sup> Henceforth Heads of Cooperation will be used to refer to the Heads of Cooperation, Heads of Operations, Country Directors, and Deputy Directors.

**Figure 1: EU joint programming 'by the book'**

### 3. Putting the process into practice

In contrast to the ideal process described above, in practice headquarters, while providing guidance and support to the initiative, have generally adopted a 'hands-off' approach, meaning that guidelines for joint programming remain very general. This choice allows EU actors in the field to develop their own arrangements. It is therefore not surprising that the process and the outputs are taking different forms according to country conditions – in fact it might be difficult to accommodate the specificities of each situation using a 'programming template'<sup>22</sup>. Box 1 provides some examples.

#### Box 1: How joint programming works: the cases of Ghana and Ethiopia.

**Ghana** graduated to lower-middle income country status in 2010. EU donors signed up to the Compact "Leveraging Partnership for Shared Growth and Development", a 10-year development strategy adopted by the government and in-country donor community in 2012 that spells out their respective priorities and objectives. Signatories commit to using the Compact – which synthesises the government's development plans, including the evolving 2011-2013 'Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda' (GSGDA) – as their core reference document for programming. EU joint programming builds on the Compact to develop a Joint Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) detailing each EU donors' financial allocations and sectors of operation. As the process is still underway, this is only a possible indication of the initiative's outcomes in Ghana.

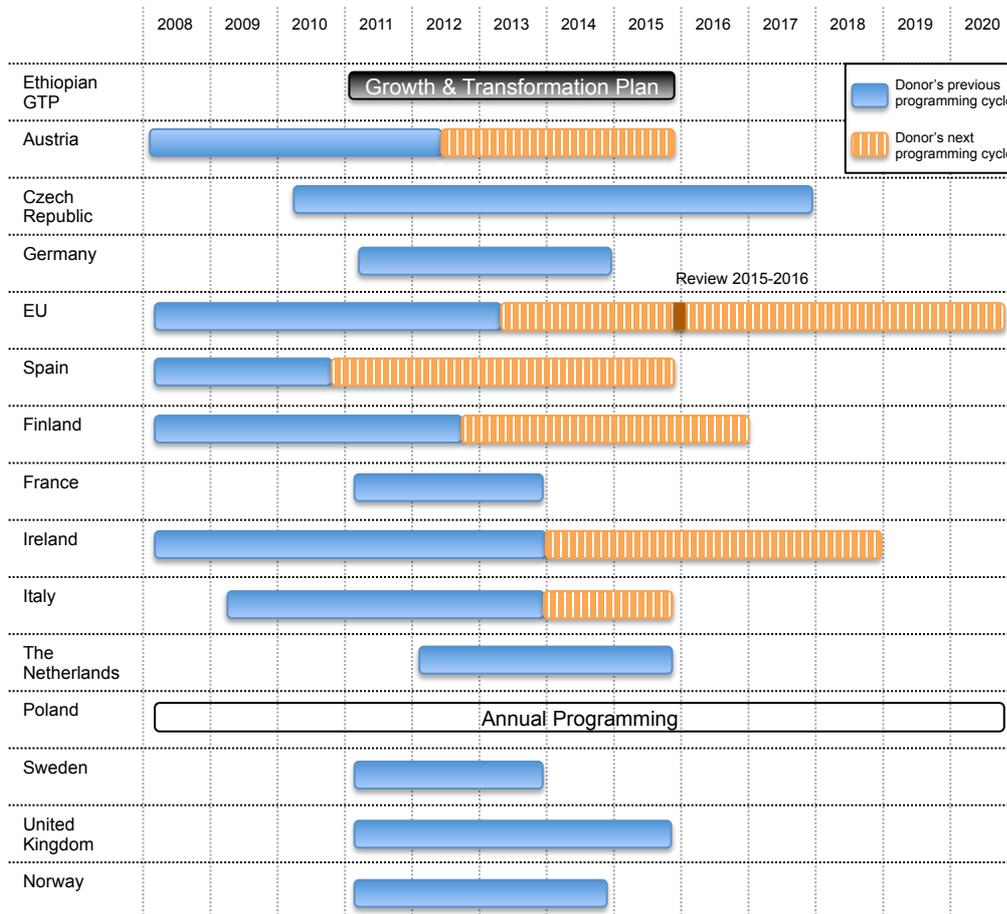
In **Ethiopia**, joint programming is built on the efforts to develop a joint EU assistance strategy that were started in 2011. The outcome is the EU Joint Cooperation Strategy (JCS) which articulates the common vision on development challenges and priorities for the EU+ group (EU institutions, member states, and Norway) in support of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of the government. The EU+ ambassadors signed the document in January 2013 in presence of the Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Ethiopia – the participation of the Commissioner gave the process political flavour and visibility. The JCS represents a point of departure for further coordination since the division of labour is not yet included in the document. A joint programming roadmap has been annexed to the document, detailing activities to be carried out to implement the Strategy, such as the division of labour and harmonisation of reporting practices. Planning the next steps can prevent the exercise from losing momentum, given the approaching deadlines – a review of the document is expected by 2015 to ensure that the JCS reflects the priorities of the new development strategy of Ethiopia, to be launched in 2016.

These examples clearly demonstrate that joint programming requires a pragmatic approach, particularly to synchronise programming cycles of EU donors with the country's national development strategy, as

<sup>22</sup> See HTSPE (2011).

recommended also by the 2011 HTSPE study which proposed a ‘mix and match’ approach where each donor could join the exercise in a gradual way<sup>23</sup>. When the synchronisation between the national development strategy and the EU and the member states’ programming cycles is not entirely possible, temporary or bridging solutions can be designed (as in Figure 2). EU donors may be required to remain flexible by shortening their programming cycles or extending the time span of existing strategies as some have done in Ethiopia. A review can be included in the strategy to further align donors’ programming cycles (such as in Ghana), or to ensure that the new development strategy of the partner country is properly taken into account, as expected in Ethiopia and Laos.

**Figure 2: Synchronisation of EU+ programming cycles in Ethiopia**



*Adapted from the EU+ Joint Cooperation Strategy for Ethiopia (2013)*

The next sections will describe early experiences of joint programming based on interviews and desk research focusing in particular on Ethiopia and Ghana. Our aim is to highlight the drivers and obstacles for the various stakeholders to take part in the initiative and note possible future challenges that the process might encounter.

## 4. Obstacles and drivers for joint programming among EU stakeholders

Although the joint programming initiative was launched in early 2012 following consultations with the field offices, it was at first perceived as a ‘Brussels-led’ initiative. As such, it was initially met with mixed reactions by both the EU Delegations and member states in the first generation of countries as well as countries in which the potential for joint programming was being assessed. The low level of buy-in arose in part due to

<sup>23</sup> See HTSPE (2011).

limited awareness of the process and lack of clarity on its scope and aims according to some interviewees, notwithstanding activities such as technical seminars and training missions to capitals' staff, jointly sharing documents to the field, were undertaken by EU headquarters to address these concerns. The need to clarify what joint programming means in practice was already noted by the 2011 study on joint programming<sup>24</sup>. Capacity constraints are another concern for the EU Delegations, who are generally recognised to require additional resources to adequately fulfil their roles and duties post-Lisbon<sup>25</sup>. Similarly, member states with small programmes (which might not even require country strategies) can find the process burdensome and time-consuming.

Capacity constraints have been dealt with in a number of ways. For instance, the technical knowledge of external consultants can facilitate the Heads of Cooperation's work. Furthermore, setting-up a 'facilitating group' comprising a small number of member states and the EU delegation, as undertaken in Ethiopia, appears to ease the burden while driving the process forward. This group contributes to the process by brainstorming and presenting ideas, setting the agendas for the monthly or bi-monthly meetings of EU Heads of Cooperation, and preparing first drafts of the joint programming document. Sharing drafting duties with member states for chapters of the analysis and response, and allowing member states' embassies' or agencies' staff to present joint programming in consultation meetings with local stakeholders also contributes to burden-sharing.

These measures serve the purpose of making the member states perceive the process as 'their own' for some interviewees. Nonetheless, whereas all EU member states have made high-level commitments to joint programming and are committed to the process in principle, the interest shown by country offices varies greatly and often depends on factors such as the size and weight of their development assistance. Member states' representatives may fear that their national interests and priorities<sup>26</sup> become diluted in aid coordination, thus making their political influence invisible or unnoticed. EU donors (large and small alike) have expressed concerns over the visibility of their bilateral donor activities being reduced as a result of joint programming. Visibility is however not at risk in the immediate sense, given that joint programming does not consist of joint implementation of aid activities (contrarily to what the term itself may lead donors to believe<sup>27</sup>).

In contrast, certain donors, in particular those with small and medium-sized programs, have taken the lead on joint programming in specific first wave countries, noting the possible gains from the reduction of transaction costs of the bureaucratic procedures of drafting country strategy papers. Austria adopted the joint programming document for Ethiopia which replaced its bilateral country strategy, complementing it with additional information on bilateral projects<sup>28</sup>. Other member states are still required by their own national procedures to draft bilateral strategies but they can still incorporate or reference the document in their bilateral documents – some of them are already doing so<sup>29</sup>. Some member states consider joint programming as a way to increase the visibility and leverage of the EU, whose total aid amounts to a sizable proportion of the overall development assistance in many developing countries, thus compensating for potential individual losses in terms of visibility or political influence and overcoming the proliferation of donor activities over the past decades. The overall political message of joint programming, as a signal for a more coherent and concerted EU external action, has therefore so far not been clearly translated into practice.

According to some interviewees further support for the joint programming can be generated by member state capitals further informing their respective country offices of the high-level commitments made towards the process, and of its nature and goals. The capitals could also make efforts to ease the legal and procedural processes which may limit the embassies' and agencies' ability to effectively participate in joint programming. Further communications can clarify if the EU delegations are meant to coordinate even in case of low interest from the member states. This can create some momentum for joint programming without, however, issuing strict instructions since delegations and embassies need to reach consensus on the modalities of the local implementation of the initiative.

---

<sup>24</sup> See HTSPE (2011).

<sup>25</sup> See for instance Wouters, et al (2013).

<sup>26</sup> See Bigsten et al (2011).

<sup>27</sup> Joint programming is quite often confused with 'joint programs' of two or more donors.

<sup>28</sup> See Austrian Development Cooperation with Ethiopia.

<sup>29</sup> Italy is currently drafting its country paper 2013-2015 and is looking into making reference to the JCS in the text and annexing the JCS to the document.

## 5. The partner country's role and response

Partner country governments are informed of the joint programming initiative when it gets underway. In Ghana joint programming was presented by the EU Head of Mission at the Ghana-EU Political Dialogue held in Accra in July 2012 in the presence of the Vice-President of the Republic and of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. So far the introduction of joint programming has been met with mixed responses from the partner countries' governments in the first cases and in other countries where the potential for the initiative has been assessed, possibly because of the limited knowledge of the initiative – further enhanced by the limited knowledge understanding of the EU's internal procedures and structures by national stakeholders.

A widespread uneasiness of partner country governments is that joint programming, by enabling EU member states to 'claim' the EU institutions' activities as part and parcel of their own, would provide member states with an incentive to reduce their aid levels.<sup>30</sup> This may be true in some countries, but not everywhere. So far, no evidence is found of a direct correlation between joint programming and EU or member states' aid exit strategies. In practice, while some member states have indeed developed aid exit strategies for middle-income countries (MICs), including in some countries where joint programming is happening, these appear to be decisions predating the start of the initiative. Coordinated EU aid programmes, if effectively planned, can actually limit funding gaps and ensure a smoother transition to different cooperation modalities with the partner country governments. Some MICs governments that will be expecting a phasing out of EU institutions' aid after 2020 have understood that, and have already requested the EU to carry out joint programming in their countries.

Until now, joint programming has been met in some cases with limited interest. It is perceived by some partner country governments as a cumbersome EU procedure with little added value in the short term: it would potentially duplicate existing donor coordination efforts and disperse the governments' limited capacities to follow these processes. Given that one of the goals of joint programming is precisely to reduce such bureaucratic burden, the EU would need to communicate clearly the intentions of the process and possible long-term advantages. Notably joint programming could lead to improved quality of policy dialogue between the government and the EU donor community which responds to the shared priorities set in the joint document instead of a myriad of different strategies.

The third reaction to joint programming has been pretended indifference. Governments aiming at maximising the volume and value of foreign assistance through 'donor shopping' have viewed joint programming as a process through which the EU and its member states 'gang-up' on them, thereby limiting their leverage vis-à-vis donors. True, increased division of labour between EU donors might make 'aid shopping' for sectors more difficult – governments are reluctant to tell donors 'who does what'. Joint programming, however, does not prevent bilateral implementation that continues to exist between the government and donors. Furthermore, as some early cases such as Ethiopia have shown, the process of defining division of labour can come at a later stage. The example of Rwanda demonstrates that governments already taking the lead in donor coordination are more eager to reap the potential benefits of this initiative.

Lastly, in line with the general requirements of EU programming and international aid effectiveness commitments, national and local stakeholders beyond the government should be engaged. At this stage in the exercise, civil society actors are being informed of the initiative (usually in the context of the DCI and 11<sup>th</sup> EDF programming, as was the case in Ghana) though they are not asked systematically to contribute. Programming for the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF is considered a highly formalised procedure between the Delegation and the partner country government by a part of the civil society, who feel they have limited opportunity to engage<sup>31</sup>. There are, however, some instances in which this is possible through consultations and workshops, such as when the EU Delegation in Ethiopia agreed for NGOs to form a small consultation working group of around 10 members to contribute to the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF programming<sup>32</sup>. The extent to which civil society will be seriously listened to remains to be seen on a case-by-case basis.

<sup>30</sup> This concern is to some degree linked to the EU's differentiation policy, noted in the Agenda for Change. See Keijzer et al (2012).

<sup>31</sup> See also Concord (2013).

<sup>32</sup> See Concord (2013).

## 6. What results and future challenges for joint programming?

In the coming months and years joint programming will meet a number of challenges that are going to test the EU and member states' willingness to not only carry out the initiative but more generally to demonstrate their dedication towards strengthening and making more coherent their collective external action for development purposes.

It will be of critical importance for the initiative to demonstrate tangible results to dispel the doubts of the EU stakeholders, partner country governments and local non-state actors alike (which may also push non-EU donors to join the initiative). In fact, while the changing aid landscape and the increasing importance of emerging economies in developing countries give additional relevance to the EU's efforts to deliver a more coordinated response, the engagement of important non-EU bilateral donors and multilateral agencies has been limited.

Some results have already been achieved, such as the use of the joint document by member states either replacing or as a main reference for their bilateral strategy papers in Ethiopia. However it should be recalled that the initiative is still in its early stages and that those developments are the outcome of lengthy processes (starting in early 2012) often building on previous donor coordination initiatives<sup>33</sup>, which can indeed provide momentum and legitimacy to joint programming<sup>34</sup>. A useful tool to sustain interest on joint programming could be a clear 'roadmap' with the steps to be taken in subsequent phases as was done in Ethiopia and is being developed in others as well.

In fact, for joint programming to go beyond being a 'paper exercise', it needs to lead to a better division of labour among EU donors and inform the choice of sectors for development assistance. EU donors have shown some reluctance to enter this phase of the process, as they are disinclined to exit sectors where they have already invested funds in and are constrained by priorities set by headquarters. The exercise risks either turning into a confirmation of the status quo if donors lack the political will to exit overcrowded sectors or to push donors with small programs to cover funding gaps by changing their priorities.

A stronger ownership from the partner governments, for instance through their role as co-chair of the Sector Working Groups, could push donors to strive for tangible results. But this will probably not be enough. A number of apparently technical challenges related to the division of labour actually have serious political implications for EU member states. They have been identified in some early countries and include, among others, the need to have a commonly agreed approach to define 'sectors' of aid intervention as well as the need to use commonly accepted tools to assess the 'comparative-advantage' of individual donors. This will ultimately test the political willingness of the actors: otherwise, joint programming risks becoming another donor coordination mechanism with little influence on policy practice.

## Conclusion

Joint programming, still in an initial phase, could have significant impact on the way EU's external action and development policy evolve over the next decade since it is now starting in over forty countries. While aiming for improved aid effectiveness and EU coordination, it also holds the potential for increased EU visibility and influence by providing a practical basis for realising a political commitment to a more coherent EU external action.

Significant interest has been expressed towards the initiative complemented by support, including with high-level political commitments and a number of practical measures since the past two years. Yet a number of challenges faced by joint programming processes have been highlighted. Some of the concerns expressed by interviewees arise from the lack of clarity on its scope and aims. Joint programming actually is not a zero-sum game. Clearly communicating the nature and goals of the exercise at the level of headquarters in Europe, building on the efforts already undertaken, could make all stakeholders (governments and societies

---

<sup>33</sup> A 'Joint Assistance Strategy' has been in development by EU donors in Ethiopia since 2011. See HTSPE (2011).

<sup>34</sup> See HTSPE (2011).

in developing countries, EU donors and NGOs) understand that there are important gains for them to make. For administrations in partner countries, increased European harmonisation and alignment to their own development priorities and synchronisation with their own development plans would lead to less burdensome reporting and coordination procedures. For EU donors, it could lower transaction costs, strengthen the visibility and leverage of EU donor efforts and contribute to the achievement of aid effectiveness' commitments.

Joint programming is context-specific. While clarifications and communications from the headquarters and capitals are undoubtedly useful, the cases of Ghana and Ethiopia show that joint programming is being shaped differently in each country – this is happening in the other cases as well. Local conditions have a very significant impact on the initiative and, as such, fixed top-down guidelines risk being counterproductive. Appropriate resources to the field level and an adequate delegation of power to the country offices are a prerequisite for the EU delegations and embassies to engage and effectively implement joint programming.

In the end, only tangible outcomes and success stories will ensure the participation and interest of the stakeholders. For this reason it is also important to have monitoring tools and share lessons learned from the early cases. To succeed, joint programming needs to show at least two concrete results as early as in its inception phase, which require political willingness from all actors: the adoption of the joint document replacing the EU member states' bilateral programming documents and an actual division of labour matching those joint strategies. Ensuring the synchronisation with some countries' newly adopted development strategies or taking them into account through reviews can also demonstrate real effects. Achieving these results is imperative to ensure support but ultimately the success of EU joint programming depends on its ability to make a better EU contribution to development objectives while also strengthening EU external action.

## Bibliography

- Ad Hoc Working Party on Harmonisation. 2004. Report: *Advancing Coordination, Harmonisation and Alignment: the contribution of the EU*. Brussels, 15 November 2004.  
<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/04/st14/st14670.en04.pdf>
- Austrian Development Cooperation with Ethiopia ,  
[http://www.entwicklung.at/countries\\_and\\_regions/east\\_africa/ethiopia/en/](http://www.entwicklung.at/countries_and_regions/east_africa/ethiopia/en/)
- Bigsten, A.L., Platteau, J.P., Tengstam, S. 2011. *The Aid Effectiveness Agenda: The benefits of going ahead*. Gothenburg: SOGES.
- Buercky U. and Knill P. 2009. 2nd Monitoring Report of the EU Fast Track Initiative on Division of Labour. A Product of the EU-Technical Seminar on Aid Effectiveness. 30 November 2009.  
<http://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/45488935.pdf>
- Busan 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. 2011. *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*. Busan, 29 November – 1 December 2011.
- Commission of the European Communities. 2006. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Increasing the Impact of EU Aid: a common framework for drafting Country Strategy Papers and Joint Multiannual Programming. ( COM(2006) 88 ). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0088:FIN:EN:PDF>
- Commission of the European Communities. 2007. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: EU Code of Conduct on Complementarity and Division of Labour in Development Policy, COM(2007) 72final. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0072:FIN:EN:PDF>
- Concord. 2013. *EEAS Review 2013 Position*.  
[http://www.venro.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Newsletter\\_Bilder/2013/Maerz\\_2013/Zu\\_3\\_Concord\\_Position\\_EEAS\\_Review2013\\_PRINT.pdf](http://www.venro.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Newsletter_Bilder/2013/Maerz_2013/Zu_3_Concord_Position_EEAS_Review2013_PRINT.pdf)
- Council of the EU. 2007. EU Code of Conduct on Complementarity and Division of Labour in Development Policy – Conclusions. (9558/07).
- Council of the EU. 2009. Council Conclusions on an Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness, Brussels. (18 November 2009).
- Council of the EU. 2011. EU Common Position for the 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, 3124<sup>th</sup> Foreign Affairs Development Council meeting. (14 November 2011).

- EC/EEAS. 2011. Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – *Global Europe: A new Approach to financing EU external action*, Brussels, 7 December 2011, COM(2011) 865 final
- European Commission, 2013, *The EU strengthens its joint development strategy in Mali and steps up its response*, 26 February 2013, IP/13/157, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-157\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-157_en.htm)
- European Commission. 2011. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the EESC and the CoR: Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change. COM(2011) 637. [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/documents/agenda\\_for\\_change\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/documents/agenda_for_change_en.pdf)
- European Union *Toolkit for the implementation of complementarity and division of labour in development policy*. June 2009 [http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/EU\\_toolkit\\_division\\_travail\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/EU_toolkit_division_travail_en.pdf)
- European Union, 2007, Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 13 December 2007, 2008/C 115/01. Brussels.
- Ghana – EU Political Dialogue Meeting. *Joint Conclusions*. Accra: 3 July 2012. [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/documents/press\\_corner/20120704\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/documents/press_corner/20120704_en.pdf)
- Görtz, S. and N. Keijzer. 2012. Reprogramming EU development cooperation for 2014-2020 - Key moments for partner countries, EU Delegations, member states and headquarters. (ECDPM Discussion Paper, 129). Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management. [www.ecdpm.org/dp129](http://www.ecdpm.org/dp129)
- High Level Seminar on Joint Programming, Brussels, 8 November 2012 [http://www.rpfrance.eu/Seminaire\\_programmation\\_conjointe/](http://www.rpfrance.eu/Seminaire_programmation_conjointe/)
- HTSPE. 2011. Joint Multi-Annual Programming: Final Report. Herts: HTSPE.
- Joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union. 2006. *Development Policy: 'The European Consensus'*. Official Journal of the European Union. 2006/C 46/01.
- Keijzer, N. J. van Seters, B. Lein, F. Krätke and A. Montoute. 2012. Differentiation in ACP-EU cooperation: Implications of the EU's Agenda for Change for the 11th EDF and beyond, (ECDPM Discussion Paper 134).
- OECD, 2005. Paris High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. 2005. *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*. <http://www.oecd.org/development/aideffectiveness/34428351.pdf>
- République d'Haïti – Union Européenne. 2012. Document révisé de stratégie pays et Programme indicative nationale pour la période 2011 – 2013
- South Sudan, Joint EU/MS, Programming Document 2011-2013.
- Wouters J., De Baere G., Van Vooren B., Raube K., Odermatt J., Ramopoulos T., Van Den Sanden T., Tanghe Y. March 2013. *The organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service: Achievements, challenges and opportunities* <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=90650>

## ECDPM Briefing Notes

ECDPM Briefing Notes present policy findings and advice, prepared and disseminated by Centre staff in response to specific requests by its partners. The aim is to stimulate broader reflection and debate on key policy questions relating to EU external action, with a focus on relations with countries in the South.

info@ecdpm.org  
www.ecdpm.org  
KvK 41077447

**HEAD OFFICE**  
**SIÈGE**  
Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 21  
6211 HE Maastricht  
The Netherlands Pays Bas  
Tel +31 (0)43 350 29 00  
Fax +31 (0)43 350 29 02

**BRUSSELS OFFICE**  
**BUREAU DE BRUXELLES**  
Rue Archimède 5  
1000 Brussels Bruxelles  
Belgium Belgique  
Tel +32 (0)2 237 43 10  
Fax +32 (0)2 237 43 19

