

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

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* Your name and/or name of your organisation

Toni Haastrup, University of Kent

* Country of residence or location of headquarters

England, UK

* E-mail

t.haastrup@kent.ac.uk

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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?

I don't think the ACP has been as useful as it could have been. Further, it serves to fragment the EU's relationship with the African states (and others) in particular. `More attention and resources should be dedicated to other holistic frameworks like the Joint Africa - EU Strategy framework.

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?

In the first instance, a new relationship with the three r

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?

The 'partnership' has certainly created the space for the inclusion of more 'political' areas of cooperation. But it is not the case that this is a partnership yet. While these are all noble concerns, the EU side must certainly do more to support local voices in achieving these normative public goods. This has to be the way in which the partnership can do more – support civil society, support marginalised groups and not sell people's futures on politics. The EU has recently had the tendency to support very questionable regimes (e.g. Turkey, Libya) for its own ends even when they clearly do not adhere to the demands currently included in the CPA.

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 has been a lot of effort put into non-state actor inclusion, but more could be done. There is a tendency to go with the same partners and thus the same perspectives and biases. More should be done to support smaller organisations and groupings of minority interests and seemingly marginal identities.

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?

They can be useful and appropriate if/when the EU considers especially non-militarised responses and coordinates responses to regional actors in African, Caribbean and the Pacific. The agency of elites and citizens in these regions must also be considered in policy proposals and responses to contemporary insecurities. This would ensure that the relevant institutions have a holistic picture of what those insecurities are and alternative responses as well.

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?

Indeed, the future of the partnership would benefit from more effective joint action, however not within a renewed ACP-EU relationship. Region-specific strategies to account for differentiated contexts, while still promoting regional integration to address transnational security challenges, and especially conflict prevention EW and mediation and peacebuilding initiatives. For example, the partnership with African states vis-a-vis the AU and in the context of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy would continue to benefit from a more joined up approach to the EU's external relations in Africa. This would further prevent continuing fragmentation and engender policy coherence.

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 SGDs framework, should the future partnership do more in this respect, and what?

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?

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?

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

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?

No – this has not been useful for dealing with migration and mobility especially because there is a dissonance in the priorities of the partners. Until human rights and dignity becomes the basis for understanding this issue areas, no partnership on mobility and migration can positively contribute to the lives of ordinary people in the EU and ACP.

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 partnership in what ever form it takes must do more. But as the root to doing all these, the EU must squarely confront the racism and tendency towards militarisation that seems to underscore its own external relations in this regard. The EU must engage with civil society in all the relevant regions and within the EU for expertise.

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?

Increasingly political dialogue is the area in which the relationship is most effective. The dialogue scope is about right, but must be deeper and while sectoral, must address cross-cutting issues such as gender inclusion, among others

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?

Yes. It seems as if there are parallel processes occurring at the Brussels level versus member state level. Of course this is a challenge of EU integration itself but it does impact on its external relations.

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?

I think future approaches should focus on self-identified regions. the ACP is arbitrary based on a colonial construct and it is time to learn and move away from this.

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?

see above

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

I think there is a lot of scope here but currently, especially in the Middle East, the political nature of existing engagement tends to exclude developmental aims. Further, the EU should be self-reflective and critical of the tendency to lump the ME with North Africa. It contributes to the continued fragmentation of these regions

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?

Countries most in need should be a priority, but countries on their way to fulfilling their priorities should not be left out in the cold because it is deemed they don't need it. Of the current framework's requirements, however, efficiency/impact is problematic as this is only measured as the EU views development rather than in conjunction with the recipient

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?

tailored-regional cooperation. In some cases countries need infrastructure, in some cases, better support for civil society can achieve the aims desired. In both of these scenarios the support is needed mainly financially to two different types of actors. More attention to these differentiated dynamics but with a regional focus should be the key to the evolution of this relationship.

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?

Overall, more engagement with civil society including academic communities, businesses and non-governmental organisations would benefit the partnerships especially in trying to formulate objectives, articulate them, and implement them.

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?

Consultations like this one are a good start.

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

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

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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?

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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?

Yes it has. it has also given an air of legitimacy, however these institutions must have more autonomy and say in decision making going forward.

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?

I am struggling to see the added value of ACP-EU institutions. The ACP framework can perhaps serve as a clearing house for dialogue between countries in the Global South, but more investment in regional and REC frameworks would be more efficient and help with ensuring context-specific responses and plans are enacted.

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

Speaking for Africa and the Caribbean, the African Union with the RECs as building blocs for regional integration, CARICOM among others.

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

Yes. More should be done by these member states.

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?

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?

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?

On principle yes. Ownership will be better accorded with financing. However, it is also important to acknowledge that limited funding on the part of the ACP states is also linked to certain practices of EU states that undermine development and fiscal autonomy. To not acknowledge methods through which past ills will be addressed and compensated is to ensure that full ownership is not attained. Until then, the EU has the responsibility to fund activities while listening to preferences of the ACP states. The EU can have an important role in shaping those preferences if it relies on universal norms of equality and dignity.

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

The EU is well placed to serve as a mentor to ACP states and institutions. But it must be willing to accept the unique contexts and also have a firm understanding of its own history within these regions. Through frequent institutional exchanges and joint planning sessions, the EU and MS are able to support the development of MI countries.

Contact

✉ europeaid-01@ec.europa.eu
