

## 4th Global Meeting of the Policy Forum on Development: Brussels, 14-16 March 2016

This is a summary of the fourth global meeting of the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) which took place in Brussels, March 14-16. The meeting mobilized more than 160 representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs) and associations of Local Authorities (LAs), the private sector, representatives from the European Commission, European Union Institutions and Member States.

**Welcome:** Welcoming remarks were given by: Jean-Louis Ville, Acting Director, Human Development and Migration, DEVCO; Jacqueline Moustache Belle, Mayor of Victoria, Seychelles, UCLG Co-President, PFD LA Co-Chair; Filiberto Ceriani Sebregondi, Head of Division, Development Cooperation Coordination Division, EEAS and Jorge Balbis, Executive Secretary, ALOP, PFD CSO Co-Chair. If 2015 was the year of setting the new Development Agenda, 2016 is the year of its implementation. This implementation must consider an international context characterized by new challenges, such as the current migration crisis. The debate about the future of the Cotonou partnership needs to go “beyond business as usual” and be linked to a renewed debate about the role of the EU in the world and its capacity to lead global agendas, particularly Agenda 2030. Representatives from LAs reminded the audience that 2016 is a crucial year for local governments, as the Habitat III meeting will guide the implementation of urban policies over the next 20 years. Finally, the PFD review provides the opportunity, after two years of implementation, to look back and assess the added value of the PFD.

**Revision of Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA):** The first session focused on the future of the Cotonou partnership and how a future agreement could better balance the role of each actor to strengthen partnerships and improve public policies. The introductory panel included remarks from H.E. Patrick I. Gomes, Secretary General, ACP Secretariat; Koen Doens, Cotonou Task Force, Director, Development Coordination, East and Southern Africa, DEVCO; Robert Hessel van Dijk, Team Leader, EU Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands and Kristin de Peyron, Head of Division, Pan-African Affairs, EEAS. The remarks raised several salient, and sometimes controversial, issues. The results of the CPA should be evaluated based on the benefits it has created and put a strong focus on the challenges of the future rather than assessing the past. Panellists and participants debated whether or not the new partnership should take place on the basis of a new legal agreement. All insisted that the content of the new partnership should be elaborated according to new tendencies in the world, including climate change, migration pressures, economic development, and the SDGs. Questions were raised as to the adequacy (based on past experience) of co-management schemes, and participants discussed the potential role of multi-stakeholder platforms as a more useful instrument to encompass different objectives and interests.

A second panel focused on the expectations in any future agreement. Speakers included: Anne-Cécile Coly, Union Nationale des Syndicats du Sénégal; Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General, UCLG Africa; Gina Wharton, Advocacy Advisor, IPPF European Network, CONCORD Cotonou Working Group; Brenda King, Chief Executive, Africa and Caribbean Diversity, EESC and Frédéric Vallier, Secretary General, CEMR. Several issues were raised during this interactive panel: the importance of a common consensus and the involvement of all actors during discussions on the new partnership; the need to localise the new partnership for effective implementation; the necessity of a vision for the new partnership; the importance for the CSOs and all non-state actors to be involved in all stages of the political dialogue (within a structured mechanism); how the new partnership agreement can use trade as a means to enable inclusive growth; the importance of social standards to be addressed in the new partnership agreement and the necessity of implementation based on fair cooperation.

**Global Influence:** This session offered the opportunity to the participants to share perspectives on upcoming global events UN Habitat III and the Second High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC HML2). The first panel was composed of three key speakers: Paolo Ciccarelli, Head of Unit, Water, Infrastructures, Cities, DEVCO; Patrick Braouezec, President of La Plaine Commune, France and Alvaro Puertas, Secretary General, Habitat International Coalition. Participants initially expressed their expectations for the conference Habitat III, which should support the realization of Agenda 2030 on the basis of an action-oriented agenda. Key elements to consider: the promotion of green and resilient cities, which can integrate principles of environmental sustainability; the combination of good governance principles with national processes of decentralisation; how to reconcile competitiveness factors with equality

and a fair redistribution of wealth; clear solutions to increasing pressures such as the refugee crisis and the agreement over a solid set of indicators which can measure the realization of the proposed goals. In addition, participants stressed the importance of reaching an agreement over the role of social organizations, which are at the forefront of problems in the cities. They discussed the role of international cooperation and, in particular, how the EU can improve its ability to support Habitat III and how to finance the agenda, involving both the public and private sector, taking into consideration the magnitude of the challenges.

In the second panel, speakers Erica Gerretsen, Head of Unit, Effectiveness and Financing, DEVCO; Maria Theresa Lauron, Asia Pacific Research Network, CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE); and Edgardo Bilsky, Director of Research, UCLG World Secretariat, discussed the key challenges and opportunities to universalizing an effective international development cooperation agenda. Panellists re-iterated that the Global Partnership will support the implementation of Agenda 2030. They underlined the need to advance in a number of areas during the upcoming GPEDC HML2, including: joint programming, better aid coordination and the use of country systems; increased transparency in both the governance and the progress of the partnership; a clearer role for the private sector; and further development of multi-stakeholder partnership mechanisms. Improving these areas, with clear timelines, financing and a strong monitoring system, should enhance the effectiveness, quality and impact of aid and help us achieve the SDGs.

**Enabling Environment for a new global agenda:** Discussing an enabling environment for CSO/LA is a recurrent item of the PFD. The objective of this session was to understand what aspects of an enabling environment are needed to increase the full participation of all actors as equal partners in the implementation of the SDGs. The discussions included eight speakers: Patrice Lenormand, Deputy Head of Unit, Civil Society and Local Authorities, DEVCO; Cornelius Hacking, Task Team GPEDC; Edith van Ewijk, PFD researcher, Netherlands; Wicak Sarosa, PFD researcher, Indonesia; Bernadia Tjandradewi, Secretary General of UCLG Asia Pacific; Hanna Surmatz, European Foundation Centre; Tony Tujan, CPDE; Marita González, CGT Argentina. Debates examined four key questions: 1) What is the relevance of the Agenda 2030 for the country and what are the main country priorities?; 2) Which initiatives to address the SDGs in the country are already in place? ; 3) What is the role of CSOs and LAs in the planning and design of the 2030 Agenda?; 4) Are there good examples of multi-stakeholder coalitions to support the 2030 Agenda?

PFD researchers from the Netherlands and Indonesia opened the panel by sharing country level findings about how PFD actors are engaging in SDG implementation. The panel that followed discussed the challenges that surround the implementation of the SDGs, including: the implicit challenges derived from the large number of goals and targets in Agenda 2030 and, as a result, the complexity in developing national strategies; the increasing restrictions that CSOs are facing in many parts of the world; the importance of the social dialogue, as exemplified in Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil, to encourage progress in the implementation of SDGs; the usefulness of developing regional networks of CSOs, as in the Asian case, to devise common objectives and advance together towards shared goals; and the gradual inclusion of CSOs in the elaboration of global agendas since, for example, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

The participants then split into different groups to share views on how to strengthen multi-stakeholder approaches to support an enabling environment: at country level; to support policy influencing; to support the implementation of a rights-based approach; and how to enhance donor support.

**Revision of the EU Development Policy:** This session aimed at presenting the most recent elements and challenges to updating EU development policy and developing the EU Global Strategy with the interventions of five high level speakers: Honourable Linda McAvan, MEP, Chair of the European Parliament Development Committee; Christiaan Rebergen, Director General, International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands; Klaus Rudischhauser, Acting Director-General, DEVCO; Felix Fernandez-Shaw, Member of the Cabinet, HRVP Mogherini and Alfredo Conte, Head of Division, Strategic Planning, EEAS. Among the challenges expressed, all panellists touched upon the universality of Agenda 2030 and the need to adapt both internal and external strategies to be coherent. This agenda requires the implementation of several global agendas to be successful, including the Addis Ababa Agenda for Action and the most recent agreement on climate change. While finally meeting the 0.7% ODA commitment from European member states will be important, there was recognition that other sources of financing, notably domestic resources and blending with private sector, will be needed. As highlighted in SDG 16, peace and security must be addressed as a matter of urgency in order to ensure development.

Participants had the opportunity to express their views and concerns about the future EU Development strategy, including: the difficult nuances of the security-development nexus, especially as relates to financing and the use of ODA; how to find the right global governance architecture, including the reinforcement of local governance, to achieve the objectives of the

different global agendas; ensuring that human rights and gender issues are truly integrated into any EU development policies and are addressed in implementation; defining more clearly who we mean by private sector and clarifying how to improve their engagement; and ensuring that the EU development policy is about engaging with citizens and not only governments. Many mentioned "leave no one behind," and reminded panellists that the EU is strongly committed to addressing gender inequality, using a rights based approach and upholding its obligation to protect and include the disabled and most marginalized in its policies, but these policy statements must become a reality in its actions.

The participants then split into PFD regional groups to discuss: How the EU should step up its efforts to achieve Policy Coherence for Development; how the EU should strengthen its partnerships to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda) through its development policy and, finally, how the PFD can best contribute to that purpose.

**PFD Review:** After working in thematic groups; the PFD members came back to the plenary to present key remarks and recommendations on the first review of the PFD. The group observations related to the relevance of the PFD and, more precisely, how relevant the objectives are for the PFD members' organisations; the impact of the PFD on Development in general and on EU Development work in particular; the mandate of the PFD and the representativeness of the members.

**Closing:** The closing session included words from the PFD co-Chairs as well as from Bento Pais, Head of Unit, Civil Society and Local Authorities, DG DEVCO. The concluding remarks highlighted the good work in progress of the PFD and the evolution observed over the past three years. Ms. Bento Pais called upon all PFD members to work together beyond PFD meeting towards an even greater level of political dialogue.

#### Key messages:

1. 2015 has been an exceptional year in terms of global governance with unprecedented agreements (Agenda 2030, Financing for Development, COP21). The first global shared priorities of the participants of the PFD is to ensure that the commitments made are **put into action** at national level.
2. It is acknowledged that the **implementation of the SDGs** will be a slow, gradual process, that will require: coordinating interlinked policies; timely implementation of the Addis Agenda; and integrating current challenges, mainly (but not exclusively) related to migration and human security.
3. It is widely recognized that the SDGs will not be achieved without the active participation of the **local level**.
4. A new Cotonou partnership agreement needs to focus primarily on **content**, including agendas, tendencies and challenges which characterise the world today, such as migration, climate change and the SDGs; and ensure a wider space for political dialogue with stakeholders (LAs, CSOs), which have an essential role to play in the process.
5. While there is still plenty of debate about the future shape of a new EU-ACP partnership, one of the key aspects is whether it should be based upon a **legally binding** agreement, and whether or not this remains essential to move forward.
6. The relation and balance between **trade and development** remains a controversial element mentioned in the different processes that have been discussed during the global PFD (Cotonou, Habitat III, HML2 and the review of EU Development Policy).
7. The quality of both **data and monitoring** systems are key to proper information and ensuring progress; therefore we need to provide the necessary capacity building to integrate adequate data collection and monitoring in the work of all actors.
8. Beyond the governance architecture and participation of different stakeholders in the dialogue and process, it is imperative to find **sources of finance** that, bearing in mind the magnitude of the challenges, will ensure the implementation of Habitat III and the SDGs. Mobilizing the needed financial resources is an essential prerequisite for the development community.
9. Global goals demand **improved forms of coordination** from all actors involved in international cooperation. These need to take into account the relevant role and contribution of different stakeholders (governments, private sector, CSOs, LAs, trade unions, etc.) and the use of instruments (joint programming, use of country systems, etc.) that are more adequate for the requirements of the implementation of the new global agenda.
10. **Multi-actor spaces** are proving to be a useful tool to find common ground and advance together, building consensus around collective development goals, and good examples of those should be replicated in the PFD and beyond.