

Draft Roadmap to Joint European Programming in Bolivia

1. Overview

As announced in the recent EU Heads of Mission (HoMs) Report on possibilities for future joint programming in Bolivia (Annex 1), the representatives of European donors present in the country, committed to build on their tradition of strong cooperation, plead for establishing **full joint programming from 2017** on. The HoMs Report should be referred to for relevant background information on this process and details of the work done to date.

The **Government of Bolivia** (GoB) has expressed strong support for joint programming from the Ministerial level down. GoB is particularly in favour of alignment to the national planning cycle and the presentation of a single strategy paper setting out the distribution of work and financing for all European donors. Giving the initiative to donor's La Paz offices on issues such as sector presence is also seen as a very positive development.

This Roadmap sets out the **detailed steps** that now need to be taken in the European Capitals as well as in donors' La Paz offices, in order to reach full joint programming by 2017. Overall, four key results need to be achieved:

- **Synchronisation** of European donors' programming cycles and bilateral implementation plans to the 2017- 21 national planning cycle. NB. 2017 has been agreed on by both donors and GoB as the right moment to start EU joint programming given the time needed to fulfil existing commitments, adjust procedures, agree on the content of a joint programming document ,and then synchronise with the national planning cycle.
- Agreement of a **common analysis, vision, division of labour, and indicative financial allocations**.
- Agreement of **other content** that will be included in the joint programming document.
- Agreement of **what content can be transferred** from each donor's bilateral implementation plan to the joint programming document.
- Agreement on the **approval procedures** that each donor will apply to the joint document.

European donors will continue to cooperate closely during the 2013-17 transition period under the auspices of the European Coordinated Response that its being agreed upon at the time of writing this roadmap.

2. Participants

In addition to the EU Delegation, the following **countries** have expressed an interest in participating in joint programming in Bolivia:

- Belgium
- Denmark
- France
- Germany
- Italy

- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
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The Netherlands, though currently present in Bolivia with a bilateral cooperation programme, will be exiting the country at the end of 2013 and therefore will not be included in subsequent steps of the joint programming process. (check with uk is a sentence on its stand is needed)

3. Immediate Actions

The following actions need to be taken in the March-June 2013 period:

- March 6th** **EU-Delegations-HoC meeting with European Commission (EC) and European External Action Service (EEAS) officials** in Brussels to de-brief on the recent joint programming consultancy mission, present next steps, and request that EU HQ sensitises counterparts in European capitals to the process.
- March 20th** **Meeting of EC/EEAS with Spanish officials** in Madrid to review next steps as per this Roadmap (NB this meeting will take place before or after a joint programming training that has already been scheduled for this date).
- April 5th** **Draft European Coordinated Response** finalised
- April 15th** **Draft Roadmap** for Joint Programming in Bolivia completed.
- Date tbc** Grupo de Socios para el Desarrollo de Bolivia (GruS – the local donor coordination structure) **mapping of development partners' work** should be completed.
- April 22th** Positive **response letter** from GoB on joint programming should have been received.
- April 25th** **HoMs letter** to be sent to GoB enclosing the European Coordinated Response and requesting written GoB endorsement for moving to full European joint programming from 2017.
- Late April** **Joint Communication** to be sent by HoMs to European capitals, briefing on the process, attaching this Roadmap and the GoB endorsement letter, and highlighting the specific actions that now need to be taken by capitals (see section 4 below).
- Late April** Bolivian case and Roadmap to be presented at the **EU Technical Seminar** on Joint Programming in Brussels.
- Early May** **Meeting of capitals' Bolivia desks** (either physically in Brussels or via video conference) to discuss the Roadmap and the next steps that need to be taken by each. The idea is to start a dialogue that will include administrative, budgeting and legal units of each EEMM for the development of joint programming.

May Bolivian case to be submitted to the **EU Director Generals meeting** as an example of good practice with a request for their endorsement of the Roadmap.

End of 2013 **Review of donor mapping** that has been carried out by GruS in combination with an examination of European donors' stated future plans to see where possible gaps and overlaps may arise in future.

4. Messages for HQs

In spite of strong support from European Heads of Cooperation in La Paz, joint programming in Bolivia will be impossible without **specific support from their capitals**. While EU Ministers have already endorsed the general concepts of synchronising planning cycles, agreeing on a joint strategy paper, and establishing a division of labour and indicative financial allocations, turning these political promises into practice will require **specific changes** to how business is currently done.

Therefore, as mentioned above, it is proposed that HoMs in La Paz send a **Joint Communication** to their capitals by late April, 1 detailing what will be needed from them to make joint programming a reality in Bolivia from 2017 on. It is suggested that this Communication include both messages that are applicable to all capitals and those that apply only to specific countries:

4.1 Messages applicable to all

- Confirmation of **local willingness** to take forward joint programming in Bolivia, referencing the recent HoMs report and to the willing of the Bolivian Government to move forward joint programming, alignment and harmonization
- Confirmation of **start date** and **duration** of the initial joint programming document. Request for agreement that capitals will now adhere to this timetable for the programming of their aid to Bolivia, initially synchronising by extending existing strategies or shortening upcoming ones so that all finish in 2016.
- Understanding that **financing commitments** may however take place on a different timetable, meaning that allocations made for the programming period will be indicative only.
- Request that initiative is given to the country level for the agreement of **sector coverage** and sensitisation to the fact that being part of a joint programming approach means that, even if a country is not directly implementing in a particular sector, they are nevertheless still supporting it by virtue of being a signatory of the overall strategy under which the work is carried out.
- Request for agreement that Headquarters will adapt and approve the horizontal part of the Joint programming document as well as their **own country's contribution** to the overall joint programming document, i.e. their specific sectors and indicative financial allocations, and not on programming and choice of sectors made by other Member States Request for clarification on the **mechanics** and **timing** of this approval process for each country.

- Request for agreement that each country's **bilateral implementation plan** will restrict itself to the implementation details of their respective agreed contribution to the joint programming document, i.e. setting out the projects and programmes to be undertaken. Thus content such as country analysis, overall priorities, aid effectiveness commitments etc. should be transferred to the joint programming document.
- Request for a **commitment** that support to Bolivia and to the agreed sectors will be maintained for the duration of the joint programming document, regardless of domestic political changes. This is essential to ensure predictability and continuity and to maintain the coherence of the joint programming document.

4.2 Country-specific messages

- **Belgium:** the Belgium-Bolivia Joint Commission scheduled to take place in late 2013 should agree that the next Belgian programming period will run from 2014-6. Concerns over GoB implementation delays, while serious, should not be allowed to delay / prevent Belgian participation in joint programming from 2017 on. Indeed, it should instead be emphasised to Brussels that, by joining a common EU response for the country, a significant new opportunity will arise for all European donors to jointly approach GoB on this issue (which is of general concern) and to exert their combined weight to ensure that it is adequately addressed.
- **Denmark:** a request should be made for the upcoming new country strategy, which would normally run from 2014 until 2018, to be shortened so as to finish at the end of 2016. While this request should be made now, it could also be formalised in the mid-term review of the strategy which will take place in 2015. In addition, the upcoming policy note on joint programming, which is apparently being drafted in Copenhagen, should be welcomed with the hope that this will provide sufficient flexibility vis-à-vis Denmark's new programming guidelines to allow the implementation of joint programming commitments.
- **EU:** a request should be made to Brussels to use the European Coordinated Response as the de facto country strategy paper up until 2017 (with specific annexes added to the document should procedures require). It should also be confirmed that the EU's upcoming bilateral implementation plan will run up to the end of 2016 only.
- **France:** Paris should be requested to commit whatever funding may be available for Bolivia from 2017 on in the framework of the joint programming process, decentralising decision-making to La Paz as far as possible.
- **Germany:** the term of the planned new German strategy for Bolivia will be synchronized with the European joint programming document as to contents and time frame.
- **Italy:** Rome should be requested to align the Italy-Bolivia Joint Commission process with the joint programming cycle and to plan their future support for the period of the joint programming document. Rome should also be requested to specify how it will adapt the application of its standard guidelines for country strategy papers to a country where a joint programming process is underway (the Minister of Foreign Affairs' recent letter to Commissioner Piebalgs supporting joint programming could be referenced in this regard). Furthermore, more decentralised decision-making power should be sought in

order to facilitate an agreement on division of labour and rationalisation of sector coverage with other European donors on the ground in La Paz.

- **Spain:** it should be requested that the upcoming mid-term review of Spain's country strategy paper include a commitment to take forward joint programming in future. This will imply a short next strategy spanning 2015-17 to bridge the gap between the end of the current strategy and the start of joint programming.
- **Sweden:** Stockholm should be asked how their new programming guidelines are to be applied to countries where a joint programming process is going ahead. Approval for full synchronisation to the agreed joint programming cycle should be sought as opposed to relying on mid-term reviews of on-going cooperation. Finally, a request should be made to allow sector decisions to be taken locally in cooperation with other European donors.
- **Switzerland:** a briefing should be transmitted on what joint programming means and involves and how country strategy guidelines might be adapted in such a scenario.
- **UK:** DFID need to be informed of the process and invited to come on board given their role in deciding on British aid to the country despite the lack of a local office in La Paz.

5. Subsequent Steps

The subsequent steps to be taken are grouped below by issue, with the exact timing to be decided on by EU HoCs in La Paz in light of progress on implementing the above recommendations on the ground and in capitals.

5.1 Common analysis and vision

A common analysis and vision for European aid has already been elaborated for the European Coordinated Response. It is recommended that this be **updated** in 2016.

In addition, once a division of labour has been agreed, European donors who will be working in the same sector in future may want to undertake a **common sector analysis / review**. This could also be done in cooperation with other GruS members working in the sector concerned.

5.2 Division of labour and indicative financial allocations

Generally, European Heads of Cooperation are of the opinion that a reasonable de facto division of labour exists today. Nevertheless, concerns have been expressed that some sectors may be over-served ('darlings') and others underserved ('orphans'). The candidates that have been put forward are:

- **Potential darlings:** agriculture, gender, governance, health, justice, rural development, water
- **Potential orphans:** education, environment, forestry, infrastructure

However, until the GruS mapping is completed it is difficult to gauge the accuracy of this assessment. Therefore, as mentioned above, it is recommended that a **review**

of this mapping be carried out in by the end of 2013 in combination with an examination of European donors' stated future plans and potential sectoral financial allocations in order to see where possible gaps and overlaps may arise in future.

In addition, as with any fragmentation assessment, the **absorption capacity** of different sectors and the **level of coordination** of existing support need to be taken into account before coming to any conclusions.

The organisation of a **European donor retreat** (possibly including responsables from delegations and headquarters) is recommended to look at the situation in detail and endeavour to agree upon a future division of labour. Where overcrowding is evident but a donor has difficulty in leaving a sector (for example for political reasons), then delegated cooperation, silent partnerships and basket funds could all be considered as ways of reducing fragmentation, with a single European lead donor established for the sector. It may be advisable to exclude support to NGOs from division of labour discussions. Alternatively and more ambitiously, the retreat could be carried out with all members of the GruS to attempt to come to a donor-wide agreement.

The division of labour agreement that is reached should be **discussed with GoB** and refined as necessary. Commitments should then be adhered to for the duration of the joint programming document.

As no European donor is likely to be able to fully synchronise its financing cycle with the joint programming cycle, it is advisable that **indicative financial allocations** for the joint programming period be updated on an annual basis.

5.3 Other content

There is considerable enthusiasm among European donors for establishing **joint positions** on a number of issues, stemming from a belief that articulating such positions backed by a joint European strategy and financial offer will considerably increase Europe's voice and influence in Bolivia. The formulation of joint positions could come out of the update of the joint analysis that it is proposed takes place in 2016. This could include inter alia the following candidate issues that have been proposed by several EU HoCs in La Paz:

- Safeguarding **human rights**, with an emphasis on the rights of women.
- Tackling **corruption**.
- Promoting **decentralisation**.
- Combatting illegal **drug** production and trafficking.
- Establishing a more favourable environment for **foreign direct investment**.
- Rule of Law, separation of powers, justice
- Climate change, biodiversity
- Tackling GoB project / programme **implementation delays**.

Proposals for other content for the joint programming document include:

- **Modalities preferences**, with a statement of intent to move progressively towards programme based approaches and more coordinated forms of aid, , when local conditions permit.
- The establishment of a coordination mechanism **for any NGO** seeking European funding. Agreement of key **development effectiveness** indicators that will be measured or, alternatively, supporting the agreement of a GoB-all donor Compact of development effectiveness actions. Such Compacts are called for in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and, in Bolivia, could be based on the existing Action Plan that has been developed by GoB as a response to the Paris Declaration Evaluation, as well as on other instruments that are being developed at international level (e.g. post MDGs).
- Agreement of specific actions that could be taken to **improve the functioning of the GruS**, for example core deliverables that each sector working group should be mandated to produce.
- Agreement of a **Code of Conduct** on how technical and financial cooperation is delivered (NB. this might work best as a joint initiative with other GruS members and GoB).
- Agreement on a **results framework** for the joint programming document with a limited number of indicators to track whether the joint strategy is achieving its stated objectives and also looking at European donors' overall development effectiveness performance.
- Agreement on a number of **communication products** that will be taken forward to raise the European profile in Bolivia, for example a joint website showcasing results, a brochure giving an overview of cooperation, annual reports on achievements, and press releases on joint EU positions and demarches to GoB.. The financial aspects of this proposal would need to be discussed at EU level.

5.4 Split between joint programming document and bilateral implementation plans

It has been proposed above that capitals be asked to commit to **restricting their respective bilateral implementation plans** to the implementation details of their agreed contribution to the joint programming document, i.e. setting out the projects and programmes to be undertaken. Should some countries have difficulty with this, a mapping should be made of what additional content they want to maintain in their bilateral document and to what extent this can be copy-pasted from the agreed text of the joint programming document.

While each country's bilateral implementation plan will be in a different format due to their respective administrative and legal requirements, it could be useful to **summarise the various projects and programmes** that each sets out in a standard format, thus providing an overall European portfolio that can be presented to GoB and other development partners.

5.5 Approach to other stakeholders

GoB, other development partners, civil society and the private sector need to be kept informed of the joint programming process, sensitised to its implications for them and invited to provide input and opinion at certain points, as appropriate.

- **GoB:** following on from the request for endorsement suggested above, GoB should be regularly updated on the joint programming process. They should be requested to comment on the proposed division of labour. They should also be reminded that the existence of a National Development Plan and key sector plans that adhere to the national cycle are vital for European joint programming to go ahead in practice.
- **Other development partners:** the GruS should be kept updated on progress and invited to provide input to and comment on specific content of the joint programming document as this is being developed. Exactly what content is opened to such scrutiny should be left to the discretion of European HoCs in La Paz.
- **Civil society:** should be asked for input on the overall analysis of the country and where the European response should best focus. This should happen at an early stage of the joint programming process. They should also be reassured that, should one European donor who is currently funding them pull out of a sector due to division of labour commitments, another is likely to still be present there. Ideally however, agreement will have been reached on the establishment of a one entry point system for NGO financing requests which can then be presented to them as representing a significant improvement in the ease of accessing European support.
- **Private sector:** views should be sought on relevant issues, such as the common European position on improving the environment for the private sector and foreign direct investment. This should happen at an early stage of the joint programming process.