

- 9.** Poor governance, corruption and risks to human security remain a major setback for different parts of the continent. In the context of fragile states, these risks spread beyond national boundaries and permanently challenge the creation of a more encouraging prospect for the continent as a whole.

Recommendation: Support with effective and integral solutions more effective development efforts/instruments to reduce the path towards increased fragility in the region.

- 10.** Despite the recent progress noticed in terms of democracy and peaceful transition in many African countries, there is a lack of engagement of governments with regards to human displacement. Migration movements are more and more the result of factors such as increased insecurity, democratic recession and growing social inequalities.

Recommendation: Strengthen the current debate and cooperation about migration, including a closer examination of both the root causes and the consequences of migration for the continent, taking into consideration the key role of local authorities in managing migration trends and their consequences, and involving the youth in the decisions taken.

How should the EU strengthen its relations with African stakeholders?

- EU and African states must draft an agreement based on partnership rather than dependency
- Treat Africa as a single continent, rather than a fragmented approach to different sub-regions
- Ensure all actors are informed, consulted and involved in policy discussions
- Encourage the positive role of EU delegations on the ground in providing space for civil society participation throughout the policy-making process
- Place LAs at the heart of programming and raise awareness of the role of LAs among EU delegations which currently rarely engage with them
- Facilitate the creation of local coalitions and multi-stakeholder fora for development to produce input towards the negotiations
- The post-Cotonou agreement should operationalize what is already embedded in the EU approach: multi-level governance, subsidiarity, going from local to global

EU-Africa in the Policy Forum on Development

As part of its role as a multi-stakeholder platform for policy dialogue, the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) has held numerous panels, working groups and roundtables focusing on the state of affairs between the EU and Africa. That dialogue has covered a broad range of themes, from trends defining the global agenda at continental and regional levels, to more detailed and focused experiences of what does and does not work in areas of common interest, such as the creation of an enabling environment, migration and domestic resource mobilisation. All those are gradually enhancing our common understanding of how to improve the partnership between the EU and Africa and, as a result, improve our work together towards shared goals.

Below is a summary of relevant discussions from previous PFD meetings to feed into the Regional PFD Africa 2018. This document provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress made on those specific conclusions and recommendations since the last PFD Regional meeting in Africa held in Dakar in 2016 as well as to encourage further debate around the new priorities of the EU-Africa partnership. The conclusions and recommendations are complemented by the views of PFD participants around three areas: the main challenges for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Africa; how the EU could strengthen its relations with African stakeholders; and what PFD members say about the post 2020 EU-Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) agreement.

Key conclusions and recommendations from the civil society organisations (CSOs) and local authorities (LAs) at the 2016 PFD regional meeting in Africa:

1. New global development objectives are accompanied by a demand to shift from aid to development partnership and to establish more effective mechanisms to encourage sustainable development. Current instruments for cooperation at continental, regional and sub-national level are unfit for implementing solutions to tackle African challenges and needs. There is a strong need to treat Africa as one in the new setting of the regional scene. Can African stakeholders support the establishment of new mechanisms that contribute better to effective development?

Main challenges for 2030 Agenda implementation in Africa (according to PFD partners in the meeting)

1. Limited resources
2. Exclusion of CSOs
3. National agendas not properly linked with SDGs
4. SDGs not integrated in local politics
5. Cherry-picking SDGs and work in ministerial silos
6. Structural and infrastructural needs not matched with SDGs ambitions
7. Bad governance and corruption
8. Lack of data and statistics
9. Limited awareness of SDGs
10. Lack of transparency, participatory spaces and collective ownership

Recommendation: CSOs, LAs and associations of the private sector call for the adoption of new mechanisms that reflect Africa's vision for unity and demand to be better represented in regional fora at African level. In addition, African governments should involve them in the design of new development plans.

2. The New Urban Agenda (NUA) adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in Quito, Ecuador (Habitat III); the COP22 Low-Emissions Solutions Conference in Marrakesh (Morocco) and the Second High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development in Nairobi (Kenya) were key gatherings to advance in tackling many of the challenges that the continent faces, including poverty, poor infrastructure and the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation. However, rather than new commitments, African countries should focus on what is on the table, and put it into action.

Recommendation: Build the capacities of African countries ensuring that the funds available target capacity constraints, including the abuse of land ownership, align to country plans, target poverty eradication and adaptation to climate change as a priority.

How should the EU strengthen its relations with African stakeholders?

- Support policy dialogue between LAs, CSOs and governments at country level
- Enhance the interface with grassroots organisations and local actors
- Strengthen the capacity of CSOs and LAs to play a stronger role in the 2030 Agenda implementation through access to funding, supporting organisational development and knowledge exchange
- Provide more opportunities for training to understand EU rules and regulations
- Support a more active role of EU Delegations to encourage multi-stakeholder dialogue both at national and regional levels

And when it comes to migration:

- Call for further consultations with African partners on EU migration policies, which is currently too focused on security, returns and reintegration
- Prioritise a human rights-based approach to migration and facilitate access to funding for LAs
- Support the social consequences of migration in countries of origin through investments for social infrastructure and budget support

3. The SDGs have proven to be a good mechanism to increase the participation of different actors, including CSOs, LAs and associations of the private sector. In parts of the continent Agenda 2063 is also encouraging active multi-stakeholder platforms and coalitions. Nonetheless, an enabling environment for stakeholders other than the national governments and administrations remains limited in practice in many parts of Africa.

Recommendation: Encourage and support African national governments to put in place an enabling environment for the initiatives and actions of all actors, and support the building of coalitions to ensure that all pro-development actors, in their own capacity and with their own experience, have a complementary role to play in achieving development goals.

4. There are areas such as the protection of human rights, the promotion of decent work and the fight against unemployment and underemployment (even for the educated youth), the fight against social and economic exclusion, and the support of gender equality and food security which require special attention in many African countries to ensure that development is not limited to only a few.

Recommendation: Safeguard a level playing field that lives up to the agreed "nobody is left behind" whereby development programmes focus on key aspects to achieve that purpose, especially targeting the youth.

5. Both the 2030 Agenda and the AU 2063 Vision are becoming points of reference for many countries on the continent, building a shared roadmap and encouraging harmonisation between countries and regions. In parallel, the thinking and objectives of both are being aligned with many existing national development plans. However, there is still a large gap between political commitments, participation of civil voices and actual implementation.

Recommendation: Mobilise to ensure that governments and partners live up to their commitments and put in practice institutional and legal mechanisms as well as funds and programmes that ensure that the implementation of the SDGs becomes a reality.

6. Despite the increasing importance and participation of CSOs, their situation is not improving in different parts of Africa, putting in danger their essential role to contribute to development and reach out to the most marginalised.

Recommendation: Emphasise the importance of CSOs and encourage both their work and active participation, including the needed resources, particularly in those countries and regions where they are more vulnerable.

7. Decentralisation is not effective yet in many parts of the continent. LAs need to be better involved in order to share both ideas and means to deliver better services to citizens. This is particularly important in the context of the 2030 Agenda, since it is widely acknowledged that no goals will be achieved without the proper engagement of the local level.

Recommendation: Promote an inclusive territorial approach to the SDGs, adapted to different contexts and needs, that integrates a more effective public-private partnership and, in that way, encourages a more effective use of resources, capacities and investments at the subnational levels of government.

8. The European Union is a key partner in development efforts. At this particular moment it also plays an important supporting role in many areas, from the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, to a better use and management of natural resources. As well, its commitment to support CSOs and LAs has continued to increase.

Recommendation: The EU should continue to strengthen dialogue, which helps to strengthen multi-stakeholder participation and engagement in many predevelopment agendas, from policy design to evaluation, and support research and advocacy capacities of all actors.