

**INFORMAL SUMMARY OF THE  
MEETING OF EU DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS GENERAL  
BRUSSELS, 12 DECEMBER 2012**

**EXTRACT ON PROGRAMMING/ JOINT PROGRAMMING**

F. Fotiadis (**FF**) chaired the meeting with the EU Development Directors General (DGs) of the 27 Member States (MS) and Croatia, with participation of K. Rudischhauser (**KR**, Deputy Director General EuropeAid), G. Martin Prada (**GMP**, Director EU Development Policy EuropeAid), P. Amilhat (Director Resources EuropeAid), of the EEAS, the EIB and the Council Secretariat (see agenda and list of participants enclosed).

**(1) EU Programming/ Joint Programming – State of play and next steps**

FF, KR and GMP in their introductory remarks underscored the following points, inviting reactions of EU DGs: reactions of EU DGs:

- The objective of the programming process for the post-2013 period is to focus and simplify (maximum three intervention sectors), to ensure that the Agenda for Change priorities will be reflected in the selected intervention areas, to compress the programming process by dropping country strategy papers, basing ourselves on the country's own development strategies and plans and to synchronise to partner country's planning cycles.
- While Commission wants to be prepared for implementation as from 2014, the financial instruments for EU external action and the budget have yet to be adopted. An open issue was how to involve the European Parliament (EP) in the programming process, as EP wants to have a say on programming sectors, overall amounts per country and sector, thereby being involved in the programming as a whole.

**(1.1) Programming**

- More and more MS like EU itself are applying the maximum three-sectors principle. The DGs agreed that good coordination through Division of Labour was necessary in order not to underfund sectors (not leaving gaps after exits).
- The DGs underscored the importance of reflecting the Agenda for Change priorities in the EU programming process.
- Some DGs explicitly expressed their flexibility on synchronisation. Some others with current fixed multi-annual timelines do not see it (any longer) as major stumbling block, and are open for ways to adapt to local synchronisation processes.
- The EIB called for including lenders in the context of differentiation.
- Many DGs asked for an experts meeting to discuss more in detail the EU programming, esp. regarding the implementation of the Agenda for Change and allocation of funds.
- There was repeated emphasis on including results and evaluation frameworks in the programming process.

**(1.2) Joint programming**

Overall, the exchange showed strong support for joint programming: for the relevance of the EU acting as one, more effectively, for increasing EU visibility in countries and for the proposed forward process to extend the exercise to more countries, building on the experience of the initial group of countries where joint programming is taking place. Almost all DGs as well as the EIB took the floor:

- EU DGs expressed support for joint programming and some MS will use joint programming as their main reference documents for programming. Appreciation for Commission/EEAS approach for reaching out and being transparent. One DG commented that the main focus should be on results; this was countered by other DGs making plea for strong joint programming as means towards reach better results.
- EU DGs welcomed the progress made in the first wave countries (some shared their positive experiences in these countries) and the first insights and lessons learnt that were presented. Some called for more (structured) sharing of lessons learnt to support the process related to other countries in which joint programming is going to take place.
- Few DGs mentioned that according to information of their embassies there is a mixed picture on the role that EU Delegations are playing in the joint programming process. The need for EU Delegations to take the lead to make progress was stressed. FF asked that DGs indicate (- in follow-up to the meeting -) exactly which countries they believe are concerned so that Commission and EEAS can take action.
- Most DGs explicitly supported the proposed process of common EU Heads of Missions supports for assessing the feasibility of joint programming in around 50 countries that had been identified with the EU Member States ahead of the EU DGs meeting.
- One DG made a reservation on Burma/Myanmar ('work should be done in wider donor context'), but others explicitly supported joint programming in that country. There was a request for more joint programming in West-Africa, Mali was mentioned as an interesting case for joint programming in a fragile state. Other made a case for smaller Member States/donors to be involved and for including Eastern Neighbourhood countries, concretely referring to Georgia Moldova, Ukraine and also Afghanistan.
- Many DGs repeated the well-known principles of joint programming: in-country led (which also means decentralisation of decision making); inclusiveness; building on existing donor-wide approaches; no additional bureaucracy; gradual and pragmatic approach; ownership of partner countries; involvement of non-state actors.

Concluding the debate FF:

- Offered organising an informal meeting of EU MS experts in February/ March 2013 to discuss programming issues, including possibly regional programming and interesting country cases;
- Stressed the Commission's resolve to ensure implementation of the Agenda for Change in the programming;
- Indicated that the Commission will ensure the reallocation of Headquarters and Delegation staff to implement the new policy;
- Emphasised the need to work more on results and readiness to learn from MS;
- Shared a concern regarding the implementation of the Agenda for Change and the new Neighbourhood policy in the Neighbourhood countries: the 'more for more' principle may be increasingly jeopardised by lack of political stability; how would Europe spend the funds reserved for helping the countries' population (e.g. to create jobs)?
- Wanted to see a shift of sector focus in EU cooperation programmes: less infrastructure/ transport, but more support for private sector development and job creation.

It was agreed that EEAS and Commission will send a joint instruction note to the EU Delegations of the countries with potential for joint programming. EU Delegations will be invited to prepare Heads of Mission reports assessing the feasibility of joint programming. The instruction note will be shared with EU Member States who – on their part – should instruct their embassies in the same way.

**(1.3) At the lunch GMP debriefed on the first Steering Committee meeting of the Busan Global Partnership (London 5-6 December 2012):** The focus of the Global Partnership may move more

towards development effectiveness than ensuring the implementation of the aid effectiveness agenda, as outlined in the Busan Outcome. While important actors (e.g. China and India) were not yet represented, the Partnership encompasses donor and recipient countries, the private sector and NGOs. The Steering committee defined the work areas: changes on the ground since Busan, domestic resource mobilisation (a special interest of the Nigerian co-chair, as ODA is not important for her country), private sector, knowledge sharing and inclusiveness. While the Steering Committee discussed options for the 1<sup>st</sup> ministerial meeting of the Partnership (late 2013/ early 2014), GMP on behalf of the EU insisted that substance should guide the agenda and timing of the ministerial.