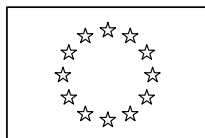


EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION
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**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PROGRAMMING OF THE 11TH EUROPEAN
DEVELOPMENT FUND (EDF) AND THE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION
INSTRUMENT (DCI) – 2014-2020**

Brussels, 15 May 2012

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
ACP-EC	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific and the European Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CTM	Country Team Meeting
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DEVCO	Directorate General for Development and Cooperation
ECHO	Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
EDF	European Development Fund
EDFI	European Development Financing Institution
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EU	European Union
FPI	Foreign Policy Instrument
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HQ	Headquarters
HR/VP	High Representative/Vice President
IFI	International Financing Institution
JFD	Joint Framework Document
MFF	Multi-annual Financial Framework
MIP	Multi-annual Indicative Programme
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
NAP	National Adaptation Programme
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Indicative Programme
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RDP	Regional Development Plan
RIP	Regional Indicative Programme
RSP	Regional Strategy Paper
RTM	Regional Team Meeting
SIDS	Small Island Developing State(s)
TEU	Treaty of the European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

1. Introduction and Context

1.1. Introduction

This document contains the detailed instructions and guidance for the EEAS, DEVCO services and EU Delegations for the programming of the EU's bilateral development cooperation with partner countries and regions in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), and in Asia, the Middle East and Latin America under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and in the context of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the period 2014-2020. The instructions set out how the programming process is organized and how the overarching policies and principles which will govern the programming for that period (in particular the proposals for a new EU development policy, as laid down in the *Agenda for Change* Communication¹), are to be translated into the programming process and documents.

These instructions do not apply to centrally managed regional and continental cooperation or to thematic programmes under the DCI, nor do they apply to cooperation with the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), which will be the subject of separate instructions.

It is important to note that, while discussions are ongoing in the Council and with the European Parliament on the legal instruments which have been proposed as the basis for the cooperation for the period 2014-2020, the timing of the programming process is related to the need to proceed with the identification and formulation of projects and programmes during 2013 in order to allow their financing on 2014 funds. The programming process is organized in a way that allows for taking into account any relevant changes which may need to be made in the programming instructions in the light of those discussions in the Council and with the European Parliament.

The framework for the programming process will be the same for both the EDF and the DCI, except for certain EDF specificities, which are set out below.

1.2. Context

The basis for EU external action is set out in the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, and the creation of the function of the High Representative/Vice President of the Commission and of the European External Action Service (EEAS) have paved the way for a more coherent and effective framework for the formulation and execution of the Union's external action, including its development cooperation with partner countries and regions. This new framework, the related institutional changes and the important role of the EU Delegations in third countries and regions will enable the EU to reinforce its role in the world and enhance its overall results and impact, in particular of its development policy and external assistance.

¹ COM(2011) 637 final

As set out in the Lisbon Treaty, as well as in the ACP-EC (Cotonou) Partnership Agreement (hereinafter referred to as "the Cotonou Agreement"), revised in 2010, the fight against poverty will remain the primary objective of the development policy of the EU, which shall be conducted within the framework of the principles and objectives of EU external action. However, crises and profound changes in the international context in recent years have also forced the EU to sharpen its analysis, streamline its policy agenda and reinforce its operational instruments in support of inclusive and sustainable development.

Such changes have led the Commission to present proposals for new guiding principles in the [Communication on the Agenda for Change \(2011\)](#), which, once endorsed by the Council, the relevant Commission services and the EEAS will ensure are progressively reflected in programming documents, as well as in the discussions regarding the architecture, legislation and programming of future financial instruments for external action. In this Communication, and building on the 2005 *European Consensus on Development*, the Commission has proposed to focus EU development efforts on partner countries that are most in need (including fragile states) and where EU assistance can have the greatest impact, concentrating in particular on:

1. Human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance

The EU should increase its engagement in partner countries in promoting:

- Democracy, human rights and the rule of law (see also the [Communication on EU Human Rights and Democracy Policy - 2011](#))
- Gender equality and the empowerment of women (see also the [EU Gender Action Plan - 2011](#))
- Public sector management
- Tax policy and administration
- Fight against corruption
- Civil society and local authorities
- Sustainable and transparent management of natural resources
- Development-security nexus

2. Inclusive and sustainable growth

The EU should also provide support to inclusive and sustainable growth, including promoting green, low carbon economy through an efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, with a view to allow people to benefit from greater wealth, the creation of jobs and decent work, and thus contribute to poverty reduction. Additionally, green low carbon economy will improve the resilience of developing countries and regions to the impact and consequences of climate change.

This should be promoted through an increased focus on key drivers for growth and sustainable development, notably:

- Business environment, productive capacities and investments
- Regional integration and international trade.

The EU should focus its support on sectors which build the foundations for growth and help to ensure that it is inclusive and sustainable, notably:

- Education
- Health
- Employment and social protection

The EU should also take into account the importance of ensuring social dialogue, while having regard to the impact of migratory flows and regional labour mobility, and on sectors that have a strong multiplier impact on the economy and contribute to environmental protection, climate change prevention and adaptation, notably:

- Sustainable agriculture, fisheries and food security (see also the Communication on [An EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing Food Security challenges-2010](#))
- Sustainable energy.

The Commission has proposed that the EU should adapt its support (the mix of instruments and aid levels, modalities and arrangements) to the country's situation and progress in terms of its commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, its ability to conduct reforms and to meet its people's demands and needs. In order to boost financial resources for growth and development, it also proposed to develop blending mechanisms to allow for the appropriate mixing of financial instruments.

In addition to the proposed overall policy priorities set out in the *Agenda for Change*, the Commission has also presented new policies and proposals on other key issues in development cooperation, including in the [Communication on Budget Support \(2011\)](#).

In that Communication, budget support remains an important instrument of EU development cooperation. At the same time, the Commission proposed that eligibility criteria be strengthened in key areas in order to provide a more rigorous approach. In particular, it proposed that more emphasis will be put on the fundamental values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as well as on transparency and oversight.

In the same spirit, the EU constantly seeks to improve the effectiveness and impact of its aid through an improved aid effectiveness agenda, in particular as defined by the Outcome Document of the [High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Korea \(2011\)](#).

The EU will also continue to provide due attention to mainstreaming cross-cutting and horizontal policy issues, as identified in the 2005 *European Consensus*, in line with present EU political commitments².

2. New Programming Framework

2.1 Institutional set up

² The Commission has, for example, proposed to allocate 20% of the EU budget to climate-related activities.

Pursuant to Article 17(1) of the TEU, the management of programmes is the responsibility of the Commission. Article 9 of the EEAS Council Decision specifies the distribution of tasks between the EEAS and the Commission services in relation to the programming process. In line with Article 9 of the EEAS Council Decision, the Working Arrangements agreed between the EEAS and the Commission services further specify this distribution of tasks for the whole programming cycle as well as to wider aspects.³ Section 3.4 of these Working Arrangements stipulates that the EEAS prepares the Commission Decisions relating to the following steps in the programming cycle for the EDF and the DCI:

- Country allocations, determining the global financial envelope for each region (subject to the indicative breakdown in the multi-annual financial framework) and reserving, within each region, a proportion of funding for regional programmes;
- Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs/RSPs) and the National and Regional Indicative Programmes (NIPS/RIPs).

It furthermore stipulates that any proposals in relation to the EDF and the DCI, including those for changes in the basic regulations and the programming documents referred to above, will be prepared jointly by the EEAS and the relevant Commission services under the responsibility of the Commissioner for Development Policy. The Decisions shall be submitted jointly with the HR/VP for adoption by the Commission.

There is a need for close cooperation and dialogue between EU Delegations, the EEAS and DEVCO during this process, to make sure that the proposals developed by the EU Delegations are in line with the EU's overall external relations priorities, regional and thematic priorities and EU policy orientations. Ensuring good cooperation and a smooth working process is, in particular, a joint responsibility of EU Heads of Delegation and relevant geographical directors in the EEAS and DEVCO, who will also ensure the appropriate involvement of the other Commission services and the EIB.

2.2 Programming process

A simplified process

One of the main purposes of the present instructions is to simplify the process of programming the EU's bilateral development cooperation with partner countries and regions, making use, wherever possible, of existing national or regional policy documents as the main reference documents for the programming process. Consequently, the multiannual indicative programme should become the central document of the programming process and EU specific strategy papers) should in most cases no longer be needed and should only be used where no other option is available. Instead, the existing national or regional development plans (or their equivalents) should from now on be used as the point of departure for the programming process, and as the main basis for coordination and dialogue with EU Member States and other donors. However, in accordance with the requirements of Annex IV of the Cotonou Agreement, for ACP countries/regions, a concise CSP/RSP may still need to be prepared when no agreement can be reached with the partner country/region to use the

³ SEC(2012) 48, p. 17 ff.

existing national/regional development plan as the strategic basis for the programming (further details on this assessment and process and on ACP specificities are provided in Section 3).

A second element of simplification is the aim to have succinct programming documents. In the same spirit, there will no longer be a standard obligation for EU Delegations to prepare various technical annexes to the programming documents on specific issues (such as migration).

Phases of the process and timeframe

An important part of the programming process is foreseen to take place during the course of 2012. The identification and formulation of projects and programmes which are to be financed on 2014 funds will then take place during 2013.

The programming process will take place in two phases - a first phase for analysing the national/regional development plan as a basis for EU programming and for defining the proposal for the overall lines of the EU response (see Section 3) and a second phase for the preparation of the full response as to be laid down in the multi-annual indicative programme, the MIP (see Section 4).

An overview of the entire process is presented in the flow chart in Annex 1.

In countries subject to EU restrictive measures, or measures of suspension of cooperation such as under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, the EU Delegation should consider the most appropriate way forward and make proposals to the EEAS and DEVCO Geographical Directors.

First phase

During the **first phase**, which takes place **in the spring and summer of 2012**, EU Delegations in partner countries and regions, eligible for bilateral assistance under the DCI or the EDF will, in accordance with the instructions in Section 3, submit to relevant geographical Directors in the EEAS and DEVCO an analysis of the existing national/regional development plan as well as a proposal for the overall lines of the EU response, or where possible, a draft joint programming document.

The deadlines for the submission of these documents are as follows:

For DCI and ACP country programmes 30 September 2012

- For **DCI/ACP regional programmes, for which additional details on the programming will be communicated by separate instruction, the deadline for submitting the documents will be fixed in the same instruction.**⁴
- For both the DCI and ACP countries, when the EU Delegation, on the basis of its assessment, considers that the existing national or regional development plan cannot be the basis for the EU programming, it should submit to EEAS and DEVCO geographical Directors its assessment as well as a duly justified proposal to instead prepare a CSP/RSP at the latest **by 1 July 2012.**

⁴ See footnote 3

The EEAS in agreement with DEVCO will then **within two weeks** of the reception of the EU Delegation's assessment transmit their instructions to the EU Delegation.

Depending on the instructions, a revised proposal or a draft CSP and a proposal for overall lines of EU response will then need to be submitted at the latest by **30 September 2012**.

The EEAS and DEVCO will examine the assessment or the NDP/RDP and the proposal for the overall lines of the EU response submitted by the EU Delegation so as to ensure that the proposals are in line with relevant EU approaches, policies and priorities. The EEAS will coordinate this process jointly with relevant DEVCO services and organise Country/Regional Team Meetings (CTMs/RTMs), ensuring the involvement of all relevant Commission services and the EIB. The EEAS, in agreement with DEVCO, will then transmit instructions to the EU Delegation **within two months from the date of reception of the EU Delegation's assessment and proposal**.

Second phase

On the basis of the instructions provided by the EEAS in agreement with DEVCO, the EU Delegation will transmit the draft multi-annual indicative programme **within three months from the date of transmission by Headquarters of the instructions for the second phase**.

The EEAS and DEVCO will examine the draft multi-annual indicative programme and jointly organise Country/Regional Team Meetings (CTMs/RTMs), ensuring the involvement of all relevant Commission services and the EIB. The EEAS, in agreement with DEVCO, will then transmit instructions for finalization of the draft multi-annual indicative programme to the EU Delegation **within two months from the date of reception of the draft MIP**.

Once the final draft is received from the EU Delegation, the subsequent internal Commission process for the finalisation of the programming documents will then be taken forward as far as possible. The formal decision-making process, involving all relevant Commission services, will take place upon the adoption of the necessary legal instruments, being the legal basis for the programming documents.

Programming Seminars

During the second phase of the programming period, programming seminars between the Commissioner responsible for development and partner countries and regions will be jointly organised by the EEAS and DEVCO services on a regional basis, where possible, and in close cooperation with the EU Delegations. The purpose of these seminars would be to enhance political and policy dialogue with partner countries/regions on their development strategies, and to explain and discuss the EU approach in defining its response to their needs, priorities and objectives, including through agreed or ongoing Joint Programming efforts in the region. EU Member States present in the countries concerned and, where appropriate, relevant Commission services and the EIB, should be involved in the preparation of these regional programming seminars. It should be noted that these regional seminars would be *complementary to*, and not in any way *instead of*, the ongoing national dialogue and consultations with partner countries carried out by the EU Delegations.

2.3 Guiding principles

In the *Agenda for Change* Communication, the Commission has proposed that the programming of bilateral and regional EU assistance under the DCI and the EDF be guided by the following key policy principles.

Ownership

The programming normally starts with the national government/regional organisation, national parliament and other representative institutions, taking ownership of an inclusive development process. Civil society organisations (CSOs), social partners such as trade unions and employers organisations, and the private sector play a vital role in advocating transparency and accountability in governance, democratic and representative governance, gender equality and providing services to populations that are sometimes out of the reach of governments. The private sector is the engine of national economies and indispensable for achieving sustainable growth and poverty reduction. CSOs and the private sector are therefore crucial to ensuring national ownership and should be consulted in the process of defining the priorities to be retained in the EU programming documents.

The EU Delegation should, in their reporting to the EEAS and DEVCO on this process, identify the local stakeholders consulted and the meetings that took place.

Comprehensiveness and coherence

There is a need for an assessment of the overall situation of the partner country/region with a view to defining a vision regarding the EU's relationship with, and support to, a partner country/region. This vision should guide all the EU's relations with that country/region, including its cooperation and assistance under different instruments. This vision should be set out in the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP). Where a Joint Framework Document (JFD) exists, outlining the EU's main priorities and objectives in its overall relations with a partner country/region (see Section 3.4), or where a Joint programming document exists, the MIP will be in line therewith.

Such a vision also should be the basis for a greater coherence at four levels:

- between the country programmes and the regional programmes which are managed by/in cooperation with regional bodies within the context of specific regional cooperation or integration frameworks (such as ASEAN or COMESA);
- between these country and regional programmes, on the one hand, and HQ managed regional multi-country programmes (e.g. EDF Intra-ACP) and DEVCO- or FPI-managed thematic programmes (DCI) and instruments (EIDHR, Instrument for Stability, Nuclear Safety, and Partnership Instrument), on the other;
- between development and other cross-cutting or sectoral EU policies and programmes (e.g. security, disaster risk reduction, migration, environment, climate change, energy, trade, agriculture, fisheries, drugs) to ensure an effective EU external action and promote Policy Coherence for Development (PCD);
- between policies, instruments and actions of the EU, and those of EU Member States and/or the EIB and other European Development Finance Institutions.

Such a comprehensive approach is particularly important in the case of crisis/disaster/conflict-affected/fragile countries/regions, including those in transition, as well as for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Such countries/regions are often subject to a number of specific EU strategies, policies and instruments related to EU crisis management, conflict prevention, security policy and stability/fragility. All instruments should be used in a way that ensures that the EU can deliver as one at country level. This requires involving specific expertise of these instruments in the programming exercise (including in the context of CSDP missions as may be deployed or planned). In crisis and post-crisis situations, EU Delegations should also involve ECHO offices early in the process. Synergies should be found in an appropriate mix of policies and instruments.

The programming by the EEAS and/or DEVCO of the Headquarters-managed thematic programmes/instruments and regional multi-country programmes will take place in parallel to that of the geographic programmes and the EEAS and DEVCO will jointly provide information to EU Delegations on their purpose and scope. The EEAS and DEVCO will also seek to ensure complementarity and coherence with EU Delegation managed country and regional programmes when programming and implementing the headquarters-managed thematic programmes/instruments and regional multi-country programmes.

For those countries which are part of regional cooperation or integration frameworks, the EU Delegation should, in preparing the programming of EU bilateral assistance, take particular care of promoting and facilitating the necessary support by the country to the regional dimension and mandate and set out its vision in the assessment to be made in the first phase of the process, both in view of the bilateral programming for the country for which it is in charge and of the regional programming.

Synchronisation and flexibility

In order to strengthen the national/regional ownership of the development process, to become more effective and to have a greater impact, the EU should be flexible and better able to adapt to specific country/regional contexts. It can do this in the first place by synchronizing the programming cycle with the partner country/regional cycle. This may in some cases lead to shorter programming cycles (see Section 3.1 for more details).

Flexibility is also key to ensuring EU capacity to respond to sudden changes (crisis, conflicts, outcome of elections, etc.) in the political and/or developmental context in a partner country/region. Such responses may need to be adopted through accelerated procedures so as to ensure a timely EU response on the ground.

In relation to conflict prevention, post-crisis and situations of fragility, the importance of flexibility for programming to help build resilience, achieve stability and tackle the link between security and development needs to be emphasized. The volatility of situations in fragile states and countries with a high risk of conflict means that there is a need for updating the analysis and EU programming as soon as fundamental, underlying assumptions are no longer applicable.

In these situations, as well as elsewhere, ad hoc reviews of programming documents may be necessary, including for the allocation of any un-programmed funds or for the re-programming/re-allocation of unused funds. In post-crisis and fragility situations, ad hoc reviews should propose a

specific strategy to ensure the transition to long-term development, promoting appropriate coordination and transition between the humanitarian and development policy instruments.

Increased flexibility also implies that reviews (including Mid Term Reviews) should as much as possible be synchronised with the country/regional cycle, including for ACP-countries/regions.

The EEAS and DEVCO will, in the context of reviews of programming documents, take care to involve all relevant Commission services and the EIB.

Section 3.1 contains further details on how to implement synchronisation with the national development cycle.

Differentiation

The differentiated approach to aid allocations may result in countries/regions receiving less or no bilateral development aid. Countries that no longer receive bilateral aid will, however, continue to be eligible for funding through regional and thematic programmes. This approach may result in the pursuit of different types of development partnerships based on mutual interests and common concerns. Such partnerships could also make use of other funding instruments, such as loans.

Sector concentration and choice of sectors

Focusing the resources of the EU on a smaller number of sectors/areas in partner countries and regions will increase the impact and leverage of EU assistance and will help to keep EU assistance manageable both for the partner countries and regions as well as for the Commission services and for the EU Delegations. In the *Agenda for Change* Communication, the Commission has proposed that the EU focuses its bilateral assistance on a maximum of three sectors, understood in a narrow sense. Budget support is not a sector but an implementation modality and may be used within the sectors chosen, but cannot be seen as a justification for a fourth, additional sector.

Priority should be given to the sectors referred to in the *Agenda for Change* Communication, including for actions related to climate change, being understood that the selection of sectors should, for reasons of ownership, effectiveness and coordination, be proposed by the EU Delegation in consultation with the partner country and other donors, especially EU Member States present in the country/region, and in the context of processes relating to Joint Programming and division of labour.

The assessment and choice of sectors should be based on inter alia the needs and development objectives of the partner country/region and national/regional definitions of sectors (as used in National/Regional Development Plans etc.). This should, however, not lead to an artificial extension of the concept of a "sector".

Annex 2 provides more detailed guidance on issues to consider during the identification and selection of appropriate sectors.

Blending for growth

Grants can be used in different ways and combinations (technical assistance, equity participation, direct public investment grants, insurance premia, guarantee and risk sharing schemes) to leverage

public and private investments. This will be done primarily through the regional investment facilities⁵, including through dedicated financing windows such as for climate-related investments. These facilities are generally funded under the regional/interregional programmes.

In addition, blending could also take place by using funds foreseen in the MIP:

- these could be channeled through the regional EU investment facilities in support to national/regional projects;
- the EU can also support specific blending operations of the partner country, e.g. when the type of operation envisaged cannot be financed through the regional EU investment facilities.

In all these cases, the preparation and implementation of the financing should be done through the involvement of European or other International Financing Institutions, making use of their expertise and capacities to provide effective support at country or regional level. The relations with the financing institutions will be coordinated by the EU Delegation with DEVCO within the framework of its overall management of blending operations.

Blending is an implementation modality and should thus not be decided upon as such at the programming stage. Still, Delegations should be aware of this option when preparing the programming. Please also note that where funds foreseen in the MIP are to be used for blending, it should take place within the sectors selected in the MIP.

Coordination and joint programming

Joint EU-Member States programming is a priority and a powerful tool for coordination. Other relevant actors in the local development community should be consulted, including humanitarian partners (e.g. in situations of transition, linking short-term interventions to longer term engagement). See Section 3 for further details.

In all cases, strong coordination and cooperation with and between EU Member States and other donors (including emerging donors, international NGOs and private foundations) is essential. Coordination should also cover the EIB, other European Development Financing Institutions (EDFIs) and International Financing Institutions (IFIs) active in development in the country/region, including Regional Development Banks.

3. First phase of programming process

3.1. The national/regional development plan and the overall lines of the EU response

The EU will, as a rule and to the extent possible, base its programming on the partner countries'/regions' own development plans or equivalent⁶, meaning CSPs/RSPs are to become

⁵ These are the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF), Latin America Investment Facility (LAIF), EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (ITF), Investment Facility for Central Asia (IFCA) Asian Investment Facility (AIF), Investment Facility for the Pacific (IFP), Caribbean Investment Facility (CIF).

⁶ Where a National/Regional Development Plan (such as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, PRSP) is mentioned in

rather an exception to the rule. Consequently, the multi-annual indicative programme, which represents the EU response, should, to the extent possible, be synchronized with the country's/region's cycle.

EU Delegations should make an assessment whether the national/regional development plan provides a sufficient basis for the programming of EU assistance. The template for this assessment is contained in Annex 3. The assessment should preferably be made jointly with EU Member States and other key development partners present on the ground.

In the exceptional case where the EU Delegation considers that the national or regional development plan cannot be the basis for the EU programming, it should submit a duly justified proposal to EEAS and DEVCO geographical Directors to instead prepare a CSP/RSP.

Furthermore, considering that for ACP countries/regions, the Cotonou Agreement foresees the preparation of CSPs/RSPs, a concise CSP/RSP will still need to be prepared if the partner country/regional partner organisation does not agree to use the national/regional development plan as the basis for the programming.

When the national/regional development plan can be confirmed as the basis for EU programming, the EU Delegation will prepare a proposal for the overall lines of the EU response, to be set out in the conclusions of the assessment (see section 6 of the template for the assessment in Annex 3).

In preparing its proposal, the EU Delegation should consider what the timing/duration of the national/regional cycles would entail for the programming of EU assistance in terms of the phasing and sequencing of programming periods, taking also into account important national/regional events (e.g. national elections):

- ✓ The most straightforward scenario would be that the national/regional cycle actually begins on 1 January 2014 (and a national development plan is already adopted) or has started before that date and is still running. In this case the EU should if possible immediately synchronise its programming with the cycle of the partner country/region, starting from 1 January 2014.
- ✓ If the new national/regional cycle begins in 2015/2016, or if the cycle begins in theory on 1 January 2014 but the relevant national/regional plan is not adopted in time, i.e. before 2014, the EU Delegation should prepare a proposal for programming in the interim period – either to remain involved in key sectors covered by the present programming, or through an alternative temporary bridging solution, involving one or two new sectors (or a combination of the two) - and an indicative proposal for the subsequent synchronising to the country/regional cycle (including possible joint programming).
- ✓ If the national/regional programming starts in 2017 (*or later*), then a full programming document covering 2014-2016 (*or longer*) should be proposed that is aligned to the existing national/regional development plan.

the present instructions, it should be taken to also mean equivalent documents, regional action plans, sector plans, such as National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs/NAPs) or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) or – as appropriate – a combination of such documents, depending on the national context .

The EU Delegation should collaborate on synchronisation with MS present in the partner country, including with a view to joint programming.

The use of national/regional strategies and development plans as a basis for the EU programming does not imply that the EU cannot support areas which are not reflected in these documents. The EU might decide to support such areas (for example business environment, climate action, human rights, or strengthened accountability) in order to encourage policies and actions in areas considered essential for the country's/region's development. Proposals to do so should be explained and motivated by the EU Delegation, which should provide information on local ownership for such initiatives and collaboration with other donors.

In case of fragile/conflict-affected countries or countries with increased/emerging conflict risk, the EU Delegation's assessment needs to be underpinned by considerations that may be additional to the national development plan (e.g. transition plan/needs assessment). In case of disaster prone countries or countries with increased climate change risk, specific disaster/climate risk assessment is necessary. In all these cases, the EU Delegation should involve the ECHO field offices early on in the programming process.

Finally, in cases where the existing national or regional plan is, for whatever reason, not considered a sufficient basis for programming of EU aid, EU Delegations will need to consider, and propose to geographical Directors in the EEAS and DEVCO, in how far it would still be possible, useful and appropriate to align the EU programming cycle to the national cycle within the context of a CSP/RSP.

3.2. Joint Programming

EU Joint Programming occurs when the EU and its Member States agree to adopt a common multi-annual programming document for their support to a partner country/region, or when they take steps in this direction. To maximise aid effectiveness, Joint Programming processes should include EIB and other European Development Financing Institutions and also be open to non-EU donors that are committed to the objectives of the exercise. If donor-wide strategies are already under way, EU Joint Programming should build on, complement and strengthen these existing processes.

The synchronization of the EU and Member States' programming cycles to the national/regional cycles of the partner country/region is a requirement for launching a Joint Programming process. This may require the prolongation of existing bilateral programmes until the new planning cycle of the partner country/region begins. During this interim period, the EU Delegation should facilitate the preparatory process for Joint Programming with the partner country/region, EU Member States present on the ground and other donors. The interim period (see Section 3.1 above) could be used to identify which donors will participate in the subsequent Joint Programming process and how the work should be organised.

In accordance with the Council Conclusions of November 2011⁷, Joint Programming calls for a joint analysis and a joint response to the partner country's/region's development plan. The analysis

⁷ http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/126060.pdf

should be concise and refer to available analysis (including what is available in the national/regional development plan or other documentation by EU Member States, International Financing Institutions or other donors). The Joint Programming document should include the identification of the sectors of intervention, in-country/regional division of labour and the indicative financial allocations per sector and donor. Both grants and concessional loans should be covered by the Joint Programming document.

While the Joint Programming process may cover several sectors, the principle of sector concentration in defining the EU support, as explained in Section 2.3 and Annex 2 should be fully respected.

Joint Programming documents will be prepared in-country/at regional level by the EU, EU Member States and where possible with the EIB, other European Development Financing Institutions and other donors under the guidance of the Heads of Mission of participating donors. The normal in-country/regional consultation process should apply, including notably civil society, social partners and private sector. EU Member States not represented in the country/region will be informed regularly by EEAS and DEVCO about the progress made in the Joint Programming exercises.

There is a need for close cooperation and dialogue between EU Delegations, the EEAS and DEVCO during this process. At Headquarters, the EEAS and DEVCO will also ensure the timely involvement of the other relevant Commission services and the EIB through the organisation of Country/Regional Team Meetings.

Once agreed at country level by the participating EU Heads of Mission, the Joint Programming document will be transmitted by the EU Head of Delegation to the EEAS and DEVCO for endorsement, following consultation of relevant Commission services, of the EU contribution. The EU Head of Delegation will also see to it that participating donors will do likewise for their contributions. Following endorsement by Headquarters, the Joint Programming document should be finalized in consultation with the partner country/region and initialled by all participating Heads of Mission, including the EU Head of Delegation, together, whenever possible, with the partner country/region.

The Joint Programming document will then be transmitted by the participating Heads of Mission to their respective capitals recommending it for adoption and formalisation in accordance with their internal procedures and requirements (Commission adopts the EU part, taking account of the proposed Member States' contributions to the Joint Programming). The Joint Programming document should also be translated into the bilateral programming documents/implementation plans (such as the EU NIP/MIP - see Section 4).

A signing ceremony/visibility event may be envisaged after the formal adoption by the Commission. It is to be noted that this adoption may only take place after the adoption of the relevant legal basis (DCI or 11th EDF).

In the case of fragile or conflict affected states, there is a particular need for a wider group of donors present in the country/region to participate in Joint Programming. Therefore, the international community, and in particular the EU, should actively strive towards Joint Programming, which may take the form of a transition compact and which may have short or longer-term validity. The

compact should as far as possible be based on a national/regional transition plan and should include a special emphasis on stepping-up coordination between relief, rehabilitation and development in order to achieve resilience. It should, in particular, ensure coherent approaches in state building. Relevant experiences from transitional states should be taken into account.

3.3. Country or Regional Strategy Papers (CSP/RSP)

For countries/regions for which bilateral assistance is financed under the DCI, an EU CSP/RSP should only be drawn up, if the national/regional development plan does not provide a sufficient basis for programming by the EU, or if Joint Programming is not possible.

Even in such cases, no strategy papers will be needed in the following cases:

- for those countries/regions that receive an EU allocation equal to or less than €50 million during the period 2014-2020;
- where a Joint Framework Document (JFD) that provides a comprehensive EU approach to the relations of the EU or the EU and its Member States with the partner country/region, including EU development policy, as proposed in the [Joint Communication on Global Europe \(2011\)](#), already exists⁸.

For ACP countries/regions, a similar approach is to be followed, but a concise CSP/RSP will still need to be prepared in accordance with the Cotonou Agreement, Annex IV, Articles 2 and 8, in those cases where no agreement with the partner country/region can be reached to base the EU programming on the national/regional development plan.

In all cases, the formulation of an EU CSP/RSP implies a prior assessment of the available national/regional policies and implementation plans and of the situation in the country/region. This assessment should be carried out by the EU Delegation, in consultation with key actors, including civil society and the private sector, and its results should be presented in a draft CSP/RSP on the basis of the template contained in Annex 4.

In case of fragile/conflict-affected countries or countries with increased/emerging conflict risk, the assessment needs to take into account the underlying/root causes of the situation and to be underpinned by considerations that may be additional to the national development plan (e.g. transition plan/needs assessment). In case of disaster prone countries or countries with increased climate change risk, additional disaster/climate risk assessment may be necessary.

The CSP/RSP should be a concise document and should refer for analytical aspects to existing evaluations and other documents prepared by the government/regional partner, other international key partners, or the EU Delegation, the EEAS or Commission services.

3.4. The specific case of a Joint Framework Document (JFD) as a non-programming document

⁸ The meaning of "joint" in the term Joint Framework Document refers to the fact that it covers both Commission competences as well as CFSP. The document may or may not be "joint" with EU MS.

The main purpose of the JFD would be to integrate a broad policy mix referring to the EU or EU and Member States' instruments and policies in relation to a partner country or region, including diplomatic and political aspects (Common Foreign and Security Policy, political dialogue, democracy and human rights, etc.), development cooperation, humanitarian aid, security, and the external projection of internal policies.

As proposed in the [Joint Communication on Global Europe \(2011\)](#), the EU should - whenever it is considered possible, timely and useful - prepare JFD's, outlining the EU's main priorities and objectives in its overall relations with partner countries/regions. JFD's are not programming documents as such, and the progress of the programming process at country/regional level will therefore not depend on whether a JFD is being prepared.

Where a JFD has been agreed, it would, however, be used for EU programming, and therefore no separate country/regional paper would be required. The national/regional development plans will remain the key reference documents for the programming process also in countries/regions where there is a JFD.

4. Second phase of programming process: Multi-annual Indicative Programme⁹

The Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) should from now on become the central document of the programming process for all countries and regions receiving an allocation for bilateral assistance.

A MIP should be prepared in all cases for all countries and regions that are eligible to bilateral EU assistance, except where a Joint Programming document exists which contains all the elements required for a MIP as set out below, where it may serve as the EU MIP, which the Commission would adopt on behalf of the EU for the assistance to be provided by the EU.

For smaller countries with limited financial allocations and similar conditions in the same region (for example Pacific SIDS), a multi-country MIP covering several countries could be drawn up, provided this is agreed with the partner countries/regions concerned.

The MIP must be drawn up in accordance with the format as contained in Annex 5.

The draft MIP to be prepared by the EU Delegation should, in its first section, set out the proposal for the overall lines of the EU response, as approved by the EEAS and DEVCO in accordance with Section 2.2, or on the basis of the Joint Programming document as endorsed by the EEAS and DEVCO in accordance with Section 3.2. It will include the strategic objectives of the EU's relationship with the partner country/region and the sectors identified for EU assistance.

This first section of the MIP will also include the context/justification and sector/thematic analysis behind the choice of the sectors.

The followings sections of the MIP will then set out:

⁹ For EDF: National Indicative Programmes and Regional Indicative Programmes (NIP/RIP)

- the indicative amount allocated to each sector;
- for each sector, the overall and specific objectives;
- for each specific objective, the main expected results;
- for each result, the main indicators and, where possible, targets.
- the possible amount to be kept un-programmed in order to answer to specific needs of post-crisis/fragile situations.

The MIP must also specify the overall measures as well as the specific measures for each sector to be taken by the partner country government or regional organisation to achieve the specified objectives and results. The MIP should, as part of the justification of the sector choice in Section 1.2 of the MIP, provide a succinct summary of the partner country's or regional organisation's sector policies (where available) and financial commitments to ensure the feasibility and sustainability of the EU response. The sector policy commitments must also take into account cross-cutting issues (the promotion of human rights, gender equality, democracy, good governance, children's rights, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, environmental sustainability, and combating HIV/AIDS).

Where possible, donors should agree to use the country's/region's result measurement frameworks. Such frameworks would normally include a limited number of agreed indicators to ensure mutual accountability and on the basis of which both donor performance towards agreed goals and the government's/regional partner's performance in implementing the national/regional development plan can be assessed. When such frameworks are available, they should be annexed to the MIP.

For the measurement of the results, reference should also be made to a monitoring system that will collect and analyse the data in a timely and systematic manner. Where possible, the system laid down in the national/regional development plan should be used. If insufficient, support to strengthen the national/regional system should be provided within the sector and/or budget support programmes selected in the MIP.

It is important that any factors or conditions which could adversely affect results are identified and analyzed (e.g. political governance, macroeconomic stability, public financial management, corruption, natural resource depletion, environmental degradation, and climate risks etc.). This analysis will influence how programmes and funding modalities are designed and decided. To this end, a short risk analysis framework covering each sector should be included in the MIP (see Section 3.1.7 of Annex 5). For fragile countries and countries/regions in crisis, the risk of "no action" should also be taken into account.