

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?

The partnership has specifically recognised the role of local government as an actor in development which has made a significant contribution to advancing the recognition and understanding of the contribution which local government can make to achieving national and international development outcomes. However, although this is in place at a strategic level, more should be done to operationalise this policy commitment. The recently agreed SDGs highlight the importance of localisation in ensuring effective poverty reduction and economic and social development. It also recognises the importance of a more territorial approach to development, but the tools, means and capacities to deliver this new approach, still need to be strengthened in many places.

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?

The Partnership must continue to focus on the increasing importance of local government in development. 65% of the 169 agreed SDG targets will only be achieved if local governments are involved, both in the designing and implementation process of development programmes. There is also a specific goal which relates to cities and human settlements which will require local governments be acknowledged and enabled to play a more central role in delivery. Goal 16 recognises the importance of strong institutions and good governance in effective development. It is important that the Partnership recognises the importance of local accountability through democratically elected representatives as part of the strengthened governance frameworks across the ACP. In addition to being the closest level of government to the people, this also builds a strong foundation of democracy, transparency and accountability from the bottom up, consistent with the principles of subsidiarity. The Partnership must also place more emphasis on the importance

of partnership, improving partnership working, and enabling strong multi-level governance to better reflect the new realities of the SDGs and the challenging environment in which they must be achieved.

Localisation of the SDGs will also require better local data to ensure effective planning, monitoring and evaluation and local government engagement in national reporting processes. To achieve this means giving local governments the legal, financial, and technical resources to implement development policies and ensures opportunities to better address inequalities at a subnational level.

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?

Not enough first-hand knowledge to be able to comment meaningfully

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?

There have been opportunities for key stakeholder including local government to engage in the Political Dialogue, however there is scope for this to be strengthened much more in the future to better recognise local government's role as a key partner in development across the ACP. Local and regional governments, and their representative platforms, would be willing to engage more strategically in this regard. The ACP-EU partnership should also integrate the many provisions and dynamics already taken in various fora, for instance in sub-regional groups, to advance on territorial reforms. The EU-ACP partnership should promote the need for on going capacity development at the local level to fulfil these objectives effectively. Membership of global local government organisations and decentralised cooperation (peer-to-peer partnerships) between local governments from the EU and from ACP countries, is one of the means to foster good governance and local democracy.

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?

Not enough first-hand knowledge to be able to comment meaningfully

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?

Peace and stability cannot be achieved without strengthening democratic governance at all levels. The future partnership should encourage cross-border cooperation within ACP regions, dialogue should involve local government ensuring a climate of confidence, peace, security and stability in local communities where people live and have their livelihoods. Safe communities are essential in efforts to increase trade, free movement of people and goods and in addressing inequalities and local government is at the heart of ensuring this.

Supporting cross-border cooperation, which are potential areas of integration, but also unstable and at risk, is an important component of continental and subcontinental integration. Coordination of this work through regional or continental level organisations at all levels, including at the local level will ensure a strategic approach. The ACP context provides opportunities for international learning and good practice in this regard.

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?

The Partnership should refocus its work on economic development and growth to reflect the targets set out in SDG goal 8. Work on Goal 8 should reflect the important role of local government in supporting and enabling local economic development.

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?

The Partnership should reflect and support the implementation of global commitments to improved development financing eg through the recent Addis Ababa Agenda for Action. There is scope for work on efficient tax systems in this context. Cognisance should be taken of the importance of strengthening

local taxation systems and financial flows from the centre and other partners eg the private sector in this regard.

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?

Support to private sector development requires a holistic, cross-cutting approach involving all stakeholders. The private sector needs to better understand local government and the modalities of the public sector and governments, including local and regional governments, should be supported in forging partnerships with the private sector and creating an enabling environment for investment through a strategic local economic development strategy agreed in consultation with the community.

Local government's support to the private sector (local small and medium enterprises) through provision of improved services and direct support, can play a significant leverage role in supporting local business, strengthening value chains, identifying investment opportunities and attracting new national and international investors. Capacity development will be key to enabling this and ODA can and is making an important contribution in these areas. LED is a central mechanism by which the SDGs will be achieved and will make a significant contribution to more sustainable local economies, increasing the tax take and facilitating further development and stability.

Fiscal decentralisation should also be pursued in the framework of EU-ACP agreement so that domestic resources and ODA can be invested in local economic development. Local governments should be given the means and capacity to access loans, bonds, and other financing tools and services.

The partnership should continue strengthen cooperation against tax evasion and illicit financial flows at all levels.

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?

The Partnership should review and refocus to take account of the new global SDG agreements. Local governments play an important role in poverty eradication (see above). Empowerment of women politically, economically and socially should take place at all levels including at the local level. Integration in politics at the local level is often a foundation for involvement of women in national politics.

The Partnership should commit to strengthening decentralisation and empowering local governments to take up their role as actors in development more fully. This implies clear division of powers, ie technical, administrative, political, human and fiscal decentralisation.

The future EU-ACP agreement should support and facilitate local governments' work for local development and reduction of social or gender-based inequalities.

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

Key priorities for the future in terms of localisation of the SDGs and addressing human development should focus on ensuring capacity for basic service delivery, through more effective decentralisation, improved governance and fiscal autonomy at the local level. Managing the challenge of urbanisation will be a key priority and local governments have an important role to play in ensuring safe, secure, inclusive and responsive city governance and management. Local government's role in local economic development will also be an essential factor in addressing inequality and promoting bottom-up led growth and development.

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)?

It is essential that international and national migration policy recognises the role of local government in managing and mitigating the impacts of migration. Migrants arrive in cities and require basic services and livelihoods immediately. Local governments have a responsibility to enable strong, socially cohesive communities and play a role in linking immigrants to support from other levels of government. Local governments are also instrumental in addressing some of the root causes of migration achievement of SDG 16 on inclusive, sustainable and resilient cities will be central to efforts to reduce migration.

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?

Given the role of local government in development and cooperation between EU and ACP countries, they should be regularly consulted by the joint EU-ACP institutions. We would recommend a political dialogue that engages and involves local and regional governments through their representative organisations.

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?

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?

In these countries it is important to focus on addressing inequalities within countries. A territorial approach to development can highlight challenges at the subnational level and concentrate support in areas of need. A new cooperation framework using this approach could contribute to reducing inequalities and attaining more equitable and sustainable growth. Capacity development through global local government organisations and using models such as decentralised cooperation can play an important role in supporting local governments themselves to highlight their needs and provides a supportive environment for more sustainable change.

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?

As recognised in the Cotonou agreement, local governments are key actors in development. It is therefore necessary to involve local government throughout in a meaningful way.

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?

Implementation of the SDGs will require commitment to partnership working at all levels. The Partnership should reflect the new priorities. Local government is already engaging at all these levels and closer coordination should be encouraged and facilitated.

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?

The ACP Partnership offers real opportunities for South South cooperation and tripartite cooperation. As with all cooperation it is important that this is clearly defined, has clear objectives, delivers results and is effectively monitored. There is increasing learning on the value and effectiveness of tripartite cooperation which is being implemented more widely, including by CLGF.

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?

Accessing existing funding lines is very difficult for local authorities. Any existing or new funds would benefit from a more streamlined and accessible application process if they are to truly reach hard to reach communities in need of development assistance.

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?

The role of local government as an actor in development should be part of the national dialogue process through local government associations as they play an important role in assessing needs.

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?

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?

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?

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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