

Strengthening Europe's place in the World: an External Budget for 2014-2020 to respect EU commitments and promote shared values



On 7th December 2011, The European Commission adopted a budget proposal for its external instruments from 2014-2020. The budget proposed under these instruments will allow the Union to fulfil its responsibility on the global stage: fighting poverty and promoting democracy, peace, stability and prosperity. The package covers proposals for nine geographic and thematic instruments and a common implementation regulation. These proposals have now been transmitted to the European Parliament and Council (the 27 Member States' representatives) for discussion prior to their adoption expected this year. Both of these EU institutions may propose amendments to the Commission's budget proposal.

In line with the Commission's new approach, outlined in its "Agenda for Change" Communication, the Commission will seek to target its resources in fewer sectors, focusing on the poorest countries and areas where they will have the highest impact (so-called "differentiation"), while ensuring more flexibility to be able to react swiftly to unforeseen events.

Priority areas for the external instruments funds are:

- Human rights, democracy and good governance
- Inclusive and sustainable growth for human development

The 11th EDF (2014-2020) will remain outside of the EU budget. However, the proposals and negotiation will take place in parallel to ensure consistency. It will continue to cover cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACPs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs). The next EDF will integrate elements to ensure more flexibility and rapid reaction in case of unexpected events. Regional envelopes will include non-programmable allocations to cover unforeseen needs with a regional dimension.

Under the new approach, countries that can generate enough resources to ensure their own development will no longer receive bilateral grant aid and will instead benefit from new forms of partnership; they will continue to receive funds through thematic and regional programmes. This will be complemented by different innovative cooperation modalities such as the blending of grants and loans.

"Even in times of crisis, Europe must look outwards and engage in the world. Our security and prosperity depend on what happens beyond our borders... The EU will stand by its international commitments to the poorest and most vulnerable people, to those in our neighbourhood undergoing transition and those in countries on a path to joining the Union. With these new external instruments we will also be much better placed to promote our own core values and interests, like human rights, democracy and the rule of law, but also to contribute to fighting poverty, preserving peace and resolving conflicts across the world." Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission

EU highlights Trade-Led Growth as central to modern Development Agenda

The European Commission has adopted a Communication that outlines how the EU's trade, investment and development policies can work hand-in-hand to support poverty reduction as well as inclusive and sustainable growth in developing countries for the next decade. European Commissioner for Trade, Karel De Gucht said "the rise of emerging economies like India, China and Brazil shows that trade-driven development is possible and that open markets can play a major role in generating growth".

The Communication aims to reflect changes in the relative trade power of developing countries, notably with respect to the growing weight of emerging economies and the struggle that Least Developed Countries (LDCs) have in reaping the benefits of world markets. It also takes stock of how the EU has delivered on its commitments and outlines the EU's trade and investment policies for development. According to the European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, "the integration of developing countries in global trade is a powerful lever for growth and the fight against poverty. It has helped to lift millions of people out of poverty in the last decade and will remain key to our development work".

In setting out the EU's trade and development priorities for the next decade, the Communication recognises the need to intensify efforts to ad-

dress remaining barriers to trade, and the role of partner countries in undertaking reforms necessary to a sustained trade and investment-led growth.

Since 2002, the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries have been negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). These are trade and development partnerships that go far beyond commercial relations and strive to break the vicious cycle of poverty. The aim of these far-reaching agreements is to improve ACP countries' trade and investment prospects, promote regional integration, improve the business environment, and implement the Cotonou Agreement's trade pillar. EPAs are pro-development and WTO-compliant, thus ensuring predictability and legal certainty. ACP countries that initialled EPAs with the EU can access the EU markets without duties or quotas. In the 2007 Aid for Trade Strategy, the EU and its Member States committed to provide developing countries with more Aid for Trade. The EU has delivered on both accounts. Today, the EU is the most open market to developing countries in the world.

The Communication will now be discussed in the Council and the European Parliament. Trade Council Conclusions are expected by March 2012.



The Gambia- EU Cooperation

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L-R: H.E David Morley, British High Commissioner to The Gambia, Mr Jean Marc Transon, Chargé d'Affaires at the French Embassy, Mr. Mod K. Secka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs, Mme Agnes Guillaud, EU Charge d'Affaires a.i, Hon. Mambury Njie, Minister of Finance & Economic Affairs, Madam Chinwe Dike, UNDP Resident Representative

The Gambia and the European Union sign €10 Million (GMD 400 Million) Project for Governance in The Gambia

The Republic of The Gambia and the European Union have signed a €10 million Governance Support Programme. The signing ceremony, held on Friday 3rd February at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, was presided over by the Permanent Secretary from the Ministry, Mod AK Secka, and the European Union Chargée d'Affaires a.i., Madame Agnès Guillaud.

You'll recall that in January's edition of The Gambia-EU Cooperation newsletter, we introduced the 5-year Governance Programme in The Gambia, which is intended to strengthen political and economic governance in the country through interventions at various levels. The focal sectors include improving access to justice and legal education (addressing limited capacity in justice-related institutions and making legal education available to more Gambians); supporting journalists and the media by seeking to improve governance of the media sector, with a particular emphasis on the legal and regulatory framework; and finally, bolstering financial governance, through reform of the public expenditure, taxation and revenue administrative systems (public finance management).

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the EU Charge d'Affaires a.i. stated that a central ambition of the programme was to "strengthen Government institutions in order for them to be able to provide

the services that Gambian citizens expect and deserve". She underlined that for this support to be sustainable in the long run, "the Gambian Government needs to take responsibility for a constructive dialogue with the Gambian people – for the success of development activities, the delivery of essential services, and the respect of Human Rights." Permanent Secretary Secka, speaking in the name of the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Hon. Mambury Njie, expressed his gratitude to the European Union for its contribution to the country's national development endeavours.

Those present at the signing ceremony included His Excellency David Morley, the British High Commissioner to The Gambia, Mr Jean Marc Transon, Chargé d'Affaires at the French Embassy, Madam Chinwe Dike, UNDP Resident Representative, senior government officials and Ms Nicola Neuss and Mr Fausto Perini, project managers in charge of the Program at the EU Delegation together with Mrs. Emily Foon-Sarr and Mr. Paul C. Mendy from the NAO Support Unit, and other dignitaries. Mr. Malang Nyass, the Coordinator of NAOSU chaired the occasion. Implementation of the project is due to commence this year, in close partnership with civil society and partners such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: THE NATIONAL AUTHORISING OFFICER SUPPORT UNIT (NAOSU)

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The Gambia- EU Cooperation

Gambian National Assembly Members learn about EU-funded Agricultural and Food Security GEAPP Project.



Members of the National Assembly at the forum on the discussion of the impact of the EU funded, Gambia Emergency Agricultural Production Project (GEAPP)

An impressive turnout of National Assembly Members at a two-day forum organised to discuss the impact of the EU-funded, Gambia Emergency Agricultural Production Project (GEAPP)

was described by the EU Chargée d'Affaires a.i., Agnès Guillaud, as a "demonstration of how important agriculture and food security is considered by all the Gambian institutions" at the opening ceremony on 2nd February.

The €5.3 million (GMD210m) project, implemented by the World Bank, is funded by the EU's Food Facility, which was created at the end of 2008 in response to growing food security problems faced by many developing countries. The two-year programme, which is now coming to an end, is already providing lessons to wide-ranging stakeholders in the Gambia's agricultural sector. The project focus aimed at assisting 20,000 farmers, by providing them with seeds, fertiliser and mechanical equipment. The impact of these high-quality inputs is already clear, with an average 2010 rice yield of 2.8 tonnes per hectare, 3 times higher than usually observed in The Gambia! To sustain these activities, 23 storage facilities and 3 seed multiplication centres, including the major one in Charmen, were rehabilitated. That could raise The Gambia to the rank of major seed provider in the region.

Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF II)

The Technical Cooperation Facility II, financed under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) with a financial envelope of €5 million Euros (about 20 million GMD), is a continuation of a similar program that has been running since 2008. Its overall objective is to contribute to the effective implementation of development cooperation between The Gambia and the European Union. The focus of that cooperation is laid down in jointly-agreed documents which are aligned with The Gambia's Development Strategy, the ultimate aim being to contribute to the alleviation of poverty. Concretely, the Facility should support, in all phases of the cycle of operations, the effective design, implementation and monitoring of projects and programmes funded under the aegis of the EDF and other EU funds.

The National Authorizing Officer Support Unit (NAOSU), under the supervision of the National Authorising Officer – Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Mod AK Secka – is responsible for coordinating the implementation of Gambia-EU cooperation, serving as an interface between the EU Delegation and the Government. It is therefore logical that a component of the TCFII is set aside to bolster its capacity to perform this task. Support relates to training activities, local studies and seminars linked to the programming of EDF interventions, enhancement of monitoring and evaluation practices, financial

management, and compliance with EDF procedures. The importance of dialogue and coordination with other relevant stakeholders, notably other donors, is also emphasized.

The Facility will also support awareness-raising activities, such as conferences and seminars on specific topics of interest to key development actors in The Gambia, so that they are better informed about development and trade-related issues and EU policies. Finally, looking forwards, the TCF II should support the preparation of the 11th EDF.



European Union approves the 'Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) support project to The Gambia for Integrated Coastal Zone Management and the mainstreaming of Climate Change'

The European Union has recently approved a €3.86 million project focusing on climate change adaptation in The Gambia, financed through the EU's Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA). The GCCA aims to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on climate change between the EU and developing countries most vulnerable to climate change. It provides technical and financial support to help these countries integrate climate change into their development policies and budgets and to implement adaptation and mitigation measures. The cooperation also facilitates policy dialogue and an exchange of experiences between the EU and its partner countries.

The Project is built around the following two components:

Coastal adaptation to climate change

Coastal adaptation is an urgent and high profile issue, particularly in The Gambia where a 1 metre rise in sea levels would be suffi-

cient to engulf all of Banjul. The objective is to establish a participatory integrated coastal zone management process, involving a wide range of stakeholders, with a view to providing guidance and direction on future management of the coastal zone and priority coastal zone adaptation measures, as well as enhancing ecosystem and livelihood resilience to climate change at the local level.

Mainstreaming climate change in development planning

This component should increase knowledge of how to integrate climate change into key sectors. The aim is to elaborate a national climate change policy, streamline institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms for climate change, and strengthen decision-makers' climate change adaptation response capacity.

Signature of the project's Financing Agreement between the EU and The Gambia and subsequent commencement of activities is expected to take place in the first months of 2012.

EU Chargée d'Affaires Speaks out on Violence Against Women

The EU Chargée d'Affaires Madam Agnès Guillaud a.i. has spoken about gender inequalities and violence against women. The interview, reported in a popular Gambian daily national newspaper, clearly laid out the EU's long term political commitment to the issue of women's rights, and addressed some of the challenges facing women in The Gambia.

When asked whether violence against women taking place in The Gambia was linked to its status as a highly indebted country, Madam Guillaud emphasised that a direct link does not necessarily exist. Indeed, violence against women is widespread across the world, including in Western and European countries. What was important, she noted, was education of girls and women, so as to improve their capacity to defend their rights and report violence, but also education of men and administration officials – security forces, judges and lawyers, who needed to recognise instances of violence and address them appropriately.

An effective legal framework that penalises violence against women was also important. In this regard, society as a whole had a responsibility to act: "[society] must realise that oppressing half the population will ultimately hamper the country's development." Asked about instances of violence towards women in The Gambia, Madame Guillaud noted that no official data was available, although Female Genital Mutilation remained widespread, with approximately 80% of girls in The Gambia having undergone

some form of the practise. FGM is widely considered as a violation of a girl's integrity. In addition, 48% of girls were married before the age of 18. Some of the risks associated with early marriage include marital rape, reproductive health complications, isolation, and discontinuation of education.

The EU Chargée d'Affaires highlighted the EU Non-State Actor Programme's special focus on women and women's empowerment at grassroots level. The NSA had built effective partnerships with civil society groups such as GAMCOTRAP, who played a leading role in advocating for legal reform on FGM, as well as other NGOs supporting women's access to community-based structures.

Did you know?

1 in 3 women globally will be beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused during their lifetime, with rates as high as 70% in some countries.

- United Nations Development Fund for Women