

Towards a new partnership between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries after 2020

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Common global interests in a multi-polar world

1. To which degree has the partnership been effective in tackling global challenges?

1. The partnership has played an important role in creating an enabling policy and programming environment to support meaningful progress to tackle the water and sanitation crisis.

The partnership agreement set the important common objective of increasing the security of household water and improving access to safe water and adequate sanitation. The EU-ACP Water Facility, subsequently agreed, has provided EUR 500 million to signatories of the Cotonou Agreement for improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene. The European Commission estimates that - globally - EU aid has helped 70.2 million people gain access to clean drinking water and 24.5 million people to sanitation facilities between 2004 and 2013 .

2. The crisis continues, however, and major inequalities in access remain within and between ACP countries.

Worldwide there are still 748 million people who lack access to adequate water (1 in 10) and more than 2.3 billion who have no access to adequate sanitation (1 in 3) . This is a significant global crisis, resulting in the spread of diseases, reduced school attendance, healthcare facilities being overstretched and individual's productivity and economic potential being significantly hampered. The burden is felt most acutely by women and girls and lack of access acts as a major barrier to their empowerment.

3. Data indicates mixed results on improving access to water and sanitation in ACP countries.

For example, water access in Uganda increased from 66.5% in 2007 to 75.9% in 2013 and sanitation access increased from 17.1% in 2007 to 18.5% in 2013. Meanwhile, water access in Papua New Guinea increased from 38.1% in 2007 to 39.5% in 2013 but access to sanitation in PNG decreased from 19.3% to 19.1% over the same period. At the same time, water access in Togo increased from 58.2% in 2007 to 61.8% in 2013 while sanitation access remained constant at 12.0% .

4. Greater action to deliver this common objective is needed.

Despite its political commitment to improving access to water and sanitation in partner countries, the EU only allocates 3.9% of its aid budget to realising this common objective . This proportion should be higher.

A future partnership between the EU and ACP countries should galvanise investment in strengthening country systems, as without strong country systems, sustainable results cannot be achieved. Strengthening systems and supporting the development of well-functioning sectors will be essential for delivering step change in the progress needed to reach universal access to WASH 2030 and ensuring the sustainability of results.

2. What would be needed to strengthen results in this respect and on which global challenges could the partnership add most value in the future, in the context of the new SDGs framework and in relevant international fora?

1. The partnership can strengthen results on water and sanitation by focusing on strengthening country systems.

This has the potential to improve access far more dramatically than individual short-term projects. Without strong country systems, sustainable results on increasing the security of household water and improving access to safe water and adequate sanitation cannot be achieved. Strengthening systems and supporting the development of well-functioning sectors will be essential for delivering step change in the progress needed to reach universal access to WASH by 2030 (the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 6) and ensuring the sustainability of results. Ethiopia and Rwanda are examples where support and attention to system-building has helped achieve the necessary step change in sector performance.

2. Achieving sustained results requires a change in behaviours from development partners, including on the part of the EU.

The EU can and should lead on improving the effectiveness of donor behaviour to strengthen national processes and embed these principles in its own practice, reflecting international agreements on development effectiveness. It is necessary to track how the EU (EC and Member States) is adhering to these established best practices, as a way of understanding the likelihood of long term sustainable impact. Principles of alignment with national plans, ensuring projects and spending are in support of national plans and included in national budgets and spending reviews, are essential to promote sustainable results and value for money in ACP country sectors.

3. Universal access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene must continue to be a priority area for collaboration.

Safe water and sanitation is a basic need and human right. Securing universal and sustainable access has been agreed as a Global Goal on Sustainable Development (Global Goal 6). But more than this, achieving this goal is a fundamental building block for eradicating poverty (Global Goal 1), ending hunger (Global Goal 2), improving health and nutrition (Global Goal 3), supporting educational retention and attainment (Global Goal 4), the empowerment of women and girls (Global Goal 5), enabling adults to work (Global Goal 8) and the creation and growth of sustainable cities (Global Goal 11). Given this, a new partnership agreement must continue to prioritise action in this area.

Human rights, democracy and rule of law, as well as good governance

3. Have the mechanisms provided for in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) (i.e. political dialogue, financial support, appropriate measures, suspension of the agreement) achieved meaningful improvements on human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance, including the fight against corruption? Should the future partnership do more in this regard, and in what way?

1. The human right to water and sanitation should be recognised as a priority area for action in the future partnership.

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly recognised the human right to water and sanitation. The right is fundamental to the realisation of all human rights, and has been implicitly and explicitly recognised in treaties and conventions. Despite this, citizens in many ACP countries are a long way from the universal realisation of this right. The future partnership should do more to promote this human right among EU Member States and ACP countries and prioritise achieving universal access to water and sanitation by 2030, as signed by 193 countries as a fundamental component of the SDG Framework.

4. Has the involvement of local authorities and non-state actors (i.e. civil society organisations, the media), national parliaments, courts and national human rights institutions in the partnership been adequate and useful to promote human rights, democracy and rule of law as well as good governance? Could they contribute more and in what way?

1. The meaningful, effective and timely engagement of civil society will be critical for the successful implementation of Global Goal 6 and the realisation of the human right to water and sanitation.

Civil Society have played a significant role in raising the profile of the human right to water and sanitation and calling for sustainable WASH to become a high priority on both the international and national political agenda. They also have a vital role to play in ensuring that governments in both the EU and ACP countries are held to account. However civil society actors must continue to:

- Contribute to the coordination and performance monitoring (for example, www.WASHwatch.org)
- Consult with local government officials and ensure that funds are on-plan
- Build an understanding of the human right to water and sanitation
- Provide support to ensure that local government planning, monitoring and implementation is transparent, accountable and participatory

2. Local authorities also have a critical role to play in ensuring that the human right to water and sanitation is realised.

In many low-income countries the main obstacle to delivering water and sanitation is at the point of local government and municipal authority delivery systems. In an increasingly decentralised context, great control and influence of local governments over adequate finance will result in improved delivery of water supplies and sanitation services. An important barrier to the realisation of the human right to water and sanitation is that development finance for the sector is not getting through to the local authorities in charge of delivering the services. A study carried out on 12 developing countries by WaterAid found that on average nearly two-thirds of capital expenditure for the water and sanitation sector is outside of the local government budget and their direct control . Therefore local governments should be supported and enabled to:

- Carry out needs assessments at sub-district level to understand real coverage levels and priority areas
- Contribute to coordination and performance monitoring through participation in national sector dialogue
- Report on expenditure publicly at regular intervals
- Open up participation in planning and budgeting

Peace and security, fight against terrorism and organised crime

5. Are the provisions on peace and security in the CPA appropriate and useful and has the balance between regional and ACP involvement been effective?

6. Should the future partnership provide for more effective joint action on conflict prevention, including early warning and mediation, peace-building and state-building activities, as well as on tackling transnational security challenges? Should this be done in the EU-ACP context?

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, investment and trade

7. How effective has the partnership been in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development?

8. Taking into account the new SDGs framework, should the future partnership do more in this respect, and what?

1. The SDGs should be treated as a cornerstone for the EU-ACP partnership.

The SDG framework has been agreed by 193 countries and lays out the framework for development over the next 15 years. The 17 goals are integrated, interlinked and indivisible and cooperation between the EU and ACP partners must deliver progress against each goal. Neither region can afford to be selective in the framework's implementation. This is essential to ensure the progressive eradication of inequalities.

2. The future partnership should galvanise cross-sector action.

Securing universal and sustainable access to water and sanitation has been agreed as Global Goal 6 and the current partnership rightly identifies access to water and sanitation as a priority area for cooperation. Achieving Goal 6 will be a fundamental building block for success in other important goals, including eradicating poverty (Global Goal 1), ending hunger (Global Goal 2), improving health and nutrition (Global Goal 3), supporting educational retention and attainment (Global Goal 4), the empowerment of women and girls (Global Goal 5), enabling adults to work (Global Goal 8) and the creation and growth of sustainable cities (Global Goal 11).

Examples of needed cross-section action include WASH embedded in all plans for reducing undernutrition, acute malnutrition, preventable childhood disease and new-born deaths. The future partnership should aim to deliver results including every healthcare facility has clean running water, safe toilets for patients (separate for men and women, with locks and lights and child-friendly and accessible to people with disabilities), functional sinks and soap for health workers and patients in all treatment and birthing rooms .

9. How effective has the partnership been in supporting macroeconomic and financial stability? In which areas would there be added value in ACP-EU cooperation on macroeconomic and financial stability?

10. How effective has the partnership been in improving domestic revenue mobilisation, in promoting fair and efficient tax systems and in combatting illicit financial flows? Would there be added value and more efficiency in stronger ACP-EU cooperation on these matters?

11. Has the partnership been able to contribute substantially to mobilising the private sector and attracting foreign direct investment?

12. How could the potential of the EU and ACP private sector be better harnessed? What should be the main focus of EU and ACP private sector cooperation in a post-Cotonou framework, and what might be the role of ODA in this?

1. The private sector has a complementary role to play in a post-Cotonou framework.

Private sector investment is becoming increasingly important to fill the financing gaps many developing countries face for basic infrastructure and services. Private and commercial flows can therefore, and should, play an increasingly important role in the post-Cotonou framework. This should be complementary to a wider package of financing measures available to ACP countries. Domestic resource mobilisation is also crucial. The single largest resource for improving access to water and sanitation comes from people and households themselves, as they invest their own resources into accessing these basic services.

2. ODA remains the most important financial flow in the water and sanitation sector.

The long-term vision for all low income and Least Developed countries is to transition away from aid dependency. However, many ACP countries - by virtue of the proportion of their people without access to basic standards of water, sanitation and hygiene services, their low national resource availability and overall levels of poverty - are highly dependent on aid. The evidence suggests that aid will be a vital element of the financial package for supporting national governments to deliver sustainable and equitable WASH services in the short and medium-term .

The EU and Member States should work to meet their individual and collective commitments to 0.33% or 0.7% GNI to ODA by 2020, with a minimum of 0.15-0.2% to Least Developed Countries, backed by national timetables. The EU and Member States must also increase the percentage of their aid budgets allocated to water and sanitation.

13. In this setting, what opportunities do you see for the new, digital economy?

14. To what extent has the partnership been able to contribute to increase agricultural development and trade?

15. What has been the contribution of the partnership trade preferences to the integration of ACP countries in the world economy and to its development goals?

16. Is there still a need for specific provisions on trade cooperation in the post-Cotonou framework, also taking into account the ACP countries which have not signed an EPA? If so, what could/should they cover?

Human and social development

17. Has the partnership delivered on its human development objective in an effective and efficient way, in particular on poverty eradication, and also concerning gender equality and empowerment of women? How could it be improved?

1. Collective action on water and sanitation under a future partnership would support objectives on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) has a particular bearing on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at all stages of their lives. Evidence strongly suggests that poor WASH influences maternal and reproductive health outcomes to the extent that it should be considered in global and national strategies . WASH in schools lacks attention despite its impact on children's health, school attendance, particularly for girls, and its contribution to fostering lifelong healthy hygiene habits. Girls too frequently drop out because of inadequate menstrual hygiene management facilities in school. In Ethiopia, for example, 51% of girls miss between one and four days of school per month because they were menstruating. 39% reported reduced performance .

18. Taking into account the new SDGs framework, what are the main challenges related to human development that the future partnership should focus on?

1. The future partnership should tackle the challenges that have been identified in the SDG framework and which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were unable to deliver real progress on.

The future partnership should focus particularly on delivering cross-sector action on areas where progress is lagging, including sanitation and maternal mortality. Sanitation was one of the most off-track of all MDG targets. Today, more than 2.3 billion people do not have access to an adequate standard of sanitation facilities and 1.8 billion people have no choice but to drink from water sources contaminated with faeces . This has grave implications for progress in other development areas such as health, nutrition, education and gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Maternal mortality was another of the most off-track targets. Wider and better-coordinated efforts to leverage increased resources and more effective action on maternal and new-born health (MNH) particularly in low-income, high-burden settings are urgently needed. Linking investments in health and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) presents an overlooked but potentially important opportunity for progress .

Migration and mobility

19. Has the partnership been a useful vehicle for discussing migration issues and has it positively contributed? Has Article 13 CPA been fully applied?

20. Should a future partnership do more in this regard, and on which particular aspects should it focus (legal migration and mobility, addressing root causes of migration, return and readmission, tackling human trafficking and smuggling, international protection)?

A stronger political relationship

21. How effective has the political dialogue been and at which level is it the most effective: national, regional and through the joint EU-ACP institutions? Should the scope of political dialogue be widened or narrowed?

22. Would a stronger involvement of EU Member States, associating their bilateral policies and instruments to the political dialogue at national level, enhance the dialogue's effectiveness and efficiency?

23. Has the fact that the agreement is legally binding been instrumental to its implementation as compared to other regional partnerships based on political declarations?

Coherence of geographical scope

24. Could a future framework be usefully opened up to other countries than the current members of the ACP Group of States? Which countries would that be?

25. What kind of framework should govern EU and ACP relations? How could an ACP-EU successor framework relate to the more recent EU regional partnerships with Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States? Could a future ACP-EU framework include distinct partnerships with regional partners?

26. Is there scope for building in more structured relationships with Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa?

Cooperation tailored more towards groups of countries with similar development level

27. Is the current system of allocation of development resources, based on need and capacities as well as performance, sufficient for channelling funds towards those countries where the highest impact can be obtained? Should allocation of resources continue to prioritise countries most in need, including fragile states?

1. The channelling of funds could be improved by better targeting on water and sanitation according to greatest need.

In its report, *Essential element: why international aid for water, sanitation and hygiene is still a critical source of finance for many countries*, WaterAid has identified 45 countries which - by virtue of the proportion of their people without access to the bare minima of water, sanitation and hygiene services, their low national resource availability and overall levels of poverty - are counted as high priority countries for aid investments in water, sanitation and hygiene.

Thirty-seven of the 45 countries identified as high priority are ACP countries, with one country in each of the Pacific and Caribbean regions and the rest located in Africa. The European Union, one of the largest donors to the sector overall, provided just 41% of its aid to priority countries. This compares to other multilateral donors, such as the African Development Fund, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa and UNICEF which do particularly well at targeting the countries with the greatest need and lowest resource availability, targeting more than 90% of their aid to the sector to priority countries.

28. What kind of cooperation could help to cover the specific needs of more developed ACP countries with a view to attaining more equitable and sustainable growth?

Strengthen the relationship with key actors

29. Has the current model of stakeholder engagement been conducive to attaining the objectives of the partnership in an efficient way? Which actors could play a more significant role in the implementation of the partnership? How could this be addressed?

30. What could be done to promote effective and efficient involvement of both international and domestic private sector, civil society, social partners and local authorities in the partnership?

1. The partnership should support decentralisation.

In theory, local government involvement can enhance the effectiveness of development finance yet a WaterAid study, 'Think Local, Act Local' , found that decentralisation has been slow to become embedded. Local governments are undermined by unpredictable funding, lack of finance and capacity.

Local governments are rarely included in the national dialogues that set the direction for development, are constantly by passed by other development actors. Their overall resource base is desperately low. Once salaries and other recurrent expenses have been paid, local government capacity for capital investment is extremely limited.

On average nearly two-thirds of capital expenditure for the water and sanitation sector is outside of the local government budget and their direct control, with local governments' own expenditure on water and sanitation reaching barely \$6 per capita per annum . Therefore local governments must:

- Carry out needs assessments at sub-district level to understand real coverage levels and priority areas.
- Contribute to coordination and performance monitoring through participation in national sector dialogue.
- Report on expenditure publicly at regular intervals
- Open up participation in planning and budgeting.

2. Innovative partnerships, such as solidarity mechanisms between water utilities in EU and ACP countries, could play a useful role in this.

Solidarity mechanisms already exist between a number of EU Member States and ACP countries. Solidarity financing mechanisms could be useful in:

- Providing finance directly to local authorities
- Building the capacity of local governments and water agencies through twinning or other similar partnership arrangements

31. Should the partnership be open to new actors as referred above?

32. In this regard, should the possibility of opening up the partnership to 'associated members' or 'observers' be considered?

33. How could a new framework promote triangular and South-South cooperation, including the increased involvement of ACP States as development actors in support of other ACP countries?

Streamline the institutional set-up and functioning of the partnership

34. Has the joint institutional set-up (with the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, and the Joint Parliamentary Assembly) been effective in debating and promoting common views and interests and in providing political guidance and momentum to the EU-ACP partnership and the implementation of the CPA?

35. What is the added value of the joint ACP-EU institutions as compared to more recent regional and regional economic community frameworks for dialogue and cooperation?

36. What institutional arrangements would most effectively help address common challenges and promote joint interests?

37. Should a higher degree of self-financing of this functioning (ACP-EU Joint institutions and ACP secretariat) by the ACP States be required?

Better adapted and more flexible development cooperation tools and methods

38. Is there added value in having a dedicated financing instrument in support of the ACP-EU partnership? If so, what are the reasons and how would it differ from other external financing instruments funded by the general budget of the Union? Is this instrument flexible enough, especially to address crisis situations? Can this instrument be deployed differently?

1. For a new ACP-EU partnership to deliver lasting results it must be underpinned by adequate funding.

A future partnership will be unable to deliver progress against common objectives without sufficient resourcing. Even with increased private sector investment and domestic resource mobilisation, many ACP countries will be unable to deliver lasting basic services and infrastructure to the standards defined by the SDG framework. Aid as grants from the EU has a critical role to play. Regardless of the mechanism, this financing must be delivered in line aid effectiveness principles and good collaborative behaviours.

39. What is the added value of the EDF's co-management system involving national authorities in the programming and management of aid programmes, as compared to other EU cooperation instruments in non-ACP countries?

40. Does the current set-up of the programming process and implementation of activities lead to real ownership by the beneficiaries? What could be improved? How can the EU and Member States maximise the impact of joint programming?

1. The impact of joint programming in the field of water and sanitation could be maximised through the integration of positive collaborative behaviours.

In the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector the Sanitation and Water for All partnership (<http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/>) has agreed four collaborative behaviours that Member States and their partners should adhere to improve their ways of working together in order to build country systems and strengthen the government capacity needed to improve the WASH sector's long-term performance.

In order to maximise the impact of joint programming on water and sanitation, both EU Member States and ACP partner countries should:

- Enhance government leadership of sector planning processes
- Strengthen and use country systems
- Use one information and mutual accountability platform
- Build sustainable water and sanitation sector financing strategies.

41. Does the variety of existing tools adequately support the EU and ACP common principles and interests and are there gaps that should be addressed? How do you assess the effectiveness and efficiency of various implementation modalities?

1. WASHwatch is a useful tool to improve monitoring and accountability in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector.

WASHwatch (<http://www.washwatch.org>) is a collaborative platform for monitoring government and donor commitments to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). They work with the sector to improve transparency, support knowledge sharing, strengthen monitoring, and ultimately improve accountability in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector.

2. The SWA provides a platform for developing countries and donors to identify and commit to address the fundamental bottlenecks holding back progress and to act on international aid effectiveness principles .

The Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) (<http://sanitationandwaterforall.org>) partnership is a global partnership of over 90 country governments, external support agencies, civil society organisations and other development partners working together to catalyse political leadership and action, improve accountability and use scarce resources more effectively in the WASH sector. SWA provides a transparent, accountable and results-oriented framework for action based on common values and principles.

42. Should a higher degree of self-financing from the ACP States be required for activities to ensure ownership? Would this apply to all countries? On which principles should this be based?

1. A higher degree of self-financing from ACP States to deliver progress on Global Goal 6 may not be possible in the short and medium-term.

National governments in developing countries bear primary responsibility for ending the scale and depth of water and sanitation poverty. The governments of ACP states should :

- Exert much stronger leadership of the sector; ensuring key institutions have appropriate resources and mandate with the required staff and skills in place at all levels.
- Substantially increase resources consistent with what is required to achieve universal access. For African signatories to the Ngor Declaration, this should include progress on the commitment of establishing and tracking sanitation and hygiene budget lines that consistently increase annually to reach a minimum of 0.5% GDP by 2020
- Harness appropriate investment from households and the private sector to help address funding gaps and strengthen the sector.

- Place equity and sustainability at the heart of all approaches to delivering services.

However, while national governments have a mandate to lead on the delivery of basic services, ODA from the EU and Member States remains indispensable. Out of 94 countries reporting to UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2014, 31 reported on national total expenditure on water and sanitation, including sources of finance to the sector. Countries with lower levels of spending in the sector rely more on external sources. For example, Eritrea and Benin reported 100% and 83% dependence on external sources, respectively .

The governments of many developing countries have reported significant gaps between available domestic resources and identified needs. Lack of adequate financing is a major obstacle to building strong and sustainable national systems for delivering access to water, sanitation and hygiene. In 2014, eighty percent of countries that responded on the finance gap to GLAAS 2014 - many of which are ACP States - reported insufficient finance to meet targets established for drinking water and sanitation .

One important gap in financing is operation and maintenance, critical for ensuring the sustainability of services. With 70% of countries reporting that tariffs do not cover the costs of operation and maintenance, there is a significant risk to the quality and durability of services and coverage levels .

2. Country ownership is critically important.

Government-led inclusive planning processes are the roadmap for achieving Global Goal 6 and its targets on universal access to sustainable sanitation, hygiene and water services. To enhance government leadership of sector planning processes, the governments of ACP countries should :

- Lead the development of one national WASH plan that reflects national targets and priorities;
- Through an identified lead ministry, ensure that all line ministries and government agencies responsible for WASH are involved in shaping the national development plan and targets;
- Ensure coherence among sector policies, plans and the legal framework at all levels (national and decentralized levels);
- Provide an inclusive environment at national and decentralized levels to guarantee consultative development and review of sector plans and policies ;
- Build capacities for planning, monitoring, joint systematic review, and analysis at both national and local levels, to ensure the sector is supported by a sound system that closes the loop between analysis and planning.

The EU should:

- Seek full alignment to the sector plans by supporting both the sector vision and mechanisms for effectively delivering development assistance;
- Support line ministries responsible for WASH by coordinating, harmonizing and aligning aid for infrastructure, Technical Assistance (TA) and training with the one national WASH plan;
- Ensure that the infrastructure investments build, not undermine, the capacity of the line ministries to oversee policy and planning of sector investment;
- Follow and support the national governments' efforts to lead the development and review of sector strategies, and work with the government to build or strengthen national and decentralized planning processes and capacities;
- Support national governments in developing and implementing strategies and programmes of decentralization and capacity building of local governments and service providers.

43. How can the expertise of the EU and its Member States be better mobilised, particularly in the middle-income countries?

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