

UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Public Consultation on revising the European Consensus on Development

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

(1) Introduction

The year 2015 was a strategic milestone for global governance, poverty eradication and sustainable development. It marked the target date of the UN Millennium Development Goals and a point to reflect on the progress made to date and the challenges ahead in addressing their unfinished business. 2015 also saw a series of landmark international summits and conferences over the course of the year (the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#), the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#), the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the COP 21 [Paris Agreement](#) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) which have collectively re-cast the way the international community, including the EU, will work to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication for many years.

Importantly, and in contrast to the Millennium Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda, including its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, is a universal Agenda which applies to all countries. It reflects many core European values and interests and provides an international framework for tackling global challenges such as climate change. The EU response to the 2030 Agenda is moving ahead in a range of ways:

- Firstly, as part of EU efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, the [Commission Work Programme for 2016](#) announces an initiative on the next steps for a sustainable European future which will explain how the EU contributes to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and map out the internal and external aspects of EU policies contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Secondly, the High Representative will present the [EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy](#) that is expected to steer the different EU external policies contributing to the global vision of a more stable, prosperous and secure world. It should set out the strategic direction for the full range of EU external action, and as such will help guide EU implementation of the 2030 Agenda in external action.
- Thirdly, the EU will review its development cooperation policy. Existing leading policy documents (including the [2005 European Consensus on Development](#) and the [2011 Agenda for Change](#)) are currently framed around the Millennium Development Goals and need to adapt to incorporate the 2030 Agenda. Given its direct relevance to the EU's overall relations with developing countries, this review will be carried out in full consistency with the ongoing work on the future of the partnership between the EU and the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, under a post-[Cotonou](#) framework.

Views from this consultation will be used to inform the way forward on the initiatives above and in particular the revision of the European Consensus on Development and other external aspects of 2030 Agenda implementation. The consultation seeks your views on **how development policy, in the context of EU external action as foreseen by the Lisbon Treaty**, should respond to the range of landmark 2015 summits and conferences, and also to the rapid changes happening in the world.

Replies can include views which could apply only to the EU institutions and also to both the EU and its Member States – it would be helpful to clarify this in your response. This open public consultation will run for 12 weeks from 30 May 2016 to 21 August 2016. A brief summary and analysis of all consultation contributions will be published by November 2016 and all individual contributions will also be made available on the consultation website (unless respondents ask for their contributions not to be published).

(2) Information on respondents

- * 2.1 Received contributions may be published on the Commission's website, with the identity of the contributor. Please state your preference with regard to the publication of your contribution.

Please note that regardless of the option chosen, your contribution may be subject to a request for access to documents under [Regulation 1049/2001](#) on public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. In such cases, the request will be assessed against the conditions set out in the Regulation and in accordance with applicable [data protection rules](#).

- I do not agree that my contribution will be published at all
- My contribution may be published but should be kept anonymous; I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication
- My contribution may be published under the name indicated; I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication

2.5 What type of stakeholder are you?

- Government institution / Public administration
- University / Academic organisation
- Civil society (including Non-Governmental Organisation, specialised policy organisation, think tank)
- International organisation
- Private sector or private company
- Citizen/private individual
- Other

- * 2.7 What is your place of residence (if you are answering as a private individual) or where are the headquarters of your organisation situated (if you are answering on behalf of an organisation)?

- In one of the 28 EU Member States
- Other

(3) Context: why a change is needed

The EU and its Member States are determined to implement the 2030 Agenda through internal and external actions as well as contribute to the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, given the strong interlinkages. In this context, our policies, should take into account changing global conditions and trends, to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose across the time-horizon to 2030.

The global landscape has changed significantly compared to the time of adoption of the Millennium Development Goals. While much has been achieved, with more than one billion people having been lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990, great challenges remain and new ones are emerging. At global level, more than 800 million people still live on less than USD 1.25 a day. The world is witnessing multiple conflicts and security tensions, complex humanitarian and global health crises, deteriorations of human rights, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, urbanisation and migration. Migration flows across the world will continue to have important impacts, and present both a risk and an opportunity. The EU needs to address global security challenges, including tackling the root causes of conflict and instability and countering violent extremism. Climate change can continue to amplify problems and can severely undermine progress. Important changes include demographic trends, a new distribution of wealth and power between and within countries, the continuing globalisation of economies and value chains, an evolving geography of poverty and a proliferation of actors working on development. Projections also suggest important challenges are ahead (for example, continuing unprecedented urbanisation, and other demographic challenges including ageing societies for some and the potential for a demographic dividend for others). Continued attention will be given to a democratic, stable and prosperous neighbourhood. A revision to EU development policy should take into account these trends (including anticipating those that will remain central in future) whilst retaining a core focus on eradicating poverty and finishing the job started by the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, the EU Consensus needs also to adapt to the Lisbon Treaty, which provides for all external action policies to work within the frameworks and pursue the principles of objectives of Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union. In particular, coherence between the different parts of EU external action and between external and internal policies is crucial.

The EU will need to address these new global challenges, many of which require coordinated policy action at the national, regional and global levels. The 2030 Agenda provides a framework which can guide us in doing so.

3.1 There is a range of key global trends (e.g. changing geography and depth of poverty; challenges related to climate change, political, economic, social, demographic, security, environmental or technological) which will influence the future of development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Which of these do you think is the most important?

Large and widening inequalities, both within and between countries, and within and outside Europe, is the key challenge that needs to be tackled to ensure sustainable development. Global power imbalances, a narrow focus on growth, and the power structures that underpin our society, the economy and global governance sustain the key global trends mentioned here above. These power structures are rooted in patriarchy and capitalism, which have led to a global tendency of hardening of society, commercialisation and militarization, and cause a disconnect from the human aspect. Progress has been made through important international conventions and agreements for the protection of the environment, human rights and gender equality, but we see a failure in terms of enforcing and implementing these. Moreover, discriminations and their intersectional nature remain largely invisible; marginalized groups are considered homogeneous (when they are considered at all) and multiple discriminations are not addressed. Further, demographic challenges, including population size and age structure, need to be highlighted here too, which come with huge opportunities in terms of the future of development. We are currently seeing increased urbanisation and migration and an ageing population along with a 'peak youth', the largest generation of young people, with 1.8 billion people between the ages of 10 and 24. Of this group, 600 million are adolescent girls with specific needs, challenges and aspirations for the future. We need to investment in them if we want them to be able to realize their potential and strengthen communities and societies. Further, about 225 million women have an unmet need for contraception. This is a very important factor in terms of demographic trends, but is also a crucial barrier to gender equality and global health.

3.2 How should EU policies, and development policy in particular, better harness the opportunities and minimise the negative aspects of the trend you identified in the previous question?

The EU should put the fight against inequality and vulnerability at the core of its programmes, mitigate any potentially negative impact it may have, and provide redress for those impacts that are proven to have been detrimental to groups of people or other countries.

A comprehensive and transformative approach to sustainable development is crucial, with policy coherence across the different dimensions of sustainable development, covering all areas included in Agenda 2030. It is important to invest in the social aspect of sustainability, which has received considerably less attention than the economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. The provision of basic social services and particularly education and health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, and investing in universal health coverage should become priorities to address the demographic, social and economic challenges mentioned above, as these are key development enablers.

This should come with particular attention and investment in the empowerment of the most marginalised groups, including adolescents, women, girls and LGBTI, in a transformative way, and building the social, economic, cultural and psychological resilience of people in crisis situations. Further, investments aimed at realising and benefiting from the 'demographic dividend' should be prioritised as a way of capitalising on the potential of the young cohort and the development enabling potential of women and girls. One way of harnessing the demographic dividend would be the integration of population issues, family planning and gender equality into all development strategies and programmes. Such approach had been already recognised as important by the EU and partner countries, for example under the ACP-EU partnership and the Cotonou agreement, but was never realised.

Finally, the EU should strengthen and advance its (public) participation models, to also tackle the growing disenchantment of European citizens with the EU, and the general adversity with international cooperation and aid.

(4) Priorities for our future action: what we need to do

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require sustained EU efforts to promote a more just world, including a strong focus on the need to address gender equality and women's empowerment. Peace, inclusiveness, equality and good governance including democracy, accountability, rule of law, human rights and non-discrimination will need particular emphasis. The 2030 Agenda also requires recognition of the close interconnectedness between poverty, social issues, economic transformation, climate change and environmental issues.

To achieve poverty eradication, EU development policy will need to take into account key demographic and environmental trends, including challenges related to climate change, and concentrate effort on least developed countries and fragile states. The EU will also need to strengthen our approach to fragility and conflict, fostering resilience and security (as an increasing proportion of the world's poor are expected to live in fragile and conflict affected states) and to protect global public goods and to maintain our resource base as the prerequisite for sustainable growth. Peace and security, including security sector reform, will have to be addressed also through our development policy, as will the risks and opportunities related to migration flows. Tackling social and economic inequalities (both within and between countries) is a crucial element of the 2030 Agenda as is addressing environmental degradation and climate change. Job creation will be an important challenge in which the private sector has to play an active role. Finishing the job of the Millennium Development Goals requires identifying and reaching those people throughout the world who are still not benefitting from progress to ensure that no one is left behind.

To achieve lasting results, EU development policy will need to foster transformation and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Drivers of inclusive sustainable growth, such as human development, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and healthy and resilient oceans should be an important part of our efforts to implement the new Agenda as will efforts aimed at tackling hunger and under-nutrition. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require a multi-dimensional, integrated approach to human development. Implementation will also require us to address vectors of change, such as sustainable urban development and relevant use of information and communication technology. Our development policy will have to engage and identify new ways of partnering with the business in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth, industrialisation and innovation. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will also require cooperation with partner countries and regions on science, technology and innovation. In all aspects of our external action, the EU will need to ensure that our approaches, including development cooperation, are conducive to achieving the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals and that the EU intensifies efforts to promote pursue coherence between our policies and our internal and external action.

4.1 How can the EU better address the links between achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change and addressing other global sustainable development challenges?

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4.2 How should the EU strengthen the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in its internal and external policies, and in particular in its development policy?

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4.3 What are the main changes you would like to see in the EU's development policy framework?

In order to respond to the key challenges and opportunities, the EU development policy should:

- Focus on transformative and systemic change for people and planet while aiming to reduce global power imbalances between people and countries.
- Promote human rights and apply a rights-based approach across its policy and work. Embedding all major elements of people's rights, including universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights in its completeness, as well as gender and all other forms of equality, should run as a common thread through all interventions.
- Put empowering women and groups who suffer from discrimination(s) at the core, which should be reflected in the framework. Institutional change within EU institutions will be needed to achieve this (as called for in the Gender Action Plan 2016–2020) to implement a real gender transformative framework.
- The reviewed policy should bring along accountability mechanisms in order to ensure commitments are actually delivered.
- Put more emphasis on the health, including sexual and reproductive health, and education for the growing number of young people, with a particular focus on young girls.
- Give more importance to the means of implementation, for example to research & innovation for global health.
- Not come at the expense or be subverted by security or migration control.

4.4 In which areas highlighted above would you expect to see greater consistency between development policy and other areas of the EU external action in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

There is clearly a need for greater consistency between EU development policy and other external action, especially with security, migration, neighbourhood, climate and trade and investment policies. The EU should avoid siloed approaches, and while sectors that contribute to different development areas should be prioritised, gender equality, youth empowerment and inclusive approaches should be cross-cutting in the implementation the 2030 Agenda. To achieve this, the EU needs to identify, promote and learn from integrated approaches that have already proven valuable in tackling inter-linked development challenges, e.g. looking at examples of incorporating sexual and reproductive health and rights in different sectors and consequently deliver in different fronts, such as Population, Health and Environment programmes.

In particular within the current global context, there is a need for the EU's development policy to become more closely interlinked and coherent with its humanitarian aid policy. Complex and long lasting crisis situations require a parallel investment in development aid, emergency aid and recovery, in which building the resilience of people before, during and after a crisis situation should be the central focus. Contributing to human security and building the resilience of people in crisis situations implies strengthening the economic, social, cultural, psychological status of people, but also investing in the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all people. Further, a sustainable development policy should be grounded in international human rights and humanitarian law.

In the EU Global Strategy, we welcome a focus on youth and a joined-up approach to humanitarian, development, health and research policies, among others, in line with the SDGs. These elements could be taken up by the reviewed Consensus.

It is important that the EU leads by example. The EU should establish trade agreements and agree liberalisation policies that do not undermine the well-being, health and livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities or come to the expense of the environment. There should be attention to the gender dimension of trade agreements which will contribute to better policy making and promote gender equality.

Finally, both in the development area as in other areas of the EU external action, the gendered impact is largely not mitigated. Gender mainstreaming should not be a tick-box exercise, but all EU actions in these areas should be gender responsive. A three pronged gender approach, including high level dialogue, gender mainstreaming and specific targeted actions to reduce gender inequality, should become integrally part of all EU external action in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda - as asserted by the Gender Action Plan 2016-2020.

4.5 In which areas does the EU have greatest value-added as a development partner (e.g. which aspects of its development policy, dialogue or implementation arrangements or in which category of countries)?

In terms of health and in particular Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, the EU has a strong collective and progressive voice (cf Council Conclusions May 2015 on Gender in Development), which is a great added value in international fora and is crucial in counter-balancing conservative politics regarding issues dealing with family, gender equality, sexuality and reproductive health. The EU should strive to reflect this appropriately in its development policy, both in its programmes as in the political dialogue with partner countries and in international negotiations. Further, the EU as a donor has a critical role in supporting work in underfunded areas, for example on topics that are seen to be polarising and due to their perceived controversial nature other donors are reluctant to fund.

A particular added value is the potential of joint programming and coordinated EU and Member States' development cooperation, which can maximize its impact. This is of particular relevance when tackling social norms which cannot be changed by one actor alone.

In terms of implementation arrangement, the EU can be of particular value through using a mix of different aid modalities for translating its policies into concrete action. The EU has failed to do so in its Multiannual Financial Framework, especially when it comes to health, funded mostly through multilateral institutions and direct support to governments. The EU should ensure an efficient mix of aid modalities to ensure diversity of channels and further inclusiveness, and hence also ensure the role of CSOs in supporting delivery of services, creation of demand, as well as conducting key advocacy work on local, national, regional and international levels.

4.6 How can the EU refine its development policy to better address inequalities – including gender inequality – in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

The EU's new development policy must take both a human rights based approach and a gender transformative approach to gender inequalities. The policy must include gender equality and women's and girls' human rights as a core value and principle in all areas of development. This is critical not only to attain the objective of eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development ("primary and overarching objective of EU development cooperation", art. 5 Consensus), but also to be in line with the specific attention to inequalities and the "leave no one behind" principle of the 2030 Agenda. In this sense, multiple discrimination on the grounds of age, ethnic and racial origin, religion and belief, gender identity and sexual orientation, and disability among other factors should be integrated in EU responses. It is critical to address inequalities in an intersectional perspective, taking into account that marginalized groups are not homogeneous and that many individuals suffer from multiple discriminations.

In the European Consensus gender equality is included in the common values and principles and in the chapters on Human Development, Human Rights and the text on mainstreaming. This is not enough. In line with Agenda 2030 gender equality and women's and girls' rights must be integrated throughout the policy, with specific commitments in all development areas. Mainstreaming has been a popular tool within the EU development cooperation in the last ten years, but it has been proven ineffective due to lack of investments in implementation. Mainstreaming must be coupled with targeted actions based on context specific, systematic analysis and appropriate programming and budget, as well as policy dialogue in order to ensure an active contribution from the EU.

The ability of women to control their own fertility is fundamental to women's empowerment and equality. Protecting and promoting women's and girls' Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is essential to ensuring their freedom to participate more fully and equally in society. SRHR is acknowledged in the 2030 Agenda, both under Goal 3 (health) and Goal 5 (gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment). This echoes the EU's own commitments (cf Council Conclusions on Gender in Development, May 2015, as well as the Gender Action Plan 2016-2020). Access to SRHR is empowering not only to women and girls but also to boys and men. SRHR are a key enabler for sustainable development, for fast recovery after crisis, and for gender equality and in this sense should get a prominent place in EU's action under such objectives.

Financial guarantees must be translated not only by incrementing and diversifying the funding for gender equality but also by building a strong system of gender-responsive budgeting. Participation and proper consultation with civil society and notably organizations defending women's rights will provide the experience to implement policies and programmes, in addition to foster accountability of the EU and local authorities. In that sense, these organizations should count with resources and capacities which allow them to exercise their rights freely.

Gathering transparent and accessible information, in which disaggregated data by sex and age as well as disability and other factors of discrimination, is included, is critical to ensure EU's accountability towards citizens, partners and the international community. Reporting should be done towards expected results in order to effectively assess efforts and progress.

The EU has committed to put gender equality at the centre of its development cooperation notably through the Gender Action Plan 2016-2020. It must now not only align its action in this regard with the 2030 Agenda but also aim higher if it wants to be recognized as a true leader on gender equality.

4.7 How can the EU development policy make a stronger contribution to the security of people? How can EU development policy contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility and contribute to security and resilience in all the countries where we work?

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4.8 How can a revised Consensus on Development better harness the opportunities presented by migration, minimise the negative aspects of irregular migration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and better address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement?

Well managed migration and human mobility are recognized in the 2030 agenda as potential development enablers. If the EU wants to address root causes in migration policy, this cannot be done without investing significantly in basic social services that respond to people's actual needs. Strengthening human capital by ensuring empowerment, education, health, including sexual and reproductive health, and employment, in particular of young people, not only has the potential to stem the tide of out-migration, but also to catalyze economic growth and sustainable development. Hence, tackling root causes can not only be seen as a way to control & reduce migration flows.

Further, recent events have also made clear that there is a need to also address racism and xenophobia in Europe, to avoid discrimination of the most marginalised. To ensure coherence between the EU's internal and external policies it is critical in this context to ensure the provision of high-quality health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, to all without discrimination (including discrimination based on migrant status).

(5) Means of implementation: how do we get there?

The principle of universality underpinning the 2030 Agenda will require a differentiated approach to engagement with countries at all levels of development. Official Development Assistance will continue to play an important role in the overall financing mix for those countries most in need (particularly the Least Developed Countries). The EU and its Member States should continue to progress towards achieving their commitments. However, in all countries our development cooperation will need to take account of other sources of finance, including by leveraging other (non-Official Development Assistance) sources of finance for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The delivery of the 2030 Agenda means that our work helping countries raise their own resources (domestic resource mobilisation), the provision of aid for trade, blending* and partnering with the private sector should be priority areas of focus. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, provides a framework for our efforts, including for our work supporting the right enabling policy environment for sustainable development in our partner countries. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be closely coordinated given the strong interlinkages. Engagement with middle income countries, notably the emerging economies, will be important to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, considering the role they can play in promoting global public goods, what they can achieve within their respective countries on poverty eradication and sustainable development, and the example they can set within their regions as well as their role in regional processes. Here differentiated partnerships can play an important role (examples include different forms of political, economic, and financial investment as well as cooperation in science, technology and innovation). Specific attention and focus should also be given to Least Developed Countries, as acknowledged by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity for enhancing consistency between the different areas of the EU's external action and between these and other EU policies (as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and in [EU's Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crises](#)). The EU will continue to pursue [Policy Coherence for Development](#) as a key contribution to the collective effort towards broader policy coherence for sustainable development. In our external action, the EU needs to consider how we can use all policies, tools, instruments at our disposal coherently in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda.

* Combining EU grants with loans or with equity from other public and private financiers with a view to leveraging additional resources.

5.1 How can EU policies, and EU development policy in particular, help to mobilise and maximise the impact of the increasing variety of sustainable development finance, including in particular from the private sector?

EU ODA can be used as a catalyst for domestic resource or even resource mobilisation from other sources. This needs to be used in accordance with existing international commitments and principles, such as, inter alia, the Monterrey Consensus, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, etc. – and, in line with these, commitments to gender equality.

There needs to be attention to finding the right balance between public & private sources. Good, long term, sustainable development results contributing to the overall aim of poverty reduction, socio-economic development and tackling inequalities should be the key objective and the use of blending and PPPs must be based on this premise, in addition to human rights principles and equity outcome-oriented results.

Finally, the EU has a role to play in ensuring that private sector stakeholders implement the UN guiding principles on business and human rights and are committed to protecting, promoting and respecting all human rights.

5.2 Given the evolving availability of other sources of finance and bearing in mind the EU's commitments on Official Development Assistance (e.g. [Council Conclusions from 26 May 2015 on "A New Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015"](#), and inter alia, paragraphs 32 and 33), how and where should the EU use its Official Development Assistance strategically and to maximise its impact?

EU ODA should continue to be pursued in line with recently in Addis Ababa renewed commitments of 0.7% GNI, but a more ambitious timeframe should however be pursued – by 2020 instead of 2030. This needs to be done in line with existing international commitments and principles, such as, inter alia, the Monterrey Consensus, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

ODA should continue supporting sectors that otherwise have the risk of being neglected and that reach out to communities otherwise underserved, through a mix of funding modalities. For example, as per UNFPA Resource Flows, access to family planning and other Sexual and reproductive health services and information are mainly funded from domestic resources, the majority of which are out of pocket expenditures (OOP). Such over reliance in OOP prevents the most vulnerable from accessing services, as they typically lack the savings to pay up-front. This exacerbates existing inequalities.

ODA can be used as a catalyst of domestic resources, but also an incentive to protect and promote 'global public goods'. Further, it is important to invest in capacity-building, research and innovation to maximize impact of investments.

Finally, the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach, inclusive of civil society, is yet again encouraged in order to guarantee funding sources are in line with existing needs in countries, regardless the sources.

5.3 How can the EU better support partner countries in mobilising their own resources for poverty eradication and sustainable development?

Through its political dialogue, the EU can call for policies that support partner countries in achieving sustainable development, for example policies that are conducive of Universal Health Coverage and that avoid out of pocket expenditures.

ODA should therefore be used as a catalyzer of domestic resource mobilisation that is people-centred and sustainable. This can be done by:

Supporting partner countries in institutionalising gender and youth-responsive budgeting.

Encouraging countries to adopt non-discriminatory and pro-poor financial policies and budgets at all levels through budget support and support to public financial management.

Supporting the adoption and implementation of progressive tax systems, in which pro-poor taxation is prioritized, and by aligning tax policies with human rights and gender equality obligations at national level.

Supporting partner countries in achieving the global public goods agenda through supporting respective means of implementation, such as development of technology, innovation and capacity building for global health in partner countries, as a way not just to contributing to human development, but also as drivers of economic growth and employment creation (NB EC Communication 'A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015' identifies health as key enabler for SD and other global public goods).

Supporting the fulfilment and scaling up of regional commitments such as the Abuja Declaration, which aims at allocating at least 15 % of the annual budget of African Union countries to the health sector.

5.4 Given the importance of middle income countries to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, what form could differentiated partnerships take?

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5.5 Given experience so far in taking into account the objectives of development cooperation in the implementation of EU policies which are likely to affect developing countries (e.g. [Policy Coherence for Development: 2015 EU Report](#)), how should the EU step up its efforts to achieve Policy Coherence for Development, as a key contribution to the collective effort towards policy coherence for sustainable development? How can we help ensure that policies in developing countries, and internationally contribute coherently to sustainable development priorities?

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(6) The actors: making it work together

An important feature of the new Agenda is that all governments, developed and developing, will need to work with a wide range of stakeholders (including the private sector, civil society and research institutions) to improve the transparency and inclusivity of decision-making, planning, service delivery, and monitoring and to ensure synergy and complementarity.

The EU must continue to work collaboratively with others and contribute to a coordinated approach. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda puts national plans for implementation (including associated financing and policy frameworks) at the centre. To maximise our impact, EU development policy should be based on a strategic and comprehensive strategy for each country, which also responds to the country-specific context.

Our partner countries' implementation of the 2030 Agenda will inform our overall engagement and our development cooperation dialogue with them and will help shape our support for their national efforts. The EU should also help partner countries put in place the necessary enabling policy frameworks to eradicate poverty, tackle sustainable development challenges and enhance their policy coherence.

There is a need for a renewed emphasis on the quality of development cooperation, including existing commitments on aid and development effectiveness made in Paris, Accra and Busan* and through work with the [Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#).

An updated EU development policy should also provide a shared vision that guides the action of the EU and Member States in development cooperation, putting forward proposals on how to further enhance coordination, complementarity and coherence between EU and Member States. Strengthening [Joint Programming](#) will be an important part of this. Improving the division of labour between the EU and its Member States in order to reduce aid fragmentation will also contribute to increased development effectiveness.

* See [Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action](#) and the [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

6.1 How should the EU strengthen its partnerships with civil society, foundations, the business community, parliaments and local authorities and academia to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (including the integral Addis Ababa Action Agenda) and the Paris Agreement on climate change?

The EU should ensure participation and engagement with civil society throughout the entire process, from design, implementation, monitoring, review and accountability of policies. It is particularly important to ensure participation of local civil society organizations working with marginalized groups, including women's organizations.

It should also work with partner governments to ensure that civil society has the necessary 'enabling environment' to fulfil its functions. In recent years there has been a worrying trend towards shutting down space for civil society organisation and free expression in many countries - particularly those Southern CSOs whose work challenges injustice or promote rights-based mandates. For such organizations, often small-scale and with limited capacity, participation needs to be actively encouraged and enabled with appropriate information and resources.

Finally, the EU should also support local and international civil society organisations in Europe and in partner countries with appropriate and predictable levels of funding. The establishment of multi-stakeholder partnerships or platforms should be promoted, through which these different actors can work together on specific projects with funds attached.

6.2 How can the EU promote private sector investment for sustainable development?

Before looking at how to involve the private sector, the EU should first consider whether, and in which circumstances and sectors, it is appropriate to promote private sector investment in developing countries as part of the EU development policy and through ODA. The EU should ensure that development motivations are not undermined by commercial motivations or the interest of EU and its member states to use ODA to support their own private sector.

Further, it is important that private interests don't contradict EU commitments towards sexual and reproductive health and rights. In the field of essential public services, states have an obligation under international law to protect, promote and fulfil the right to health and the right to education, and to do so without discrimination. There should be particular vigilance to ensure that the most marginalized populations are not left of the provision of related services under motives of profitability.

Finally, the involvement of private sector should be considered in coherence - and not replace - with the involvement of civil society organizations, and the establishment of tripartite partnerships should be aimed at. In looking for private sector involvement, the EU should try to find companies that are already working on the basis of a more transformative and sustainable approach.

6.3 How can the EU strengthen relations on sustainable development with other countries, international financing institutions, multilateral development banks, emerging donors and the UN system?

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6.4 How can the EU best support partner countries to develop comprehensive and inclusive national plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

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6.5 What are the best ways to strengthen and improve coherence, complementarity and coordination between the EU and the Member States in their support to help partner countries achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development?

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6.6 How can EU development cooperation be as effective as possible, and how can we work with all partners to achieve this?

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6.7 What further progress could be made in EU Joint Programming, and how could this experience be linked with other EU joined-up actions in supporting countries' delivery of the 2030 Agenda?

Existing policies such as the Gender Action Plan 2016–2020 already integrate joint programming. This is critical to the success of the EU action in the field of gender equality, and implementation of these existing policies will now be key over the next years. Joint programming is particularly important to address social norms in the long-term as no actor alone can bring consistent and sustained change over time. This can particularly maximize impact in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. In terms of review and accountability, it is important for the EU to organize consultations with civil society so that feedback and recommendations can be given, also with regards to attention and prioritization of certain sectors and areas of work.

(7) Keeping track of progress

The EU will need to contribute to the global follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda. Keeping track of progress in a systematic and transparent way is essential for delivering the 2030 Agenda. The EU is actively contributing to the setting up of a Sustainable Development Goal monitoring system at global, regional and national level. Demonstrating results and impact from our efforts and the promotion of transparency will be important priorities for EU development policy, as part of a wider move to strengthen accountability, follow-up and review at all levels.

7.1 How can the EU strengthen its own use of evidence and analysis, including in the development field, to feed into its regular review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the UN?

As the 'leave no one behind' principle is central to the SDGs, it is critical that the implementation and mainstreaming of this principle is also reviewed, both in Europe as in its development cooperation. This requires collecting disaggregated data on marginalised and vulnerable groups (data should be disaggregated a minima by gender and age). The EU should also use the evidence and analysis that emerge from monitoring various action plans and policies, such as the Gender Action Plan to feed into its regular review. Specific gender transformative criteria must be applied to ensure that the gaps are being closed between girls and women and boys and men.

Further, some concrete steps can be taken by the EU to adjust its collection and use of data and evidence according to the SDG follow-up and review, including:

- The effective use of its research agencies across the whole range of SDG areas.

- Adjusting and improving own M&E and reporting system to include more specific indicators that are in line with the SDGs, and adapting own reporting frequency in line with frequency of regular SDGs review.

- Investing in M&E and communication staff - also at partner country level.

- Setting-up of peer monitoring, accountability and review mechanisms within its Member States, within EU institutions and with its counterparts in bi-regional frameworks. This way all actors, including CSOs, can scrutinize the SDG implementation.

- Encouraging the preparation of stakeholder reports and include these as contributions to the official national, regional and global follow-up and review processes.

7.2 How can the EU help to ensure the accountability of all actors involved in implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the private sector? How can the EU encourage a strong and robust approach to the Follow Up and Review of the 2030 Agenda from all actors?

The EU should encourage the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms, and organize regular large public EU events in which all actors are encouraged to actively participate,. The EU can also support platforms to organise public events at national Member State level.

Further, civil society plays a critical role in holding governments and other actors accountable for implementing the 2030 Agenda and for identifying gaps, and lack of progress in achieving particular targets or for particular groups that are left behind. They must be involved as governments develop implementation plans and strategies. The EU therefore also has a potential role to play in supporting data- and accountability initiatives by citizens and civil society, both in the EU as in supporting countries, to monitor progress against the SDGs. Input from other stakeholders, based on themes, regions or goals, should also be considered and included in the compulsory national reports.

7.3 How should EU development cooperation respond to the regular reviews on progress of the partner countries towards the 2030 Agenda goals?

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