



## Consultation on the draft Global Challenges MIP

Virtual meeting held 14 July 2021

### I. Introduction and methodology

As part of its consultations on the 2021-2027 programming of the EU, the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) hosted an informational meeting to capture the views of the multiple PFD members and other local authorities (LAs) and civil society organisations (CSOs), including women and youth organisations, on the EU thematic Global Challenges (GC) Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP).

The meeting was conceived as an informational session, with an initial general presentation of the draft MIP on Global Challenges by the corresponding directors of Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA) and European External Action Service (EEAS), followed by a more detailed presentation by the different units of INTPA involved. This was followed by a plenary discussion, which allowed participants to ask questions for clarification, as well as to make concrete suggestions and recommendations regarding the programme overall, the budget and the involvement of partners, as well as the content of the GC programme (sections III and IV respectively in this report). All questions and suggestions were addressed by the representatives of INTPA and EEAS, including most of the questions raised in the chat box of the meeting.

Written inputs were accepted in the two days following the meeting and have been forwarded to the European Commission. However, due to time constraints, these inputs have not been included in the elaboration of this report.

### II. Presentation of the draft Global Challenges MIP

The meeting was opened by **Felix Fernández-Shaw**, Director Sustainable Development Policy and Coordination DG INTPA. **Michele Cervone d'Urso**, EEAS Head of Division for Development Cooperation Coordination, began the presentation of the GC MIP. He emphasised the principle of subsidiarity in the NDICI 'Global Europe'. Only global actions responding to big global challenges are included under the GC, complementing actions in the national and regional programmes. The budget is now EUR 3.3 billion, which is sizeable, but there are many demands on it, with commitments to some specific initiatives already in place. The GC is an essential tool of the EU multilateralism agenda.

Mr **Fernández-Shaw** explained that global actions include supporting: multilateralism and international governance; global/multilateral processes, funds and programmes; global/trans-regional advocacy, research, innovation, public goods and knowledge; global/trans-regional networks, information and Early Warning Systems (EWS); global standard-setting; and innovative approaches and pilots. For example, a transregional early-warning system (EWS) is very important, but once these networks signal an issue, the action needs to happen at country or regional level. The GC comprises 4 strategic areas: People, Planet, Prosperity and Partnerships, as well as the cross-cutting priorities multilateralism, inequalities, gender and sustainability. There are significant interlinkages and synergies between all areas and workstreams of the programme. The COVID crisis exacerbates certain issues but also provides the opportunity to 'build back better'.



## 1) People

**Henriette Geiger**, Director for Human Development, Migration, Governance and Peace for DG INTPA, presented the People pillar, covering: health; education; gender equality and women's empowerment; children and youth; social protection and inclusion; migration and forced displacement. The importance of human development for all the sustainable development goals (SDGs) was highlighted, even more with the COVID pandemic hitting very hard the areas of health and education, inequality and vulnerable groups. The NDICI Global Europe has a target of 20% for human development. The aim of this pillar is to strengthen the EU's position as a leading global actor for inclusive and equal societies with human development for all, including the most vulnerable.

Action on health under this pillar include reinforcing EU contributions to global health funds and strategies, including to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; the WHO One Health strategy; and the vaccine alliance GAVI.

At least 10 % of the NDICI Global Europe will go to education, a key priority of Commissioner Urpilainen that has gained even more relevance with the impact of the pandemic, with significant contributions to global education funds (EUR 700 million over 7 years have been pledged to the global partnership for education, and additional contributions will be made to Education Cannot Wait global fund).

Work on gender, children and youth is a priority, and will include implementation of the Gender Action Plan III and an ambitious youth action plan (joint strategy), including engagement on children.

Social protection and inclusion have been key to protect the most vulnerable in the response to the pandemic and will include work under the global partnership for social protection and UN programme for the rights of people with disabilities.

The GC will also support global platforms and initiatives in line with the Global Compact on Migration and Asylum, including one on forced displacement and another one on migration and mobility. It was noted that the bulk of the funding, including to address root causes, will be programmed at national and regional levels. Funding at global level contributes to the overall spending target of 10% of the NDICI for this policy priority. The EU will also support the Global Forum on Migration and the Comprehensive Refugee Response framework, among others.

## 2) Planet

**Stefano Signore**, INTPA Head of Unit for Climate Change and Sustainable Energy; Nuclear Safety, presented the 3 elements under the Planet pillar: climate action; environment; and green energy transition. The focus is on implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Convention on Biological Diversity, among others) and supporting the external dimension of the European Green Deal, as well as actions to improve knowledge, monitoring, capacities and standards.

On climate change and disaster risk reduction, the focus will be on enhancing the participation of developing countries in international climate negotiations, including the implementation of selected initiatives via specific global mechanisms or funds; strengthening the regulatory and policy frameworks for climate actions (such as nationally determined contributions, national action plans and long-term strategies).



On environment, the GC will focus on strengthening environmental governance, through implementation of the different multilateral environmental agreements, but also improve global knowledge, data monitoring, capacities and standards on environmental issues. GC will also support the adoption and implementation of an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework ahead of the COP15. It will strengthen international cooperation to tackle illegal wildlife trafficking and consumption, which is also a source of new viruses and pandemics. International ocean and water governance, protection of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, and acceleration of progress on SDG 6 on water. Included here is international pollution including plastic and marine litter. And GC will support international action to tackle deforestation and illegal logging and associated trades in line with the deforestation action plans and the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan.

Regarding the green energy transition, this is largely being developed under the national and regional programmes, but there will be action in GC to strengthen international cooperation for a just and inclusive transition to green energy, including energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sharing EU experience acquired during energy transition. International climate and energy diplomacy will be supported, including interactions with international organisations and partners such as IRENA (International Renewable Energy Agency) and others.

### 3) Prosperity


The Prosperity pillar, presented by **Erica Gerretsen**, INTPA Acting Director for Sustainable Finance, Investment and Jobs, and Economy, shows close linkages with the People, Planet and Partnerships pillars. The EC's priority under this pillar is an economy that works for people, with actions to support the investment climate, private sector, decent jobs, employment and trade. There are 3 workstreams included in this area:

- i) Supporting global knowledge and information building, for example through information tools which provide access to free market information for partner countries, especially least developed countries, to integrate them in the global trading system;
- ii) Supporting global standardisation processes, such as through the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative; and
- iii) EU flagship programmes for women, such as the Women's Financial Inclusion Facility and Women's World Banking.

Transitions to the circular economy and sustainable agri-food systems (in line with the Circular Economy Action Plan and the From Farm to Fork Strategy) also come under this pillar, with actions to support global advocacy, knowledge and policy on circular economy, and support to greening value chains and promoting ambitious international standards.

'Prosperity' also covers global actions to eradicate child labour, including the fight against inequalities and forced labour. 2021 is the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour. Ursula von der Leyen has called for zero tolerance approach to child labour, especially in EU trade agreements. Child labour is the result of a number of socioeconomic factors, associated to other labour rights violations such as indecent jobs and extremely low wages. It is inherently linked to inequality and poverty dynamics. This priority lies at the core of the Prosperity chapter.

Regarding digital transformation, GC will reinforce strategic partnerships with relevant multilateral institutions. Team Europe members will promote an EU human-centric model, acting and succeeding



as one in the global response to Covid-19. As well GC will provide proactive support to global information campaigns and political outreach, including in non-like-minded countries, on strategic priorities in digitalization.

GC will also specifically support the reduction of the incidence of road traffic accidents that kill 1.35 million people worldwide each year and are the biggest cause of death for young people aged 5 to 29. Improved road safety together with post-crash care enable injured people to recover faster and return to their socioeconomic lives, thereby directly contributing to the specific Prosperity objective.


#### 4) Partnerships

The fourth pillar is Partnerships, presented by **Daniel Giorev**, INTPA Head of Unit for Sustainable Development Policy and Global Partnerships with the United Nations (UN) and International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Inclusiveness underpins the elements in this pillar, which builds on the other three. It includes three main types of activities:

- i) Strategic cooperation with global and multilateral organisations and processes, according to the Joint Communication on multilateralism, including actions that: help promote rules-based international or global order; promote EU priorities in the multilateral system (many of which are the priorities of the 2030 agenda); help bridge the internal and external work of the EU; back multilateral processes geared towards inclusiveness and cooperation with other stakeholders; and support the ongoing reform processes including reform of the UN development system;
- ii) Promote global economic governance, with sustainable and inclusive economic development as a central element of COVID recovery, to put the 2030 agenda back on track. This area will support actions for a green, just and resilient transition and effective multilateralism that strengthens coordination between various stakeholders, most notably some of the multilateral organisations, such as acceleration of public and private financial flows towards green, just and resilient transition; promotion of transparency and long-termism in the financial and economic activities of our partner countries (includes work on standards, labels, and taxonomies); public and private disclosure; and corporate governance;
- iii) Support global associations of local authorities in their work to promote inclusive societies. The EC recognises LAs and LA organisations as partners, not just beneficiaries, as expressed in the 2013 Communication on empowering local authorities and 2018 Council conclusions on EU cooperation with cities and local authorities. Most of the financing foreseen under this heading will maintain support to the 5 global and regional associations of LAs, with whom there are already FPAs. The objective is to pursue strengthening members' capacity and advocacy activities, which contribute to state reforms and sectoral policies linked to many of the EU's global priorities. These actions will complement those for better governance, development impact, and addressing inequalities carried out by LAs under the geographical programmes. Sharing knowledge and experience among LAs worldwide will continue and expand.

### III. Discussion about the programme overall, the budget and the involvement of partners

#### Consultation process



Participants thanked the European Commission and EEAS for their very informative presentation. They were pleased to see important themes under the 4 Ps for achieving the 2030 agenda. The EC and EEAS responded with thanks for substantial CSO input to the consultation process, today and over the past year. They explained that this consultation was happening at the same time as with the UN and other multilateral organisations and key stakeholders, and that they take the comments seriously and many of the requests from this consultation process are already reflected in the programme. The EC expressed its wish to have open and ongoing dialogue and indicated they may come back to participants once there is a fuller picture of the programming.

### **CSOs and LAs involvement in the GC programme**

There were requests for CSOs and LAs to be more visible as key stakeholders in the GC programme, and for more discussion on how the EU proposes to work with CSOs and LAs, including to ensure access to the relevant global discussion platforms.

CSOs and LAs emphasised that they have a lot to offer in helping to implement, monitor and evaluate the actions. They asked whether more flexible funding modalities could be considered under the GC programme, such as framework contracts or granting, to enable this role. PFD members have previously recommended specific envelopes under spending targets where CSOs or LAs expertise can contribute to implementation.

Regarding CSOs and LAs involvement in the GC programme, the European Commission indicated that there is an overall drive to be as inclusive as possible.


### **GC programme budget**

Several participants asked if further detail could already be provided on how the GC budget would be allocated: the split across the 4 Ps and between geographic and thematic programmes; the translation of headline percentage targets to this specific thematic programme; the balance of funding between global and EU-led actions (with reference to Team Europe initiatives); and how local CSO and LA actors can access GC funds. Global LA associations were pleased that support is continuing under Partnerships but wish to know how LAs and other partners will be able to access and influence programmes and funding from the other priority areas and workstreams.

The EC and EEAS explained that the budget split is still subject to discussions, but it will not be split pro rata across the 4 Ps. It was noted that much of what might have come under previous thematic programmes is now covered by geographic and regional programmes, and it is important to see how programming overall will look across all of these levels. Ongoing reality and historical partnerships also have to be integrated. The GC package has to be seen alongside the rest of the programmes. It is important to recognise that while the MIP provides a broad framework, it does not contain every action or implementing actor. Within the GC, there are areas that are more defined than others, and flexibility is needed to adapt as situations and international processes evolve.

Team Europe initiatives overall are a driver of a lot of the regional and country specific programming. They are also a driver at global level, but the concrete initiatives are not defined yet, as well as the exact ratio between Team Europe and the rest. There is a lot of scope for that, linked to overall EU ambition to lead on many of those global conversations, and the European Commission intends to work on this with Member States. Team Europe must be seen in line with other ongoing global conversations and initiatives with likeminded partners in multilateral settings. They are not mutually exclusive and can reinforce each other.





They also explained that targets are for the whole instrument for 7 years and will be assessed regularly during this cycle at all levels and components. Percentage targets are not for each sub-element but will arise from the connection/interaction between them. Overall the GC will be a major contributor of targets. Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) falls under 2 different programmes: a part for LAs and a part for CSOs, and they come from different budgets.

Participants requested more detail on how **the 'cushion' of unallocated funds for 'emerging challenges'** within the NDICI will be used, particularly given the COVID context and the wish to be involved in the programming process. The EC and EEAS explained that the cushion is an emergency instrument, and the EC knows from experience that it will be needed. GC is expected to be a significant beneficiary, although programming has to be completed before they can say what the cushion will be used for precisely. It was noted that the cushion is very much a top-up of what is already in the programme. COVAX could not be included in GC as there are many other key priorities and this would unbalance the overall programme, but the EC is looking at the cushion and all possibilities to support it.

Finally, a clarification was requested as to why the **budget for peace and conflict resolution** is not included in the GC, and it was explained that there is a peace, stability and conflict prevention thematic programme under the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI).

#### IV. Discussion regarding the content of the GC programme

##### 1) People

There was support for the gender mainstreaming approach of the programme and a question about whether the same approach would also be applied for youth. There were also questions on whether the EU will continue to support the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supplies; and on the support foreseen for implementing the Pact on Migration and Asylum and how CSOs could contribute.


EC staff responded that **gender** will be mainstreamed in all work under GC (fulfilling the 85% commitment in the Gender Action Plan, plus additional 5% for actions with gender equality as main objective). Support for feminist movements will also be included in the overall response, although the specificities are not defined yet; and they have made a commitment already under Generation Equality. They also explained that **youth** is a priority of the Commissioner; specific actions under GC include the Youth Sounding Board and within DEAR.

**UNFPA supplies** will continue, as it is important to support sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

On **migration**, the bulk of funding will be programmed at national and regional levels, but GC will contribute to the external dimension of the pact through global platforms and initiatives. CSOs will continue to play a role not only at national and regional level but also at global level, including in implementation of joint priorities, advocacy, and participation in global alliances and initiatives.

##### 2) Planet

Participants asked if **nutrition** features under more pillars than just Prosperity; and how will the GC adapt to potential EU commitments in forthcoming global agri-food summits. The EC responded that the GC MIP is flexible enough to support several agri-food initiatives, although it is too early to give



specific financial commitments without a view of all global, regional and national programmes. Investing in nutrition is investing in people; this is an example of wider, linked benefits across the GC programme, also to nature-based solutions, biodiversity and climate change. The EC of course recognises the importance of the upcoming COPs for nature and climate; GC will definitely contribute in this regard. On biodiversity and Green Deal priorities, GC will complement country and regional level MIPs by supporting global initiatives including on wildlife trafficking, forests and deforestation.

The importance of **climate adaptation, biodiversity and climate action** were stressed by participants. In this regard, the EC pointed that the request to focus on adaptation is also coming from partner countries and is fully noted. Adaptation and resilience is already in the previous MFF and will continue in this one, including: supporting least developed countries and small island states in international negotiations; identifying selected initiatives; and supporting specific frameworks such as national adaptation plans. Adaptation and disaster risk reduction activities will mainly be supported at country level, e.g. integrated landscape approaches.

### 3) Prosperity


Asked about the role of the GC programme on **global economic governance**, the EC explained that it is very important as we move out of the pandemic. Specific dimensions include domestic revenue mobilisation; public expenditure and debt. This work is closely monitored and addressed also under Partnerships in relation to SDG 16. The EU will work closely with CS and international partners on these issues.

Specific questions arose about initiatives to promote **decent work**, including in global value chains, and to tackle **child labour**. Regarding decent work, the EC responded that there is the due diligence initiative and directive and that DG INTPA will closely monitor the external dimension of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) criteria to improve sustainable value chains and integrate these standards as far as possible in work with partner countries (an example of this would be the Better Work Programme, with ILO/IFC, implemented by ILO, that supports a global coalition with international companies and brands to improve working conditions in the garment sector). They pointed out that the COVID crisis has had a major negative impact on child labour, and that they will be active together with international partners in identifying the root causes and seeking complementarity between what we do at global and national level. For example, continuing work in cocoa-producing countries and the textile industry on specific initiatives.

Trade unions (TUs) were pleased to see the reference to **social dialogue** in the GC, among other elements, and asked for more information on the role of social dialogue and TUs in implementation. Global and regional networks that represent diverse economic actors asked how they will engage under GC, in particular with private sector. The EC expressed that dialogue with private sector and networks is part of the consultation process and will continue once we are in the implementation phase. As a result, the EC is fully aware of the diversity of private sector actors and their needs, and the need to maintain this diversity in our partner countries, including in different sectors – also now through EFSD and EFSD+.

### 4) Partnerships

LA associations in partner countries recognise many of their priorities in the GC, such as economic growth, trade and investments, public administration, decentralisation of cooperation and programmes, local democracy and the business climate. However there was a question on the extent to which **LA priorities** in partner countries diverge from those of the EU. Capacity-building of experts,



including those in delegations, is also important in this regard. Local service provision should be mentioned explicitly in the GC as a catalyst for development.

EC staff responded that, indeed, the EU is trying to shape certain **norms and standards**, for example through the green agenda or digital governance, but this is not at the expense of in-depth dialogue and agreement with partner countries and partners on their priorities, especially when it comes to geographical programming. Infrastructure, capacity building, and technical assistance will be major elements overall in NDICI Global Europe.

Efforts will be made to integrate LA in the implementation of programmes at all levels, including via calls for proposals, so that decentralised cooperation can also be managed at delegation level, rather than only centrally. DG INTPA will continue to work with participants on this.

## **V. Conclusions**

PFD and non-PFD members have found the structured consultation process very useful and expressed a wish for their input and involvement to continue over the 7-year cycle. They asked if another consultation is planned for the autumn, once the EC has more of a view on programming. On this aspect, **Marlene Holzner**, Head of Unit for LAs, CSOs and Foundations at INTPA, acknowledged the desire for further future engagement with PFD on the GC and other programmes.

In their closing remarks, Mr **Cervone d'Urso** and Mr **Gioev** thanked participants for the rich discussion and interaction and looked forward to continued open exchange. They agreed to consider the possibility of an update after the summer, with an overview of the different NDICI pillars and what these could include for CS and LAs.