



EU Development Aid: Future Challenges and Opportunities within Development Cooperation Instruments

Meeting summary

ISC
Intelligence in Science

23 October 2014
Brussels

EU Development Aid: Future Challenges and Opportunities within Development Cooperation Instruments

On 23 October 2014 ISC organised a meeting on “EU Development Aid: Future Challenges and Opportunities within Development Cooperation Instruments” which took place in Brussels from 09:00 - 11:00.

The meeting explored EU-Africa collaboration in the context of the new funding strategies, specifically discussing Research, Technology & Development. EU-Africa cooperation for science capacity building was used as a case study to examine how international cooperation in the area of science and innovation can stimulate economic growth, human capital development and job creation across borders.

Speakers on the panel included:

- **Francesco Affinito**, European Commission, DG Development & Cooperation
- **Stephanie Truille-Baurens**, European Commission, DG Development & Cooperation
- **Nienke Buisman**, European Commission, DG Research & Innovation
- **Jean-Cyril Dagallier**, ACP - Sugar Research Programme
- **Leonard Mizzi**, European Commission, DG Agriculture & Rural Development

Declan Kirrane, Managing Director of ISC, opened the seminar with a presentation on the increasing contingency of science and research on policy and the regulatory environment, as science is essential in responding to global challenges. Mr Kirrane stressed that the focus of the seminar would be on science in the development context. He equally underlined the need for capacity building and the value of exploring new ways of addressing global challenges.

Francesco Affinito, Research for Development Focal Point - DG Development and Cooperation, made an informative speech about the European Union development cooperation instruments and their contribution to research capacity building in Africa for the benefit of local population. In his presentation he outlined the priority societal challenges for research in development cooperation i.e. Food security, Health, Environment-Climate action and Secure Societies. Mr Affinito mentioned the most relevant EU development instruments for funding scientific cooperation in 2014-2020: the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) (EUR 19 662 million) - of which the Pan-African Programme (PANAF) (EUR 845 million); the European Development Fund (EUR 30 506 million); the European Neighbourhood Instrument (EUR 15 433 million) and the Instrument for Stability and Peace (EUR 2 339 million). He further specified that 35% (approximately EUR 490 million) of the 2014-2020 “Sustainable agriculture, Food security and Nutrition” component of the Global Public Goods and Challenges part of the Development Cooperation Instrument are earmarked for research and research capacity building.

The African Research Grants Programme was mentioned as an important means for African researchers to not only obtain funding for their projects but also to develop and autonomously manage their own research programmes. The next call under the African Research Grants Programme is likely to be published by the African Union Commission in 2015 for an amount of up to EUR 10 million.

The PANAF is a new programme supporting the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), which will complement other financial instruments in Africa by concentrating on trans-regional and continental activities. Altogether, the PANAF has earmarked considerable funds for Space cooperation (EUR 60 million), ICT (EUR 50 million) and research capacity building (EUR 20 million). Mr Affinito concluded his presentation with a few remarks on ICT uptake, which, he said, in Africa, “is growing faster than anywhere else in the world”, reaffirming Africa’s current potential in science and technology.

The next presentation was delivered by **Stephanie Truille-Baurens**, a Desk Officer for Pan-African Programme from the European Commission, DG Development and Cooperation, who expanded on her colleague’s speech by further briefing the participants about the Africa-EU Partnership, specifically with regards to research and innovation. She first provided an outline of the main pillars behind the Africa-EU Partnership, namely the JAES, the Roadmap for 2014-2017 and the PANAF. She noted that the JAES “remains the strategic political reference for EU-Africa relations”, while the Roadmap for 2014-2017 will serve as an agenda of actions at a continental level complementing the regional, national and local levels. The PANAF, which is the financial tool dedicated to support the implementation of the JAES, will allocate EUR 845 million for 2014-2020. Ms Truille-Baurens emphasised the importance of research and innovation as areas of common interest and mutual benefit for Africa and the EU and also as cross-cutting dimensions that should contribute to socio-economic development objectives. Finally, she explained that the new PANAF will support both research capacities (through programmes in higher education, research grants and ICT tools) and applications (i.e. space applications in earth observation and transport).

Nienke Buisman, a Policy Officer for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) relations with Africa at the European Commission, DG Research & Innovation, very well complemented the previous presentations by providing information about Horizon 2020, the EU’s biggest research and innovation programme with nearly EUR 80 billion of funding available over for the period 2014-2020. In her presentation she stressed the importance of this programme, particularly its openness to participants from all over the world, specifying that both European and developing countries are eligible to receive funding. She also mentioned that cooperation between European researchers and researchers from developing countries is highly encouraged and is perceived as a solution towards the tackling of global transnational challenges. Additionally, Ms Buisman listed a number of successful African projects, which have received funding under the 7th Funding Programme for Cooperation (total EU-funding received: EUR 217 million), including i.e. ERAFRICA or CAAST-NET Plus.

Finally, Ms Buisman provided a comprehensive update on the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on science, technology and innovation, a platform endorsed in 2010 by the 3rd EU-Africa Joint Summit and launched in October 2011, which was created with the objective to build better common understanding, mutual trust and ownership of joint programmes between the two continents and to strengthen the overall cooperation. The EU-Africa Summit 2014 showcased convergent views between the EU and Africa on the enabling role of STI in creating growth and employment. Presently, the Expert Working Group is working on the development of a roadmap towards a jointly funded partnership, which will soon be sent out for consultations as an advanced draft. At the same time, models and instruments for joint implementation by the EU and the African Union are being examined.

Jean-Cyril Dagallier, Head of the Coordinating Unit of the ACP Sugar Research Programme, presented the ACP Sugar Research Programme as an example of EU funded projects, in this case the European Development Fund. Mr Dagallier provided an overview of the programme, which was launched in 2010 and will end in 2015, involving 5 core members (MSIRI, SSA, WICSCBS, SIA/SIRI, SRIF) and 15 members from Academia, R&D, Development, and Industry with a budget of EUR 13 million for 13 projects. The three axes are: improved and new varieties of sugarcane; reduction of the production costs and environmental protection; and reduction of sugar losses and new co-products. Mr Dagallier described some outcomes of the programme, including the development of biodegradable plastics, irrigation efficiency with the use of smartphones, the establishment of quarantine facilities to prevent disease infection from imported sugarcane varieties, lower prices for quality canes, and others. Mr Dagallier then presented some elements of the future plans for the ACP Sugar Research Programme, which includes tackling climate change and contributing to the development of a green economy through the development of bioethanol, biomaterials, green chemistry, and medicines. Mr Dagallier added that 62 R&D projects proposals had been submitted to the ACP Sugar Research Programme and that their new network will include 23 institutions and 80 partners in 20 countries in ACP and in Europe.

Leonard Mizzi, Head of Unit from DG Agriculture and Rural Development at the European Commission, gave a presentation on development cooperation from the point of view of DG Agriculture and Rural Development. Mr Mizzi stated that DG Agriculture and Rural Development will collaborate with DG Research and Innovation and DG Development and Cooperation on the respective funding instruments. Mr Mizzi remarked that agriculture and food security remain high on the international policy agenda as evidenced by the conclusions of the EU-Africa Summit held in April 2014; and mentioned the importance given to research by the G7 and the development of an agriculture plan by the G20. Mr Mizzi referred to the EU requirement for coherence and complementarity between EU policy areas and highlighted the need to focus on market integration and value chains in Africa, mentioning the growing importance given to quality and geographical indications. Lastly, Mr Mizzi noted that in the post 2015 context, any elaboration of targets and indicators for the sustainable development goals (SDGs) needs to be underpinned by research potential.

Discussion

Patrick Worms from the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) asked a question about the timeframe and process for the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on science technology and innovation roadmap. **Nienke Buisman** replied that the consultations for the improvement of the roadmap were not open to the public, and that the DG is listing organisations to consult and ask specific questions to. The consultations will take place between mid-November and mid-December.

Dr Ernst van Groningen, International Science Programme Director at Uppsala University, mentioned the importance of fundamental sciences, such as maths and physics, in agriculture and for industries, but noted that fundamental sciences are weak in Africa and that African groups of scientists cannot compete with other researchers in obtaining grants. **Nienke Buisman** noted that “twinning” is an example of a Horizon 2020 programme which addresses that issue, while **Francesco Affinito** explained that the nature of development strategies is evolving but that it is currently not at the top of the agenda. **Leonard Mizzi** agreed that this was an issue, as shown by the lack of statistical data in agriculture in Africa, and also evoked the problem that many Africans study abroad but do not have the available capacity to apply what they have learnt once they return to Africa. **Stephanie Truille-Baurens** commented that the first package under the PANAF will include a programme on statistics for Africa.

Lastly, **Dr Aniyam Varghese** from DG CONNECT at the European Commission asked **Jean-Cyril Dagallier** if the ACP Sugar Research Programme has a mechanism to reach small farming communities and whether there is a mechanism in place to get their products directly to the market. **Jean-Cyril Dagallier** replied that such a mechanism exists, as exemplified by the Swaziland project, which involves data delivery to small farmers through their mobile phones to manage irrigation. As for supplying sugarcane directly to the market, **Jean-Cyril Dagallier** explained that this was not an issue in the case of sugarcane as it is always sold directly to factories.



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