



# LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ACP-EU PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT



by Mr Adenane Djigo & Dr Carl Wright

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& Dr Carl Wright**

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## FOREWORD

*"After climbing a great hill,  
one finds there are many more to climb"*

**Nelson Mandela**

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**Dr Sindra Sharma-Khushal**, researcher, Ramphal Institute, London, provided additional support.

## Context

The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) - which was concluded between the European Union and its 28 members on the one hand and the 79 members of the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States on the other hand, is a comprehensive political, aid and trade accord and the largest global agreement of its kind. It is also one of the few development cooperation agreements which explicitly includes local and regional governments (LRG) among the key stakeholders in its implementation. In particular, it recognises LRG as 'State actors' (art. 6) and acknowledges their '*complementary role and their potential contributions*' (art. 4) in ACP-EU cooperation. Specifically, it provides for LRG engagement in political dialogue and eligibility to EDF funding and makes provision for strengthening LRG capacity and supporting local development.

Local and Regional Governments from Europe and ACP countries have therefore a direct interest in the implementation of the provision of the Cotonou agreement. European LRGs have indeed become, through their cooperation, actors of international relations, and actors of European development cooperation in particular. Mostly known as 'decentralised cooperation', the international action of LRGs has been developing for over 50 years and is today operating on a global scale, unfolding at bilateral and multilateral level<sup>1</sup>.

The Cotonou Agreement will expire on 29 February 2020 and provides in Article 95.4 that the parties "*examine what provisions subsequently govern their relations*" 18 months before the end of the Agreement, or no later than 31 August 2018. Both ACP group of country and the EU have adopted negotiations mandate for this post-2020 relations. Past evaluations of the Cotonou Agreement have however questioned if relations between the ACP and EU are best served by a continuation of the Cotonou Agreement in its present form and structures. In particular, the Communication 'Towards a renewed partnership with African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries after 2020'<sup>2</sup> implies that the European Commission favours a new agreement with more distinct regional components for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, within an umbrella ACP component. It also calls for a stronger multi-stakeholder approach, embracing not just ACP central governments, but also local government, parliaments, the private sector and CSOs. However, the negotiation mandate doesn't the place and role LRGs will play in the ACP-EU relations beyond 2020<sup>3</sup>.

The forthcoming negotiations to revise ACP-EU relationships provide an early opportunity to ensure better positioning of LRG in a future agreement. The overall goal in this respect is to enhance the participation of LRG in ACP-EU cooperation in order to improve governance and development in partner countries. In collaboration with LRG international associations - Association Internationale des Maires Francophone (AIMF), Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) - and with the support of the European Commission, PLATFORMA accordingly commissioned this study to consider how LRG has been able to engage under the Cotonou Agreement to date and how it might relate to a post-2020 ACP-EU Agreement.

The main issue of the study arises from Article 4 of Cotonou, which states that LRGs are actors of the partnerships and should be actively involved in its implementation. The key question is therefore 'has Article 4 of Cotonou being properly implemented?' The study seeks to find out if this has been the case at national, regional and pan-ACP levels: how LRGs has been involved in political dialogue and consultation mechanisms; what financial resources LRG has received for the implementation of projects and programmes; and to what extent LRG has been provided with capacity support. It also looks at the potential prospects for a stronger LRG role in the post-2020 ACP-EU relationship.



<sup>1</sup> Galet Bertrand, 2005, *Les enjeux de la coopération décentralisée*, *Revue internationale et stratégique* 2005/1 (N°57), p. 61-70.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, (2016), *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council - A renewed partnership with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific: JOIN (2016) 52 final*, Strasbourg. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-acp-20161122\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-acp-20161122_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Council of the European Union, (2018) *Negotiating directives for a Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part, and with countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the other part*. Retrieved from: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8094-2018-ADD-1/en/pdf>



## Methodology

The methodology deployed for the study involved interviews and consultations with ACP and EU developmental actors and a preliminary desk-based review of bibliographic sources, resulting in an interim report issued in June 2017. The literature review considered the context of the international development agenda; it entailed consideration of the role of the LRG under the Cotonou Agreement and related EU support mechanisms for LRG; it further looked at evaluations of EDF programmes, including those for strengthening LRG, and projects undertaken by various actors; finally, it examined studies on the effectiveness of institutional and financial support to LRG.

The study further involved consideration of the content and scope of 11 selected NIPs (National Indicative Programme) under the 11th EDF and a number of RIPS (Regional Indicative Programme) and EU relations with the African Union, AU. It deployed specially-designed on-line questionnaires (see Appendix 2 page 45) and interviews in the selected ACP countries and at regional level (Africa: Mali, Cameroon, Guinea, Zimbabwe, Uganda and ECOWAS/AU; Caribbean: Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica and CARIFORUM; Pacific: Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, PIFS) to analyse practical experiences in connection with the engagement of LRG in the Cotonou Agreement. Analysis of actual practices or the concrete implementation of Cotonou then allowed an evaluation of the effective recognition of the role of LRG under the Agreement, identifying both strengths and weaknesses. Overall, the choice of actors contacted and interviewed, reflects a wide range of practitioners in development cooperation. These included LRG, as represented by their national local government associations (LGAs); central government as represented by National Authorising Officers (NAOs) responsible for EDF coordination (usually located in the ministry of finance) and ministries of decentralisation/local government; the EU Delegations concerned;

and representatives from the respective regional organisations including the relevant LRG regional/international bodies. Interviews were conducted with a number of key Brussels-based ACP and EU institutions and actors, including the ACP Secretariat, the European Commission and the European Centre for Development Policy Management, ECDPM, PLATFORMA/CEMR and other LRG organisations having Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) with the European Commission (AIMF, CLGF, UCLG, UCLGA), were also consulted, including during the June 2017 EU Development Days and July 2017 Assizes of Decentralised Cooperation (see Appendix 1 page 42-43).

The study was undertaken by two international consultants, Mr Adenane Djigo, geographer, founder on the consulting firm D&C Engineering, Dakar, Senegal, and Dr Carl Wright, Secretary General Emeritus of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), London, UK. It was commissioned in May 2017 and carried out in June-July 2017, and did not involve country field visits and this impacted on the availability of in-depth data. The representativeness of LRG and other partners consulted, together with the wealth of prior policy positions reviewed, serve to re-enforce the accuracy of the study's final conclusions and to underline the relevance and topicality of the policy recommendations made.

Following this introduction, *Chapter 1* deals with EU support for Decentralisation and Local Governance, *Chapter 2* examines the Role of Local and Regional Government in the Cotonou Agreement, over the 2000-2017 period, *Chapters 3* reviews Policy Engagement at pan-ACP level, *Chapter 4* provides findings on the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific case studies<sup>4</sup>. Conclusions and policy recommendations are set out at the end of this study.

<sup>4</sup> Full case studies on Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific can be downloaded via the link <http://platforma-dev.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ACP-UE-Djigo-Wright-Case-studies.pdf>



# CHAPTER 1

EU SUPPORT FOR DECENTRALISATION  
AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

## EU SUPPORT FOR DECENTRALISATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The EU has increasingly emerged as a leading player in supporting LRG, decentralisation reform and development decentralised cooperation. This was reflected in particular by the 2005 revisions of the Cotonou Agreement, incorporating 'local decentralised authorities' as State Actors and the growing engagement with LRG at pan-ACP, regional and national level; the significant EU support provided to LRG under the DCI and other instruments; the provisions of the 2013 EU Communication on empowering local authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes; the new EU emphasis on TALD (Territorial Approach to Local Development) and the conclusion of Framework Partnership Agreements, FPAs, between the European Commission (EC) and international LRG associations. This chapter provides a short overview of EU political and financial support for decentralisation and local governance, including LRG capacity building, financing and decentralised cooperation.

### 1. Political support: from the 2008 communication to the 2017 European Consensus on Development

An EU evaluation undertaken in 2012<sup>5</sup> presents a comprehensive review of EC support for decentralisation and local governance (DLG) under the DCI covering the period 2000-2009. While it extends beyond Cotonou and the ACP countries, it does draw on many African ACP experiences and thus has relevance to this study and illustrates some of the practical issues facing LRG in being a full partner to the Cotonou Agreement. The evaluation follows the 2011 EU Agenda for Change<sup>6</sup> mandate that *'EU support to governance should feature more prominently in all partnerships'*. Its overall conclusion is that the EU has progressively established a policy framework for supporting decentralisation; that *'EC support has made important contributions'*; and that *'continued support for decentralisation reforms remain of utmost relevance- in particular in poor and fragile countries, where efforts aimed at state building and public-sector reforms are greatly needed'*.

The practical implementation of Cotonou in respect of LRG cannot be seen in isolation from a range of subsequent EU policy decisions and new instruments which guides action by EU Delegations.



The most important of these for LRG was the 2013 **Communication on Empowering Local Authorities in partner countries**<sup>7</sup>. This integrates the results of the 2010-11 Structured Dialogue on involvement of CSOs and Local Authorities in EU development cooperation<sup>8</sup> and the 2011 EU Agenda for Change<sup>9</sup> and proposes a more strategic engagement with LRG, based on recognition of its important role in development. It seeks to unlock LRG's development potential in adherence with the EU principle of subsidiarity according to which public responsibilities, regulatory functions and spending are transferred to the lowest institutional or social level, closest to citizens, that is able and entrusted to complete them. It endorses the territorial approach to development (TALD) characterised as *'a dynamic bottom-up and long-term process based on a multi-actor and multi-sector approach, in which different local institutions and actors work together to define priorities, and plan and implement development strategies.'*

The Communication commits the EU to *'work in favour of democratically legitimate, accountable and representative Local Authorities and local leaders in partner countries with particular focus on municipal authorities in rural and urban areas'* as well as *'coordination with regional authorities'*. In this it envisages the promotion of decentralisation processes; LRG capacity-development, including for

<sup>5</sup> Particip GmbH. (February 2012). *Thematic global evaluation of the Commission support to decentralisation processes – Final Report*.

<sup>6</sup> European Commission. (13th October, 2011). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change. COM(2011) 637 final*.

<sup>7</sup> European Commission. (15th May 2013). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Empowering Local Authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes. Brussels, COM(2013) 280 final*

<sup>8</sup> URL: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/structured-dialogue\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/structured-dialogue_en.htm).

<sup>9</sup> COM(2011) 637 final (13.10.2011)

local government associations (LGAs) at country, continental and international levels, central-local authorities linkages; and support for sustainable urbanization. It further encourages the EU to use innovative funding modalities for LRG, including performance-based grants, support for citizen involvement such as participatory budgeting, decentralised budget support and decentralised and cross-border cooperation between LRG. It also foresees a greater role in development cooperation for the EU Committee of Regions<sup>10</sup>.

The **Territorial Approach to Development (TALD)** reference document issued to Delegations in December 2016<sup>11</sup> reviews past EU support for decentralisation - including what it terms the 'paradigm shift' of the 2013 Communication on Empowering Local Authorities; and sets out a vision for decentralising for development. It proposes shaping EU support through a territorial approach to local development (TALD) and localising the SDGs and puts forward new ideas for EU modalities and mechanisms, including budget support, 'smart' projects and innovative financing mechanisms for local authorities such 'blending' grants and loans, and use of trust funds and as well as the NSA-LA programme. It is noteworthy for highlighting the role of both LGAs and of decentralised cooperation. Its analysis is supported by a series of country case studies. It was significant that in the period 2015-16, the EC organised a number of regional TALD policy events for operational staff from Delegations to make them aware of this new approach. LRG representatives were invited to participate in these regional events, so as to encourage interaction and potential collaboration with Delegations. In consequence, there are now growing opportunities of EU- LRG cooperation, including under Cotonou, especially at ACP country level, which can be taken forward by LRG.

The **2017 European Consensus on Development** is the latest overall EU policy statement issued by the EU Council in May 2017 and therefore is of high topical relevance to this study. Although its am-

bit goes beyond the ACP-EU partnership, its declared intention is to achieve EU policy coherence for development (PCD). At the core of the Consensus is the intent to implement the 2030 Agenda with its focus on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, 'closely coordinated with that of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other international commitments, including the New Urban Agenda' (pa.7); reference is also made to the AAAA as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda and to it being complimented by the Sendai Agreement (pa.3).

The Consensus places strong emphasis on multi-stakeholder partnerships as being key to the implementation of SDGs and devotes two substantive paragraphs to the role of cities and LRG:

*'The EU and its Member States will seek to boost the potential of cities as hubs for sustainable and inclusive growth and innovation, taking account of their wider rural communities and of balanced regional development. They will promote inclusive sustainable urban development to address urban inequality focusing on those most in need, including those living in informal settlements and slums. They will support partners to improve the delivery of basic services and equitable access to food security, accessible, decent and affordable housing and the quality of life of a rapidly growing urban population. In line with the UN's New Urban Agenda, they will promote sustainable land use planning, equitable management of land markets, sustainable urban mobility and smart, safe cities that make use of opportunities from digitalisation and technologies. They will promote inclusive, balance integrated territorial and urban policies, and multilevel governmental coordination, forging stronger links between rural and urban areas. They will build cities' resilience to shocks and harness opportunities for a low-emission and climate-resilient economy (Pa.60)'*

*'The achievement of most of the SDGs is strongly dependent on the active involvement of local and regional authorities. The EU and its*

## LRG LANDMARKS IN EU DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY

- **2005** Incorporation of LRG into Cotonou
- **2006** New thematic instrument for Non-State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA-LA)
- **2007** ARIAL (Supporting and Strengthening Local Authority Associations Programme, 2007-2013)
- **2008** First dedicated EU Communication on Local Authorities: "Local Authorities: actors of development"
- **2010-11** LRG involved in Structured Dialogue
- **2013** Communication "Empowering Local Authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes"
- **2014** NSA-LA programme is renewed as Civil Society Organization-Local Authorities (CSO-LA)
- **2015** LRG involved in the public consultation "Towards a new partnership between the EU and ACP countries after 2020" European Commission Framework Partnership Agreements with international LRG associations
- **2015** LRG recognised as development actors in a number of international development agendas, notably the 2030 Agenda (including a dedicated goal 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements) with growing focus on the localisation of the SDGs
- **2016** Habitat III New Urban Agenda agreed
- **2017** European Consensus on Development recognises role of cities & LRG
- **2017** Reorganisation of DG DEVCO: CSOs and LRGs are no longer regrouped in the same unit

<sup>10</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Empowering Local Authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes. Brussels, COM (2013) 280 final. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/communication-local-authorities-in-partner-countries-com2013280-20130515\\_en\\_4.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/communication-local-authorities-in-partner-countries-com2013280-20130515_en_4.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Reference Document No 23 in the EC's Tools and Methods Series on supporting decentralisation, local governance and local development through a territorial approach (DLGTD) (December 2016).

*Member States will support transparency, accountability and decentralisation reforms, where appropriate, to empower local and regional authorities for better governance and development impact and address inequalities within countries. They will support processes to help people interact effectively with local government at all stages of policy planning and implementation and will strengthen their cooperation with local and other sub-national authorities, including through decentralised cooperation (Pa.86)'.*

In addition, much of the remainder of the text makes extensive reference to LRG, stating that the EU and its Member States 'will support capacity building support for strong institutions and multi-level governance, with the participation of persons in vulnerable situations and minorities through partnerships between national, sub-national and local governments (pa.61/Box); that 'regional and local authorities...have become instrumental partners (pa.72); that this include 'twinning' among modes of aid delivery (pa.79); that 'regional and local authorities, must play their respective roles fully, including their scrutiny role, alongside national governments and actively participate in the decision-making process (pa.83); that the EU and its Member States 'will provide support for comprehensive and inclusive planning in developing countries rooted in national and sub-national development strategies, programmes and budgets (pa.84); that 'a fundamental aim will be to build developing country capacity for implementing the 2030 Agenda at local, regional and national levels (pa.85); that they will 'promote and monitor the use of country systems in all aid modalities, where quality allows, including at local level in order to help improve the democratic ownership and effectiveness of institutions at national and sub-national level (pa.116); and boost 'investments in stronger statistical institutions at sub-national, national and regional level (pa.121)'.

The 2017 Consensus and its above commitments to engage LRG will clearly have a direct influence on the objectives and functioning of a future ACP-EU agreement and provides LRG with significant advocacy framework to take forward in the forthcoming post-2020 negotiations.

## 2. EU Support in practice: external financing instruments and how they have been delivering on political commitments

The main financial instrument supporting the implementation of the Cotonou partnership is the European Development Fund (EDF), which is also the largest external financing instrument of the EU (€30.5 billion against €19.66 billion for the Development Cooperation instrument for the period 2014-2020). A number of recent EDF evaluations have emphasised the complementarity between the EDF and other EU instruments and the need to ensure greater policy coherence between them. Thus, while the present study is focused on LRG in the context of Cotonou, it also needed to take into account the impact of non-EDF policy instruments on LRG in ACP countries. Of particular importance is the Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI), which among other components includes the Civil society organisations and local authorities (CSO-LA) programme, which has grown significantly since 2008.

The 2012 evaluation of the Commission support to decentralisation processes by Particip GmbH mentioned<sup>12</sup> above showed that financial support for Decentralisation and Local Governance (DLG) grew from zero in 2000 to €100pa by 2009 of which 74% went to -mainly francophone- Africa; 3% to Caribbean and 1% to the Pacific. This represented less than 1% of all EU finances 2000-2004, but then grew to 2.4% 2004-2008. While there was a significant increase in the number of Country Strategy Papers having a DLG component, only 5 of 23 countries surveyed contained explicit support for decentralisation. EC staff resources for decentralisation were seen as modest both at Delegations and in Brussels, and there was deemed to be limited institutional memory on DLG; a lack of coherence with sector policies was also noted. EU support for DLG was seen as most effective in areas like development of decentralisation policies; intergovernmental fiscal transfer systems; LRG capacity on planning, financial management; citizen's access to selected LRG services. The evaluation found that it was important to support all



<sup>12</sup> Particip GmbH. (February 2012). Thematic global evaluation of the Commission support to decentralisation processes – Final Report.



stakeholders in DLG – central and local governments and CSOs; and that capacity-building was best combined with additional resources to allow LRG practice new skills.

EU interventions were deemed less successful for deep legal reforms, especially sector harmonisation and intergovernmental/inter-ministerial relations; decentralisation of human management; central government capacity for reform management; increasing LRG autonomy (other than managing discretionary grants) and in improving quality of local services. EC support to LGAs was generally seen as limited and *'hampered by their very limited resources and highly-politicised internal processes'* and it was noted *'This situation requires more long-term and strategic support'*.

The evaluation showed it was necessary to develop an explicit EU response strategy that embeds future EU support for decentralisation reforms within a wider public-sector reform agenda, together with clear operational guidelines. It recommended intensified efforts to strengthen and broaden country ownership/range of stakeholders and management of decentralisation reforms, including involvement of LGAs; strengthening EU response strategies including improving EU Delegations' LRG sector analyses and paying more attention to quality aspects of local service delivery. It noted innovative support modalities for decentralisation reforms remain limited and raised the possibility of moving beyond ad hoc grants and project support, potentially deploying a wide range of instruments such as sector support, basket funds, trust funds and sector budget support, as well as regional/international peer reviews, (akin to the European Charter on Local Self-Government). Other suggestions included building on EU comparative advantages, especially in the area of support for intergovernmental fiscal transfer systems; strengthening partner countries' monitoring and evaluation, including to LRG; strengthening donor harmonisation and in support of decentralisation in partner countries and globally.

## EDF FUNDING

The EDF is the main instrument of EU development policy, however unlike other External Financial Instruments, it is not included in the EU budget. It is financed by direct contributions from EU Member States and covered by its own financial rules.

The period 2000-2020 has seen three financial allocations under the European Development Fund:

- The 9<sup>th</sup> EDF 2000-2007  
€13.5 billion
- The 10<sup>th</sup> EDF 2008-2013  
€22.7 billion
- The 11<sup>th</sup> EDF 2014-2020  
€30.5 billion

While it might be assumed that post-2020 allocation under a new Agreement would continue to see growth, the potential impact of the withdrawal of UK contribution to the EDF in the case of Brexit may need to be factored-in (€4.48 billion, representing 14.48 % of EDF resources in 2014-20); alternatively, there could be a case of negotiating a continuing UK contribution and engagement with the EDF and/or with potential EU-supported Trust Funds in the interest of policy coherence.

The European Commission proposal for the multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027 foresees the inclusion of EDF in the budget of the EU, which would allow for parliamentary scrutiny.



The CSO-LA budget line and other EU instruments outside of Cotonou have supported a range of LRG activities including decentralised cooperation. The most significant evidence is the EU support to PLATFORMA – the European network of LRG and their associations involved in development decentralised cooperation. European cities and regions have rich experience in undertaking development cooperation projects focused on municipal partnerships and exchanges. These exchanges have evolved from more traditional cultural city ‘twinning’ to specialised municipal technical coopera-

tion partnerships designed to enhance diverse skills and capacity in a wide range of areas. The latter include for instance projects addressing local accountability and financial management, local economic development and job-creation strategies, environmental programmes, urban planning, etc - in fact any potential area where local government has direct responsibility. This practice of decentralised cooperation (DC) has involved south-south as well as triangular (e.g. north/south/south) partnerships as well as the more traditional north/south partnerships<sup>13</sup>.

## BUDGET SUPPORT TO LRG<sup>14</sup>

A recent EC publication on ‘Providing budget support in decentralised contexts: A methodological note, examines in some detail options for budget support. It identifies three areas:

- Budget support to decentralised public service delivery
- Budget support to decentralisation reforms and local authority system development
- Budget support to local authority territorial development policies, notably where sub-national authorities enjoy substantial political, administrative and fiscal powers, e.g. in federal systems. The EDF is the main instrument of EU

development policy, however unlike other External Financial Instruments, it is not included in the EU budget. It is financed by direct contributions from EU Member States and covered by its own financial rules.

The third option of EU budget support to LRG is the most innovative but is still quite unusual. It is currently being experimented with in a few countries such as Ethiopia; however, there is increased international acceptance of the need to encourage sub-national development finance, both by giving LRG powers to mobilize domestic revenue as well as by giving it direct access to international development finance and capital markets. This new acceptance is reflected in pa. 34 of the Addis Ababa Action Programme on sub-national finance and reflects the need to localize resources, alongside localizing the SDGs.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on the different types of decentralised cooperation, see Agustí Fernández de Losada Passols, 2018, CPMR & PLATFORMA, Shaping a new generation of Decentralised cooperation - For enhanced effectiveness and accountability, <http://bit.ly/2FIEG0Z>

<sup>14</sup> European Commission. (2017). Methodological Note: Providing EU budget support in decentralised contexts. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/budget\\_support-web-final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/budget_support-web-final.pdf)

# CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL  
GOVERNMENT IN THE COTONOU  
AGREEMENT 2000-2017

# THE ROLE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE COTONOU AGREEMENT 2000-2017

## 1. Article 4 and other formal provisions of Cotonou

The original Cotonou Agreement of 2000 did not specifically reference LRG, but this was changed in its 2005 revision in Luxembourg and significant changes of EU policy towards LRG have taken place in the last 12 years, especially in the last 4-5 years. The General Provisions of the Cotonou Agreement now give clear recognition to the role of LRG, especially *Article 4* which sets out in detail that:

*“...local decentralised authorities shall, where appropriate:*

- *be informed and involved in consultations on cooperation policies and strategies, on priorities for cooperation especially in areas that concern or directly affect them, and on the political dialogue;*
- *be provided with capacity-building support in critical areas in order to reinforce the capabilities of these actors, particularly as regards organisation and representation, and the establishment of consultation mechanisms including channels of communication and dialogue, and to promote strategic alliances;*

*Non-state actors and local decentralised authorities shall, where appropriate:*

- *be provided with financial resources, under the conditions laid down in this Agreement in order to support local development processes;*
- *be involved in the implementation of cooperation projects and programmes in areas that concern them or where these actors have a comparative advantage;*

**Article 2** establishes that local government is an actor under the Cotonou Agreement:

*‘Participation: apart from central government as the main partner, the partnership shall be open to ACP parliaments, and local authorities in ACP States’.*

**Article 6** defines local and regional government as part of the State, i.e. it is not a non-State actor; this effectively means that all other parts of the Agreement relevant to State actors potentially apply to them: *‘The actors of cooperation will include... State (local, regional and national)’.*

**Article 10**, on essential elements regarding human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and fundamental element regarding good governance, recognises that *‘greater involvement of ... local decentralised authorities’ contributes to ‘the maintenance and consolidation of a stable and democratic political environment’.*

This role of LRG is spelt out in the Institutional Provisions under **Article 33** which refers to *‘support the efforts of the ACP States to develop and strengthen structures, institutions and procedures that help to... ensure transparent and accountable governance and administration at all levels’ and ‘political, administrative, economic and financial decentralisation’, as well as ‘building capacity at the local and municipal levels which is required to implement decentralisation policy and to increase the participation of the population in the development process’.*

The sections on development cooperation finance include explicit reference to eligibility to financing under **Article 58 (2e)** and to micro projects and decentralised cooperation under **Articles 70-71** which envisage support for *‘decentralised cooperation, in particular where such operations combine efforts and resources of decentralised agents from the ACP States and their counterparts from the Community. This form of cooperation shall enable the mobilisation of capabilities, innovative operating methods and resources of the decentralised agents for the development of the ACP State.’* and set out detailed provisions for not less than 25% co-funding of projects by the agents of decentralised cooperation.

It is noticeable that the procedures and management systems set out in the Agreement make no formal provision for the consultations and engagement in the political dialogue called for under *Article 4*. However, **Annex IV**, dealing with implementation and management procedures in more depth, specify, under *Article 2*, that *‘The country strategy paper shall be prepared by the ACP State concerned and the EU. It shall draw from prior consultation with a wide range of actors including ...local authorities ...and shall draw on lessons learned and best practices’.* Moreover *Article 4* states *‘The annual operational, mid-term and end-of-term reviews of the indicative programme ...shall be finalised between the National Authorising Officer and the Commission, in consultation with...local authorities’.* This recognition is however not explicitly extended to regional programming, which refers to consultation with *‘non-state actors represented at regional level’* (*Article 8*)

Reference should also be made to **Community Declaration XI** of Luxembourg, 25 June 2005 on *Articles 4 and 59(2)* Cotonou Agreement which states *‘For the purpose of Articles 4 and 58(2), it is understood that the term ‘local decentralised authorities’ covers all levels of decentralisation including ‘collectivites locales’.*



## 2. 2015 consultations on Cotonou and EDF evaluations

In 2015 the EC held an extensive open consultation on the workings and future of Cotonou to which a wide range of stakeholders were invited to answer. These included responses from different organisations including local government associations notably PLATFORMA, AIMF, CLGF, UCLGA, as well as Cities Alliance. All the local government respondents to the 2015 consultation agreed on the need for more institutionalised engagement with LRG, especially through increased access to the Political Dialogue. They also pointed to the new strategic approach being developed on account of the 2013 EU Communication and the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) concluded with the main international and regional LRG associations, and they further highlighted the importance of the Territorial Approach to Local Development and the need to localise the SDGs, including within the more developed ACP states.

The 2016 EC summary report of the consultation<sup>15</sup> addresses shared principles and common interests and includes urbanisation among the global challenges which a new ACP-EU partnership should address. It notes that there was a view that *'the EU should continue to support... local authorities... with additional capacity-building and financial resources and actively seek their participation in political and economic processes, especially at the local level (p.7)'*. It notes further that *'there is general consensus that the adoption of the SDGs has provided an important framework for international cooperation and that any future partnership should be adapted to*

### EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (EDF) 2017

The European Commission commissioned an evaluation of the 11th EDF in the framework of a mid-term review of European External Action instruments and in view of EDF and Cotonou end of term. A consultant Consortium led by DAI, undertook a performance review of EDF11 in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, added value, complementarity, leveraging and influence.

The evaluation, which emphasises the need to ensure alignment with the new European Consensus on Development and with the SDGs, makes five core recommendations:

- Restore the spirit of Cotonou's partnership principle by instituting a democratic ownership of EDF programming, formulation, implementation and monitoring and ensuring that EDF implementation modalities and tools are coherent with the instrument's core values and principles.
- Focus efforts on increasing accountability for results and on improving sustainability across all actions funded by the EDF.

- Entrust programming choices to field offices based on political economy analysis, and ensure that programming can be adapted to evolving needs.
- Conduct a structured review of the impact of the various programming, implementation and monitoring changes under the EDF11 and take corrective action where necessary.
- Improve complementarity and synergies in the programme and project cycle of the EDF with other instruments, and between the different services (EUD, DEVCO and EEAS) by entrusting the management of all projects and programmes in ACP countries to EUDs

Specifically, the report concludes that *'the EU still has difficulties in finding the right entry points to work with CSOs and LAs (pa.171)*. In this context, it also notes that *'evidence points to difficulties with the function of NAOs in some countries when the centralizing role of the NAOs impedes direct EU relationships with ministries, local authorities, civil society and jeopardises their ownership of EDF programmes (pa.170)'* It accordingly recommends that *'the level of participatory partnership needs to be significantly strengthened by actively safeguarding and promoting the full range of different relevant stakeholders in programming, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (pa. 188)*.

<sup>15</sup> European Commission. (March 2016). *Towards a New Partnership Between the European Union and the African, Caribbean And Pacific Countries After 2020* - Summary Report: Ref. Ares (2016)1372862 - 18/03/2016



## EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP FOR DEMOCRACY (2017)

This evaluation focuses on 'who owns the EDF' and how to ensure domestic accountability in ACP-EU development cooperation. In its findings it draws on the UK Department for International Development (DFID) multilateral framework review of EDF and the outcome of the 2015 EU consultations among others. Its basic approach is that in line with the Global Partnership's 2016 High Level Meeting in Nairobi, ownership needs to be conceptualized as inclusive, participatory and extending across the entire societal spectrum as 'democratic ownership'. The evaluation notes that of all 73 available National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) under 11EDF, 43 set governance as the focal sector with 29.2% of all funds and with 81.4% of these having public finance management as the preferred area for support; this also embraces general budget support- deemed 'Good Governance and Development Contracts (p10)'. There is however no breakdown of governance to the sub-national level.

The report has five key findings: accountability is mostly constricted to the governance/administrative sector; there is an inflated focus on the state in implementation; the current focus on CSOs for domestic accountability misses other key players such as political parties, parliaments and the media; EU programming requires more political awareness; and there is underutilisation of methods of oversight in Country Strategy Paper (CSP) support. It consequently makes specific recommendations to improve EDF programming in these areas, one of the more notable being the suggestion to replace NAOs by National Development Platforms with a wide range of domestic accountability actors (which presumably could include LRG).

The report states that National Authorising Officers (NAOs) under the EDF are direct representatives of the ruling government and that in consequence decisions on EDF implementation can be *'heavily motivated by politics and have in many cases disadvantaged domestic actors (p. 17)'*. In this context, domestic actors can include mayors or local leaders from opposition parties with the result that these are denied EDF infrastructure or other support on political grounds, which makes the case for ensuring that such actors are formally involved in NIP programming and provided with relevant capacity-building support to enable this to take place effectively.

*ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 agenda in the various ACP countries'; and 'in line with this, it would be necessary to...increase ownership of local/regional governments and CSOs and grass-roots organisations with the aim of 'localising 'the SDGs (p.8).'*

On developing a more effective partnership, the report states *'political dialogue remains underused, limited notably by its often rigid and formalised nature, as well as the lack of transparency and insufficient involvement of other key stakeholders such as civil society and local authorities (p. 11)'*. Significantly, it notes that *'A large majority of respondents believes that the joint institutions have not been effective' and 'should be substantially revised (p13)'*, there is support for EDF 'budgetisation' and a questioning of the bureaucracy involved in the operation of National Authorising Officers; 'twinning' i.e. decentralised cooperation, is mentioned as a potential tool (p. 14).

In July 2016, the **European Commission** published its evaluation of the Cotonou Agreement<sup>16</sup>. It recalled its 2005 revision had brought in the MDGs as targets and sought a deeper political cooperation and the promotion of NSAs and local authorities while the 2010 revision had sought to link the partnership with the aid effectiveness agenda and with regional integration policies. It is surprising that while the EC report does refer to the CSO role in several occasions, its only reference to LRG comes almost as an afterthought in a short section on CSOs where it states *'Equally, at local level, synergies between CSOs, local governments and private sector should be better addressed in order to strengthen sustainability, efficiency and better representativeness (p111)'*. However, in its conclusions, the EC admits that *'more needs to be done, however, to achieve the aims of consolidating and mainstreaming the strategic role of CSO (advocacy), non-state and decentralised actors in the development processes (p126)'*.

The **European Parliament** report on the future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020 of September 2016<sup>17</sup> in contrast to the above EC evaluation, provides clear recognition of the significance of the LRG sector. It states that *'despite the clear recognition of the role of ...local authorities ...in the Cotonou Agreement...their participation in deliberations on ACP-EU policies and activities has been limited (Preamble)'*. Significantly, it *'calls for an ACP-EU peer monitoring, accountability and review mechanism to scrutinise SDG implementation in member states on a regular basis, with ACP and EU representatives not only from central governmental institutions but also from parliaments, regional and local authorities, civil society and scientific communities, drawing up yearly conclusions and recommendations for national, regional and global review processes and follow-up (pa 3)'*.

In addition, the Parliament *'Calls for stronger participation of national parliaments and regional and local authorities, both in ACP and EU countries, at all stages of ACP-EU policies and activities, from future planning and programming to implementation, evaluation and monitoring, particularly from the viewpoint of subsidiarity (p13)'*. It *'Urges all the parties to the new agreement to undertake to give local and regional government greater autonomy and build up its capacity, so that it is able to carry out its duties effectively and to play a significant role in the development of ACP countries (pa.14)'*. Dealing with the future ACP-EU institutions, the Parliament *'calls for thematic topical meetings with civil society, local authorities and the private sector to be included in JPA sessions (pa.20)'* and *'calls on the Commission and governments to promote the involvement of ...local and regional authorities...in all the different scrutiny phases of development programming (pa.22)'*. Further reference is made to involving local authorities throughout the implementation of the EPAs and the post-Cotonou process.

<sup>16</sup> European Commission. (2016). Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council - A renewed partnership with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific: JOIN (2016) 52 final, Strasbourg. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-20161122\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-20161122_en.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> European Parliament. (12.9.2016). On the future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020: (2016/2053(INI)). Retrieved from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A8-2016-0263+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

The subsequent **EC Communication to the Parliament and Council** of November 2016<sup>18</sup> seeks to align any post -2020 Agreement to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including the AAAA. It picks up on some of the suggestions by the Parliament regarding local governments, but only in a limited way and only in respect of Africa, where it envisages ‘supporting a greater dialogue with local authorities’ and sets a specific objective to ‘promote and protect human rights, including by supporting the work and taking forward dialogue with ...local authorities (p.16). Dealing with human development in Africa, the EC sets as an objective to ‘make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (p.18)’, in line with SDG11. It is however notable that these objectives are not stated in respect of the Caribbean and the Pacific and there is only brief reference to ‘enhance policy and political dialogue implementation with results at local, national and regional level (p.22). The Communication however envisages a multi-level, multi-stakeholder partnership in line with the principles of subsidiarity and does confirm that LRG are State actors (p.27).

Other recent evaluations of Cotonou and the EDF were undertaken by ECDPM and by the DAI Consortium<sup>19</sup> and the European Partnership for Democracy<sup>20</sup>, all of which strongly advocate for a multi-stakeholder approach, including engaging with LRG (see boxes on pages 17 & 19).

The **ECDPM** evaluation of 2016<sup>21</sup> undertook an in-depth political economy analysis of Cotonou which makes critical observations about its current effectiveness and potential for post-2020. Specifically, it points to what it deems to be a loss of relative ‘status’ of the Cotonou Agreement; its limited track record on delivery; its failure to respond adequately to globalisation and regionalisation;

its unclear added value compared to other bodies and structures such as the AU and the Joint-Africa-Europe Strategy and being ill-adapted to accommodate the 2030 Agenda. It feels Cotonou has lost relevance on trade cooperation and political dialogue, which are now being carried out in other fora.

ECDPM examines what it deems the limited ownership of Cotonou by actors other than central governments, noting that ‘in recent years, more and more local authorities have been recognised as actors with a distinct identity and specific set of (legally enshrined) competences. In several ACP countries, new opportunities have emerged for local authorities to engage in the domestic policy process on matters concerning them (through their national and regional associations).’ However, ‘A highly centralised culture clearly still prevails among ACP officials in charge at country and regional level, as well as in the ACP institutions (p.87)’ and the voice of local authorities and other actors ‘remains limited in core ACP-EU cooperation processes such as programming, political and policy dialogue, and sector budget operations (p.88)’.

Specifically, ECDPM concludes ‘In many countries, local authorities also face an uphill struggle to obtain meaningful levels of autonomy from central governments that resist effective decentralisation. As newcomers to ACP-EU cooperation, they face information gaps about the opportunities offered by the CPA [Cotonou Partnership Agreement], as well as major capacity challenges limiting their ability to engage effectively. Access to funding is hampered by ill-suited instruments and procedures (including the use of ‘calls for proposal’ for local authorities). Their integration into mainstream cooperation processes (e.g. policy dialogue and sector budget support operations) is therefore still at an embryonic stage’ (p.88)<sup>22</sup>



<sup>18</sup> European Commission. (22nd November 2016). High representative of the Union for Foreign affairs and security policy, Joint Communication to the European parliament and the council ‘A renewed partnership with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific: JOIN(2016)52, Strasbourg. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-20161122\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/joint-communication-renewed-partnership-20161122_en.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> DAI Consortium. (June, 2017). Main Report: Evaluation of 11th European Development Fund (EDF). Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/edf-evaluation-final-report\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/edf-evaluation-final-report_en.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> European Partnership for Democracy. Who owns the EDF? Ensuring domestic accountability in ACP-EU development cooperation. Retrieved from: <http://nimd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/EPD-Input-Paper-EDF-2017.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> ECDPM, 2016, explore scenarios for the future of ACP - EU cooperation: an analytical tool for informed choices

<sup>22</sup> ECDPM. (June 2008). Zimbabwe Local Democracy Enhancement Programme, Final Evaluation

# CHAPTER 3

POLICY DIALOGUE AND ENGAGEMENT  
AT PAN-ACP LEVEL



# POLICY DIALOGUE AND ENGAGEMENT AT PAN-ACP LEVEL

This chapter addresses the extent to which LRG has been able to engage effectively at pan-ACP level under the Cotonou Agreement as opposed to at national or regional level. It reflects the outcome of discussions and interviews held with key ACP and EU stakeholders in Brussels and elsewhere, including LRG, notably in the framework of the 2017 European Development Days (7-8 June) and the Assizes of Decentralised Cooperation (10-11 July).

Policy dialogue with, and support for LRG, at pan-ACP level under Cotonou, and on development cooperation more generally, has involved LRG interaction mostly with the European Commission, the ACP Secretariat and ACP Committee of Ambassadors, the Joint ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament, as well as the European Committee of the Regions (with the Assizes on decentralised cooperation). On the LRG side, the key stakeholders have been PLATFORMA/CEMR, AIMF, CLGF, UCLG and UCLG Africa, all of which now have, individual FPAs with the EC.

The main policy dialogue on development cooperation between LRG and the EU has entailed bi-annual consultations with both LRG and CSOs under the **Policy Forum on Development** (PFD). Interviews with PLATFORMA and other key partners of the LRG constituency (AIMF, CLGF, UCLG, UCLGA) indicate that the PFD is a useful event for overall interaction with the EU and other partners such as CSOs, but it does not lend itself to detailed LRG dialogue either on Cotonou or other policy issues.

Although, the ARIAL Programme (Supporting and Strengthening Local Authority Associations Programme) which was funded under the EDF provisions for pan-ACP cooperation from 2007 to 2015 deserves special mention. ARIAL has been the only significant - pan-ACP programme designed to address local government needs in the ACP and to help strengthen- and on occasions to assist establish LGAs (for example in Kiribati and Vanuatu). ARIAL's main objective was to promote the political recognition and engagement of local authorities as important players and partners in development and had a budget of €6.6m allocated between 2007 and 2013 (with an extension to 2015). The programme was authorised by the ACP Secretariat and implemented by a LRG consortium led by the Dutch local government association VNG International (VNGi), together with partners like CLGF and UCLGA. This LRG consortium undertook the bulk of the capacity-building and related activities at national (11) and regional (4)

level. Another component was implemented by the Brussels-based ACP Local Government Platform (ACPLGP), which was responsible for ACP-wide engagement.

The 2015 evaluation of ARIAL, including supplementary comments by VNGi<sup>23</sup>, highlights that local governments in many ACP countries had difficulty in achieving the intended impact and sustainability under the programme. However, it must be remembered that the €6.6m ARIAL budget represented less than €1m annually, shared across the ACP among over 15 different actors and the report itself admits that ARIAL was *'implemented over a period too short to achieve meaningful results'* (p.23).<sup>23</sup> In addition, given that LRG and their LGAs in many of the ACP countries are still quite weak institutionally and that, as will be shown subsequently, central government and EU delegations have often had only a small amount of active engagement with LRG in the respective ACP partner countries, it is not surprising that the impact and sustainability of ARIAL was limited.

An earlier attempt to establish a pan- ACP LRG structure – the **ACP Local Government Platform**, or ACPLGP, was unsuccessful and has not been sustained. The Brussels-based ACPLGP was established in the early 2000s with funding support from DFID and subsequently received EU funding under the ARIAL programme 2007-15. It had a loose confederal structure comprised of regional local government organisations in ACP regions (e.g. UCLG Africa; Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities CALGA) and global local government organisations having ACP membership, notably AIMF and CLGF; technical support was provided by ECDPM. In its early phases, the ACPLGP with active support from its constituent stakeholders did have modest impact by organising regional awareness-raising seminars for LRG about Cotonou, producing some materials and guides and having political interaction with the ACP and EU institutions. Increasingly however, the organisation lost momentum and direction, suffering from what was essentially an artificial and conflicted structure, with no real membership as such; its internal management, staffing and interaction with its own stakeholders was also poor. This is documented in a highly negative narrative of the ACPLGP in the ARIAL evaluation report of 2013, arguing that the platform has lost relevance since 2007. This assessment was backed up by a detailed survey of ACP local government perception of the ACPLGP which, in the case of ACP local government associations, showed that only 43-56% felt it had been of use, depending on the area of engagement.

<sup>23</sup> European Commission. (November, 2013). *Final Evaluation of the ARIAL (Supporting and Strengthening Local Authority Associations Programme): EuropeAid/127054/C/SER7Multi*



Feedback received from local government organisations with ACP membership and from interviews with individual ACP local government stakeholders concur that the Platform is effectively defunct. Instead more effective, sustainable and representative local government membership organisations such as PLATFORMA/CEMR, AIMF, CLGF and UCLG which collectively have LRG membership in virtually all ACP countries and are organised at regional and international level, are undertaking the tasks originally envisaged for the ACPLGP. They do this in respect to both policy dialogue and in facilitating access to EDF and other EU resources by their own members.

In 2016, the ACP Group published '*A New Vision for our Future*'<sup>24</sup> which was a Report by an Eminent Persons Group which looked at the future of the ACP Group and its relations with the EU, and which made a strong case for continuation of the Cotonou Agreement and its structures post-2020, with the SDGs as benchmark. However, despite the high-level recognition given to LRG by all ACP Governments under the 2030 Agenda and in other international agreements, the ACP Eminent Persons Group report does not mention the role of LRG.

Thus, while it specifically mentions various stakeholders, including NSAs and the private sector, LRG is not referred to. Indeed, the report suggests the establishment of a new Governing Board and of permanent or ad hoc advisory groups drawn from the NSAs (private sector, civil, society and diaspora), but again LRG is not mentioned. This demonstrates the potential political challenges which still face LRG in the context of the post-2020 ACP-EU relationships.

Contacts made with the ACP Secretariat with regard to this study, however do indicate an understanding at technical level of the importance of LRG and LGAs in development, in the implementation of the SDGs, and more specifically in the post-2020 ACP-EU partnership and structures. This potential opening could be built upon by LRG in future political dialogue with the ACP Secretariat, its Secretary-General and the ACP Governments. There also appears to be a recognition by ACP Governments and the ACP Secretariat of the relevance of the international LRG associations in support of their LRG members in ACP countries, notably in respect of LRG capacity-building and exchanges of good practice policies.

<sup>24</sup> ACP Eminent Persons Group. (2016). *A New Vision for our Future - A 21st Century African Caribbean And Pacific Group Delivering For Its Peoples*. Retrieved from: [http://www.acp.int/sites/acpsec.waw.be/files/EPG%20Final%20Report%202016\\_EN.pdf](http://www.acp.int/sites/acpsec.waw.be/files/EPG%20Final%20Report%202016_EN.pdf)



# CHAPTER 4

AFRICAN, CARRIBEAN AND PACIFIC  
CASE STUDIES

# AFRICAN, CARRIBEAN AND PACIFIC CASE STUDIES

## 1. African case studies

According to the 2016 EC study on the Territorial Approach to Local Development (TALD)<sup>25</sup>, Africa has received the most significant engagement of EU development cooperation support for decentralisation and LRG capacity building of any of the ACP regions, amounting to €1.3 billion 2002-2014 (excluding the current 11th EDF), in part a reflection of its size and complexity. This represents 69% of total EU expenditures in this area. The following allocations have been for local governance, local development and LRG capacity-building made 2002-14, mostly under the EDF (although some amounts relate to budgets provided under other smaller budget lines such as the CSO-LA budget): West Africa €539m (28%); Central Africa €92m (5%); East Africa €533m (28%); Southern Africa €230m (10%).



The main beneficiaries in Africa have been Ethiopia (€313m), Mali (€156m) and South Africa (€104m); the study notes that funds have been directly channelled to LRG in Benin, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali and Tanzania.

In the context of National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) under Cotonou, the key central government actors are the National Authorising Officers (NAOs) for the EDF, alongside the respective EU Delegation in each country. Regionalisation is undertaken through the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) at the level of regional economic communities such as ECOWAS. At the Africa level, a certain 'institutional polygamy' remains about the regional economic communities. For example, the signatories to the West Africa 2014-2020 RIP are both the chair of the ECOWAS Commission (with its 16 Member States) and the UEMOA commission (representing the 8 French-speaking Member States of the monetary union). However, compared to the former Lomé Convention, the new cooperation framework places more emphasis on the political dimension of development and encourages a pluralistic approach to the partnership. This, in turn, opens new opportunities to support democratic decentralisation and the involvement of LRG. A step forward to democracy and decentralisation can be noted in most African countries despite crises in territorial administration (as in Mali). Indeed, most of the States engaged in the international development agenda involve their respective LRG through participatory approaches.

The choice of case studies was undertaken in consultation with LRG actors such as UCLG-A and sought to cover all regions of Africa, taking into account a range of different experiences in respect of EU and EDF engagement, with particular, but not exclusive, focus on the current 11th EDF 2014-20. The countries accordingly chosen were Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The NIP in each country was analysed in order to highlight the priority sectors and their consideration of local governance. Beyond local and national actors, the approach has been to broaden the range of actors, practitioners of development and local governance at the level of regional and international actors. The African economic communities were reviewed for their potential implications for engagement and dialogue with LRGs, in a RIP planning framework, with an example in West Africa (ECOWAS) and also the AU. In terms of the regional actors, the relevant international/regional LGAs, where possible, consulted (AIMF, CLGF-Africa; and UCLGA).

<sup>25</sup> Reference Document No 23 in the EC's Tools and Methods Series on supporting decentralisation, local governance and local development through a territorial approach (DLGTD) (December 2016).

### Key findings on Africa case studies<sup>26</sup>

All three focal sectors under the ECOWAS RIP: peace, security and stability; economic and regional integration; food, nutritional security and natural resource; have direct relevance to LRG in West Africa, i.e. requiring action at local level. There is however no evidence of any formal regional consultation having taken place on the RIP with LRG or LRG sub-regional bodies like UCLGA regional sections, nor is there evidence of any of the RIP focal sectors being used to fund relevant LRG activities; this is contrary to the spirit and legal requirements for LRG engagement under Article 4 of Cotonou.

One important finding in that respect is that dedicated national investment agencies, through which EDF and other programmes are channelled are preferred by ACP States to implement instruments and policies on decentralisation and local development. This means that LRG and LGAs, while benefiting from EU-supported capacity-building, have had little direct political dialogue with the EU and have also not had EDF funds channelled to them directly. This in turn impacts both on their long-term role and sustainability and seems contrary to Article 4 of Cotonou and the 2013 EC Communication. However, EDF programmes to support decentralisation have contributed one way or another to the decentralisation process, both at central and local level, and have often assisted the consolidation of grass-roots institutions in support of sustainable local economic development. The same remark might be made about focal sectors under the current 2014-20 NIPs that in general impact directly on LRG. However, as stated in the 2006 joint EC-French evaluation of cooperation with Mali, *'it is difficult to measure the impact of interventions (longer-term and more holistic), which is limited in certain areas such as decentralisation or health'*.

While it is encouraging that some LGAs state they were involved with implementation of previous EU programmes, it is regrettable that many indicate unawareness of the provisions regarding LRG in the Cotonou Agreement and have no formal contact with the NAOs. At the same time, it is apparent that the EU and other development partners value the external skills brought by international LRG organisations such as AIMF, CLGF and UCLG. It is also encouraging that some LRGs are now being engaged by the EU as key partners in programmes based on a TALD and providing LGA capacity-building. As shown by the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development, the work of the AU Decentralisation and Local Governance Subcommittee and the All-Africa Ministerial Conference on Decentralisation and Local Development (AMCOD), there is a significant political (or rather institutional) commitment to decentralisation processes in Africa. This should find itself reflected in the post-2020 AU-EU relations and will be given added momentum by the role LRG has in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as underlined in the 2017 European Consensus on Development.

The exact shape of the post-2020 partnership, and the role of current funding instruments such as the Pan-African Programme is unclear as yet. However, there is a possibility for advocating for a stronger institutionalised LRG presence, for example within the consultative committee of the Pan-African Programme, the role of which could itself be strengthened and given more competencies after 2020. There should be scope for ensuring that LRG, repre-



### THE 2017 EU-AFRICA LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

The 5<sup>th</sup> EU-Africa Summit, taking place in Abidjan (28-29 November 2017) redefined AU-EU Partnership's strategic orientations for the coming years. On the eve of the Summit, European and African LRG leaders gathered in the first-ever Africa – Europe Local Government Forum to share their messages and seek to put the local dimension on the agenda of EU-Africa Summit. In order to align their voices and prepare the messages to share, and to propose concrete new initiatives, elected LRG representatives of the two continents met to address some of the key issues of Europe-Africa partnership from the local perspective such as climate change and access to energy, youth empowerment, local economic development and migration.

sented by UCLGA and other international LGAs are directly engaged in relevant pan-African programmes supported by the EU, so it could facilitate engagement by its members in African LRGs and help them work with AU Member States in the pursuit of decentralisation, better local service delivery and local economic development.

<sup>26</sup> Full case studies on Africa can be downloaded via the link <http://platforma-dev.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ACP-UE-Djigo-Wright-Case-studies.pdf>



## 2. Caribbean and Pacific case studies

This section is the outcome of consultations with selected LRG, national government and EU representatives in six different Caribbean and Pacific countries on LRG involvement in the respective National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) and two at regional level (CARIFORUM (Caribbean Forum), Pacific Island Forum Secretariat -PIFS) on LRG involvement in the Regional Indicative Programmes (RIP), as well as with responsible EC officials in Brussels. The Caribbean is a small part of the wider EU support for the decentralisation sector, including LRG capacity-building, drawn from diverse EU instruments, which also embraces Latin America, and was estimated at €252m 2002-2014 (13% of global EU support in the sector). Likewise, the Pacific is a small component of EU support for this sector in the wider Asia-Pacific region, estimated at €289m over the same period (14% of global allocations). In this regard, the only countries which have received significant support in the sector are Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Papua New Guinea (PNG), in part a reflection of their relative size compared to the many small states, mostly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in the two regions.

Overall some 50%+ of correspondents replied to the questionnaire, although the percentage was higher in the Caribbean and lower in the Pacific (although in the case of the latter, a key country- PNG- was in the middle of national elections). Replies were received from LRG, national government (through ministries of local government, rather than NAOs) and EU Delegations. Replies were received from all countries except one (Vanuatu); in respect of the regional level, replies were received from the responsible LRG associations (the Caribbean Asso-

ciation of Local Government Authorities – CALGA, CLGF and CLGF Pacific), but not from CARIFORUM or PIFS. At the same time, it must be recalled that the timescale for securing responses was a short one.

The focus has been on the engagement of LRG under the current 11th EDF (2014-2020), but where relevant, reference is also made to previous EDF supported programmes involving LRG for example the PASCAL Program in the Dominican Republic under the 10th EDF (2008-2013), the pan-ACP ARIAL Programme 2007-15.

### Key findings on Caribbean and Pacific case studies<sup>27</sup>

It should be emphasised that most of the 30 ACP countries in the two regions are SIDS, a substantial majority have democratically elected LRG and many have national LGAs with some past experience of undertaking EU-funded projects. However only LRG in the Dominican Republic and to some extent in PNG, have been directly engaged and funded under their NIP. At the same time, many of the NIPs do make direct reference to LRG in their focal sectors and responses received, including from Government and the EU, appear to offer prospects for greater formal engagement with LRG in future, especially post-2020, notably in respect of localisation of the SDGs. In contrast, LRG appears to be given little or no role in respect of the two RIPs coordinated by CARIFORUM and PIFS, despite- in the case of the Pacific RIP, governance being a focal area; in both instances CSO enjoy significantly more access and this obvious imbalance requires urgent addressing, and certainly within the context of the post-2020 ACP-EU regional arrangements. To meet their tasks post-2020, LRG, both the national LGAs and the regional LGAs, require capacity-building.

<sup>27</sup> Full case studies on Caribbean and the Pacific can be downloaded via the link <http://platforma-dev.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ACP-UE-Djigo-Wright-Case-studies.pdf>



# CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY  
RECOMMENDATIONS

## CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Implementation of article 4 – results of the case studies

A key question of this study relates to the effective implementation of Article 4 of the Cotonou Agreement regarding the involvement of LRG. From interviews and the country/regional data, a classification is proposed according to the successes or failure of LRGs engagement under Cotonou. This takes into account the extent of political dialogue, how far LRG is included in NIP/RIP focal areas and the access to EDF funding support by LRG. Inevitably, the classification is not meant to be rigid and is dependent on volatile political and economic factors which may change suddenly.

**Successful LRG engagement under Article 4 in the implementation of development programmes:** Guinea, Mali and the Dominican Republic and most recently, Uganda, represent cases of successful engagement under EDF, as they meet most of the factors set out in the box below, although the case of Uganda is still work in progress. In the case of Mali, however, while there have been large-scale EDF budget allocations since 2002, it does not appear that LRG and the national LGA Association of Mali Municipalities (AMM) is being adequately involved in the process of programme formulation, implementation and monitoring. In all cases, with the possible exception of FEDOMU in the Dominican Republic, LRG and their LGA still lack critical capacity and technical know-how and rely on support from, in particular, international LGAs like AIMF, CLGF and UCLG/UCLG-A. The willingness by the EU in the Dominican Republic to engage with LRG in more formal structures and budget allocations post-2020 is commendable.

**Partially successful engagement under Article 4:** These are countries where only some of the factors set out in the table next page are being met; where the NIPs focal areas do include direct reference to LRG but have shown no evidence of active implementation in accordance with Article 4 (Jamaica, Kiribati); or countries which do have significant allocation of EDF funds for decentralisation and LRG capacity-building, but where, contrary to the spirit of Article 4, LRG/LGAs have not been actively engaged - or only to a limited extent - in programme formulation/implementation or monitoring (Cameroon, PNG). Zimbabwe represents a special case because although there has been no direct allocation of EDF funds as yet, significant amounts of alternative EU resources are increasingly being provided to LRG with active involvement of the EU Delegation. Jamaica is a marginal case, given the stated opposition of the Government to direct LGA engagement with development partners, but at the same time, has previously welcomed engagement by international LGAs and shows some recognition of the need for change post-2020.

**No current engagement under Article 4:** Where few of the factors set out apply and there is (or has been) no reference to LRG in NIP focal sectors (Dominica, Vanuatu) or RIP focal sectors (West Africa/ECOWAS; Caribbean/CARIFORUM; Pacific/PIFS), even if focal sectors have direct relevance to LRG (e.g. governance focal sector in the Pacific RIP, climate change/natural disasters in the Caribbean RIP). Likewise, there has been no documented formal consultation of LRG with respect to the NIP/RIP, although informal dialogues do occur. Indeed, in both the Caribbean and the Pacific, LRG has indicated that it has been excluded from recent regional consultations (unlike CSOs) which shows a lack of application of Article 4, especially at RIP level.

### FACTORS MAKING FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION OF ARTICLE 4 AND LRG ENGAGEMENT

- Pre-existing system of democratic decentralised governance with significant and well-defined LRG powers, including fiscal powers; good intergovernmental relations between central and local government / clear political commitment by central Government to such implementation of such enabling.
- Presence of autonomous, well-capacitated, transparent and accountable LRG/LGA which is democratically elected, developmental and aware of the Cotonou provisions regarding LRG.
- Availability of international/regional LRG associations to provide technical and other support for their LRG/LGA members and assist programme management/overcoming legal barriers.
- NIP focal sectors covering areas where LRG has responsibility or is a beneficiary (as in the case of PFM) and direct reference to LRG as implementing partner for the sector.
- Active engagement between the EU Delegations, NAOs and LRG and involvement of the latter in programme formulation, implementation and monitoring under the relevant NIP focal sectors and absence of mitigating political factors/barriers.
- Multi-stakeholder approach engaging LRG, as well as national Government (especially, but not only, ministries of local government), CSO, the private sector and other stakeholders.
- Capacity-building of LRG/LGAs (and ministries) as integral component of NIP programmes.
- Focus on a territorial (TALD) rather than sectoral approach.
- Significant EDF budget allocations to decentralisation/local development, continued over several EDF cycles to ensure sustainability.
- Use of innovative funding instruments suited to LRG as public sector institutions.
- Coordination/complementary deployment with other EU instrument such as CSO-LA budget.
- Coordination/co-funding with other development partners active in the sector.

FACTORS FAVOURING APPLICATION	MALI	CAMEROON	GUINEA	ZIMBABWE	UGANDA	DOMINICA	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	JAMAICA	KIRIBATI	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	VANUATU
1 Pre-existing system of democratic decentralised governance.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2 Presence of autonomous, well-capacitated, transparent and accountable LRG/LGA*											
3 Availability of international/regional LRG associations to provide technical and other support for their LRG/LGA members	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4 NIP focal sectors covering areas where LRG has responsibility or is a beneficiary	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
5 Active engagement between the EU Delegations, NAOs and LRG and involvement of the latter in programme formulation					X		X				
6 Multi-stakeholder approach engaging LRG, as well as national Government**	X	X	X		X		X				
7 Capacity-building of LRG/LGAs (and ministries) as integral component of NIP programmes	X		X				X				
8 Focus on a territorial (TALD) rather than sectoral approach.					X		X				
9 Significant EDF budget allocations to decentralisation/local development, continued over several EDF cycles to ensure sustainability	X	X	X		X		X			X	
10 Use of innovative funding instruments suited to LRG as public sector institutions		X					X				
11 Coordination/complementary deployment with other EU instrument such a CSO-LA budget				X	X	X		X	X		X
12 Coordination/co-funding with other development partners active in the sector	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

\*All countries survey do have democratic LRG with established national LGA, but the degree of their autonomy from central government, their capacity (to engage in dialogue and implement NIP activities), their transparency and accountability varies considerably. Moreover, in all cases, LGAs and other respondents indicated that LRG had a need for capacity-building and other support in this regard.

\*\*In many cases the multi-stakeholder approach is still very embryonic and often involves designated Government agencies on decentralisation, rather than LRG directly.

## 2. Conclusions

### Legal status and formal recognition of LRG under Cotonou

A legal policy framework for supporting decentralisation, local governance and local development has been established under the Cotonou Agreement since 2005 in Articles 2,4,6,10,33,70 and Article 4 which stipulates that LRG should be informed and involved in consultations, be provided with capacity support and financial resources, and involved in the implementation of programmes, is especially relevant. This framework is supplemented by subsequent EU decisions, notably the 2013 Communication on Empowering Local Authorities.

At both policy and operational level, the period since 2005 has seen growing recognition of, and EU dialogue with, LRG, both under the Cotonou Agreement (for example under the ARIAL programme and selected NIPs) and through other EU development cooperation structures, notably the CSO-LA thematic programme and the Framework Partnership Agreements between the European Commission and the main regional and global association of LRG with membership in ACP countries. In addition, recent international development agendas such as the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, also included significant recognition of LRGs in development process, and are therefore reflected in the EU development policy. The status and legitimacy of LRG as a partner under Cotonou has



occasionally been questioned by the EU if, as is the case in small number of countries, there is no democratically elected LRG, if local elections have been repeatedly postponed, or if central government has interfered substantially in local democratic processes.

### An embryonic state of integration

The survey of NIPs in 11 selected ACP countries and 3 RIPS, together with interviews of key ACP and EU stakeholders, LRG and LGA, and other partners, has shown that despite the legal status and formal recognition accorded to LRG, its integration into Cotonou and related mainstream development cooperation is still embryonic. Although all Governments and Delegations who responded, indicate awareness of the Cotonou provisions on LRG, but in only in very few cases have the provisions of Article 4 on LRG involvement in NIPs been followed and practically implemented.

Underlying instances where involvement of LRG in Cotonou under Article 4 has been little or none (especially, but not only, in the smaller Caribbean and Pacific countries), is an inadequate awareness of the status and role of LRG, especially on the part of NAOs. In some instances, NAOs also have limited engagement with relevant ministries of local government which in general work more closely with LRG. This demonstrates a failure by NAOs to engage of both vertically (within central government) and horizontally (with LRG). This matter has also been noted critically in several EDF evaluations (ECDPM<sup>28</sup>, DAI<sup>29</sup>), which have called into question the appropriateness of the NAO system. In this context, the limited response to the study questionnaire by NAOs and also by the regional IGOs- as opposed to other actors- is itself an indication of their disconnect from LRG and failure to acknowledge or implement Article 4 of Cotonou.

The situation is compounded by continuing confusion of the role of LRG with that of CSOs and failure to see LRG as a distinct sphere of government (and State actor under Cotonou), separate from central government. This is reflected where, in many NIPs, dedicated budgets are earmarked for CSOs but not LRG (Dominica, Vanuatu)). Likewise, LRG in the Caribbean and Pacific strongly feels that, unlike CSOs, it has been explicitly excluded from consultation on the RIPS and other regional cooperation. There may be political and other reasons for having CSO and LRG budgets and policy consultations jointly, but there is also a case for more detailed consultations with LRG on its own, given its distinct nature as an elected voice of the community, which is quite different from the role of CSOs.

Some responses by ACP governments (Jamaica) stated unambiguously that they actively opposed direct LRG access to donor or EDF support. This demonstrates the continuing political resistance by many central governments to genuine decentralisation, especially, but not only, if the local government happens to be controlled by an Opposition party (an issue also highlighted by some EU Delegations). In contrast, it was noted that the same central governments appear to have no problem, and indeed welcome, interventions and LRG capacity-support undertaken by international LGAs in their jurisdictions and this was deemed an important alternative way of the EU engaging with LRG where domestic legal and political barriers prevail. All SIDS surveyed had active democratically-elected LRG, some re-

<sup>28</sup> See Bibliography pages 38 to 41

<sup>29</sup> DAI Consortium. (January, 2017). Main Report: Evaluation of 11th European Development Fund (EDF). Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/draft-eval-report-edf\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/draft-eval-report-edf_en.pdf)



cently established, often with EU support and in most other SIDS there are formal LRG structures operational, even if they are appointed rather than elected. This underlined the need for NAOs and EU Delegations to apply Article 4 provisions also in the small states of the Caribbean and the Pacific, where LRG face growing problems of urbanisation and acute vulnerability on account of climate change.

A problem encountered was a dearth of available quantitative data, notably about funds channelled to LRG under Cotonou and other EU instruments (other than the relatively small amount under the CSO-LA budget). It is however apparent from EC evaluations, that the total amount involved is a very small proportion of overall EU ODA. Allocations to LRG have frequently been ad hoc and not sustained, making measurement of the impact and results achieved difficult (ARIAL had only €6.6m over 7-8 years, spread over numerous countries and was not sustained after its conclusion; likewise, PASCAL was not continued under the 11th EDF).

In general, it can be concluded that the greater the degree of public sector decentralisation and local government legal empowerment, including fiscal powers to raise revenue, and the stronger intergovernmental relations between central and local government are, the more scope there is, both legally and politically, for effective LRG engagement in the Cotonou processes and with development partners. The same applies to use of innovative development instruments for LRG support (Uganda and to some extent the Dominican Republic being cases in point). In this context, EDF funding

being provided to strengthen the decentralisation process can make an important contribution.

### Need for LRG capacity-building

LRG in ACP countries and their national LGAs often lack awareness, technical expertise and other capacity to allow effective participation in the Cotonou process. However, LRG know-how and capacity can be strengthened by European LRGs or associations under a number of EU-supported programmes (pan-ACP ARIAL, CSO-LA programme, including through some FPAS). However, there is little evidence of council-to-council decentralised cooperation being directly supported under NIPs or RIPs. It is also noticeable that, as also shown by a number of EDF evaluations, there is only a limited integration and coordination of the various EU cooperation instruments with the EDF operations; this lack of policy coherence often contributes to LRG capacity-building being sustained over insufficient time and provided with inadequate funds.

### Positive Engagement in accordance with Article 4

Evidence from a detailed examination of NIPs under the 11th EDF (2014-2020) and from previous EDFs and other EU development instruments, shows that there is a growing reference to and engagement with LRG in NIP priority sectors, especially, in the area of public sector finance (Kiribati, PNG). However, to date this has rarely entailed formal consultative structures and it is not always apparent to what extent this commitment to engage LRG has been operationalised in the 11th EDF. To date, the best examples of ef-

fective LRG engagement in NIP policy dialogue and operational programming have been when there are clearly defined, integrated and multi-stakeholder programmes involving LRG (especially the national LGA), ministries of local government and others; when this include dedicated LRG and ministry capacity-building; and when there is a significant financial allocation (as with the PASCAL programme in the Dominican Republic under the 10th EDF).

The EC and its Delegations have increasingly become aware of the importance of LRG as shown by the new EC focus on a TALD (as under the DINU programme in Uganda) and have recognised the key role of LRG and cities in implementing the 2030 Agenda through localisation of SDGs. EU Delegations have a central role in promoting TALD and LRG engagement in Cotonou in accordance with Article 4, notably in their interaction with NAOs and host governments and in particular by encouraging consultation with LRG over the programming, implementation and monitoring of NIPs/RIPs. This point was re-enforced in interviews with EC officials in Brussels.

### Suitability of Instruments for Development Cooperation

Certain EU instruments such as Calls for Proposals are not suited for LRG. This is because, as public authorities, LRG have, like central government, strict budgetary and other fiscal guidelines, which do not allow the operational flexibility in responding which CSOs enjoy, especially for co-funding. Some LRG also lack technical capacity. This was highlighted by a number of LRG respondents. It was pointed out that in most circumstances, LRG as represented by their national LGA or their international LGA, occupies a 'monopoly position' as defined in EC legal terminology, and should therefore qualify for direct EU grants and not be subject to Calls for Proposals or tendering.

There have been few instances of innovative instruments being deployed such as channelling budget support to decentralisation, local governance and local development; resorting to investment lending; or applying 'smart projects'. It is encouraging that the EC has begun to provide guidance to its Delegations in these areas as seen by its recent publications on budget support in decentralised contexts and on TALD and the organisation of dedicated events on TALD.

There are many examples, well documented by PLATFORMA and other LRG partners, of LRG-led projects of decentralised cooperation involving technical exchanges between LRG in Europe and the ACP countries, increasingly also on a 'south-south' or north-south-south' basis. However, there are still few examples of such projects, which offer key professional LRG expertise at low cost, being actively supported and integrated as part of EDF programmes. The PLATFORMA/VNG International CONNECT initiative<sup>30</sup>, like other similar initiatives, is a valuable new tool to support such LRG exchanges.

Evidence from an ECDPM evaluation of one of the countries surveyed (Zimbabwe) shows the importance of EU support for LRG in a conflict/fragile State situation and how that this can be facilitated by the active engagement of global LGAs and decentralised cooperation.

### Regional and pan-ACP engagement by LRG

At regional level, there has been policy engagement with LRG in Africa, notably at AU level, although not specifically under the EDF. There are also a growing number of AU instruments such as the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development which demonstrate the AU's commitment to decentralisation – although it has not yet been ratified by all AU Member States. The 2017 Africa-Europe Abidjan Summit was preceded by a dedicated Local Government Summit. However, this engagement does not extend to formal policy dialogue or access to funding on any of the RIPs in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific which are implemented by ECOWAS, CARIFORUM, PIFS or other regional IGOs. Indeed, as already indicated, international/regional LRG associations have been excluded from some key policy dialogues.

At pan-ACP and global level, progress has been made in progressively engaging with LRG through their representative organisations (PLATFORMA/CEMR, AIMF, CLGF, UCLG) under the PFD and through direct consultations under the reference group of the new FPAs. This has provided a more effective and appropriate approach than seeking to establish artificial pan-ACP LRG structures which lack membership and therefore legitimacy (such as the ACPLGP). However, there has only been limited engagement with the ACP Secretariat and ACP governments (apart from under the ARIAL programme); this is seen by absence of reference to LRG in ACP position papers on post-2020.

Interviews held and responses from the central Governments and the EU to the questionnaire acknowledge specifically the role of LRG in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDG. Given that the 2017 EU Consensus puts the 2030 Agenda at the heart of future EU development policy and acknowledges the important role of LRG and cities in its implementation, this will have significant impact on the formulation of the post-2020 ACP-EU relations and should open up key opportunities for LRG to be more directly engaged. Thus, the political dialogue with LRG on future NIPs and RIPs, should not only relate to specific programmes on decentralisation or LRG capacity-building, but extend across all relevant sectors of development and SDG implementation, such as decision-making on major economic or infrastructure investments in both urban and rural communities.

The priorities set out in 2030 Agenda and in the 2016 New Urban Agenda agreed by UN Habitat (and its provision for National Urban Forums) need be incorporated in the future ACP-EU agreements in order to improve on the current dynamics of Cotonou and to facilitate implementation of SDGs by LRG. Formal provision for LRG engagement with central Government and the EU within the context of multi-stakeholder partnerships, and LRG involvement in drawing up country focal areas, accordingly needs to be established. The issue of achieving better development financing and domestic resource mobilisation at sub-national level and, where feasible, having national FPAs and dedicated funding allocations for LGA (for example through budget support where this is possible) can also be considered by the EU.

<sup>30</sup> <http://connectfordevelopment.eu/>

### 3. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- › The new Partnership framework must include formal provision for LRG engagement with central Government and the EU within the context of multi-stakeholder partnerships, as well as LRG involvement in designing National Indicative Programmes.
  - › EU Delegations must adhere to the provisions of Article 4 of the Cotonou Agreement and engage actively in dialogue with LRG and LGAs, to help delivery of agreed NIP priorities notably where these make direct reference to LRG;
  - › In most circumstances, LRG as represented by their national LRG Association, occupies a 'monopoly position' as defined in EC legal terminology, and should therefore qualify for direct EU grants and not be subject to Calls for Proposals or tendering.
  - › The EU should consider achieving better development financing and domestic resource mobilisation at sub-national level and, where feasible, having national FPAs and dedicated funding allocations for LGA (for example through budget support where this is possible). Support from international/regional LGA could also be sought for where, because of legal and political reasons, or lack of capacity, national LRG association cannot be provided directly with grants;
  - › At national level, the NAO mechanism must be replaced by an obligatory inclusive multi-stakeholder forum, bringing together LRG, Parliament, CSO and the private sector and other potential partners to meet regularly with the Government and EU Delegation to assist in formulating, implementing and monitoring the NIP, including deciding NIP focal sectors.
  - › The new partnership framework should also include provision for the various stakeholders like LRG to have sub-groups for more frequent in-depth consultations with national governments and the EU Delegation on programmes and activities which they are directly concerned with, notably as they relate to the localised implementation of SDGs;
  - › At regional level, a similar multi-stakeholder forum must be established and international/regional LGAs must be fully consulted on formulation of RIP and regional focal sectors and EPAs; in cases where RIPs implementation is subcontracted to international organisations such as Cities Alliance, UNDP-ART, UN-Habitat or UNCDF, it must be done in close consultation/cooperation with the international/regional LGAs.
  - › The political dialogue with LRG on future NIPs and RIPs, should not only relate to specific programmes on decentralisation or LRG capacity-building, but extend across all relevant sectors of development and SDG implementation, such as decision-making on major economic or infrastructure investments in both urban and rural communities.
  - › The new partnership framework must ensure that LRG and their associations have dedicated capacity-building, to become effective partners in the post-2020 processes and to attain the necessary technical and other know-how to understand, and be able to contribute to, complex NIP programming and implementation; this could be an integral component of the NIP, to be implemented through the responsible LGAs;
  - › European LRG and their associations must be actively supported, both under the post-Cotonou arrangements and through other EU development cooperation instruments, in undertaking decentralised development cooperation, involving technical cooperation and exchanges between local government to accompany their peers in building the necessary capabilities to engage in the EU-ACP partnership context; the new CONNECT programme and similar cooperation mechanisms should be actively deployed in this regard;
  - › European Commission, DEVCO unit C5 on cities, local authorities, digitalisation and infrastructures must continue to work closely with LRG FPA partners to facilitate political dialogue, advise on operational implementation of the 11th EDF, and provide support on subsequent post-2020 engagement;
  - › LRG, not only CSOs, should also be able to benefit from the 2002 Council decision to allocate up to 15% of NIPs to non-state actors. Whereas Local Authorities are by definition part of government, in most countries they are not a department of the national state.
  - › RIP funding support should go to LRG regional programmes, notably where these relate to priority areas like governance and assist regional integration and exchanges of LRG expertise;
  - › The priorities set out in 2030 Agenda and in the 2016 New Urban Agenda agreed by UN (and its provision for National Urban Forums) need to be incorporated in the future ACP-EU agreements in order to improve on the current dynamics of Cotonou and to facilitate implementation of SDGs by LRG.
  - › The mid-term review of development cooperation instruments must result in more coherence and complementarity and better de-facto accessibility of the different EU instruments, especially those affecting LRGs (such as DCI, the EIDHR, IcSP or the Trust Fund for Africa).
- These issues can be tabled by LRG and taken up in the forthcoming European dialogues with Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific and in the formal ACP-EU post- 2020 negotiations, so as to ensure LRG is fully integrated into the post-2020 structures. Similar provisions can be negotiated at regional level to ensure formal engagement of international LGA associations.

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAAA	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
ACP	Africa, Caribbean, Pacific
ACPLGP	ACP-Local Government Platform
AfDB	African Development Bank
AIMF	Association Internationale des Maires Francophones / International Association of Francophone Mayors
ALGAJ	Association of Local Government Authorities of Jamaica
AMCOD	Africa Ministerial Conference on Decentralization and Local Development
AMM	Association des Municipalités du Mali/Association of Municipalities of Mali
ANCG	Association Nationale des Communes de Guinée / National Association of Municipalities of Guinea
ANICT	Agence Nationale d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales / National Investment Agency of Local Governments (Mali)
ARDCZ	Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe
ARIAL	Supporting and Strengthening Local Authority Associations Programme
AU	African Union
CALGA	Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEMAC	The Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CMUV	Communes et Villes Unies du Cameroun
COMESA	The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPA	Cotonou Partnership Agreement
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CSO-LA	Civil Society Organisations – Local Authorities
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DCIs	Development Cooperation Instruments
DDC	Decentralised Development Cooperation
DeLoG	Decentralisation and Local Governance network
DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DINU	Development Initiative in Northern Uganda
DLGTD	Local Governance and Local Development through Territorial Development
EAC	Eastern African Community
EC	European Commission
ECDPM	The European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EIDHR	The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Right
EODB	Ease of Doing Business
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
FCFA	Franc CFA
FEDOMU	Federación Dominicana de Municipios
FNACT/ANICT	Fonds National d'Appui aux Collectivités Territoriales / l'Agence National d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement

FTS	Fiscal transfer Study (Uganda)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTF	Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and peace (EU)
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development (Africa)
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic sub-Commission (Africa)
LAA	Local Authority Association
LAHV	Local Authorities Association of Vanuatu
LAs	Local Authorities
LDC	Least Developed Country
LGA	Local Government Association
LRG	Local and Regional Government
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NAO	National Authorising Office
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NSA-LA Programme	Non-State Actors and Local Authority Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
PEFA	(tool for) improving public finance management
PFD	Policy Forum for Development
PFM	Public Finance Management
PIFS	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
PILGA	Pacific Islands Local Government Association
PNDP	Le Programme National de Développement Participatif
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RIP	Regional Indicative Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARO	Southern African Regional Organisation (UCLG)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SISMAP	Monitoring system of local public administration (Dominican Republic)
TALD	Territorial Approach to Local Development
TASU	Technical and Administration Support Unit (Uganda)
UCAZ	Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe
UCLG	United Cities and Local Government
UCLGA	United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
ULGA	Uganda Local Government Association
UMOA	L'Union Monétaire Ouest-Africaine
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
VNG	Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten / Association of Netherlands Municipalities
WARO	West African Region Office (UCLGA)

## Agreements, Reports, Evaluations and Institutional Publications

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## LIST OF ACTORS SURVEYED/INTERVIEWED

NAME	DESIGNATION	COUNTRY	SURVEY (S) OR INTERVIEW (I)	DATE WHEN SURVEY / INTERVIEW COMPLETED
<b>ACTORS SURVEYED AND INTERVIEWED FOR AFRICA</b>				
Florence Ndongo	Cadre au FEICOM, Direction des études et de la coopération	Cameroun	S	06/07/2017
Ba Boubacar	Président de l'Association des Municipalités du Mali	Mali	S	28/06/2018
Thomas Tiedemann	EU Delegation Uganda, Head of Section - Governance and Human Rights	Ouganda	S	10/07/2017
Iverson Mutekede	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	S	25/07/2017
Linda Kalenga	EU Delegation - Zimbabwe Task Manager	Zimbabwe	S	06/07/2017
<b>ACTORS SURVEYED AND INTERVIEWED FOR CARIBBEAN</b>				
Sandra Singh	CALGA/CLGF, Programme Officer	Cariforum	S	01/07/2017
Helen Royer	Ministry of Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs, The Permanent Secretary - Dominica, Permanent Secretary	Dominica	S	03/07/2017
Luc Patzelt	EU Delegation Barbados, DELCSLA/EIDHR	Dominica	S	22/07/2017
Yoland Jno-Jules	Dominica Association of Local Community Authorities (DALCA), Chairman	Dominica	S	04/07/2017
Luca Lo Conte	EU Delegation Santo Domingo	Dominican Rep.	S	30/06/2017
Clive Edwards	Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, Project Manager	Jamaica	S	04/07/2017
Scean Barnswell	Association of Local Authorities of Jamaica (ALGAJ), President	Jamaica	S	30/06/2017
<b>ACTORS SURVEYED AND INTERVIEWED FOR PACIFIC</b>				
Rikiau Takeke	Kiribati Local Government Association (KILGA)	Kiribati	S	07/2017- No time stamp
Karibaiti Taoaba	CLGF Pacific	PIFS	S	23/06/2017
Paulius Strelciunas	European Union Delegation to Papua New Guinea, Programme Manager	PNG	S	12/07/2017

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE WHEN SURVEY / INTERVIEW COMPLETED
<b>OTHER ACTORS INTERVIEWED</b>		
Bernard Fort	Secretary-General, National Commission on Decentralised Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, France	07/06/2017
Bernard San Emeterio Cordero	European Commission, Team Leader, Multiannual Financial Framework, DEVCO-A6	26/07/2017
Dr D Natallie Corrie-Kordas	ACP Secretariat, Expert, Humanitarian Matters & Civil Society	16/06/2017
Emilia Saiz	UCLG, Deputy Secretary-General	26/07/2017
Ewout Sandker	European Commission, Development Coordination, Latin America and Caribbean, DEVCO-G1	11/07/2017
Jean Bossuyt	ECDPM, Head of Strategy	06/06/2017 10/07/2017
Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi	UCLGA, Secretary-General	11/07/2017
Jorge Roderiguez Bilbao	Formerly Civil Society, Local Authorities , DEVCO	06/06/2017 11/07/2017
Lucy Slack	CLGF, Deputy Secretary-General	03/07/2017
Marine Gaudron	PLATFORMA, Policy Officer	06/06/2017
Michael Laloge	European Commission, Cities, Local Authorities, Digitisation, Infrastructures, DEVCO-C5	07/06/2017
Renato Mele	European Commission, Development Coordination, Central Asia, Middle East/Gulf & Pacific, DEVCO-F2	11/07/2017
Silvio Lazzari	European Commission, Cities, Local Authorities, Digitisation, Infrastructures, DEVCO-F2	07/06/2017 12/07/2017
Sylvia Kimpe	European Commission, Cities, Local Authorities, Digitisation, Infrastructures, DEVCO-F2	07/06/2017
Wouter Boesman	PLATFORMA, Director, Policy	06/06/2017 11/07/2017
Mrs Nyasha Simbanagevi	Head of CLGF Africa	10/07/2017
William Cobbett	Director, Cities Alliance	12/07/2017
Johannes Krassnitzer	International Coordinator, ART Initiative, UNDP	28/04/2017



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## QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE: ZIMBABWE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Taking into account previous EU funding under the Cotonou Agreement and the focus on consolidation of democracy, peace, stability, prosperity and sustainable development under the EDF ZIMBABWE NIP 2014-2020, as well as the recognition this gives to the need to strengthen governance and institution building, agricultural based economic development and health.

### POLICY DIALOGUE

- Are you aware of the provisions for local and regional government (LRG) engagement in the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement?
- Have you ever had contact with your Government's EU National Authorizing Officer? Please specify including any consultation/involvement on the design/implementation and monitoring of your National Indicative Program supported by the EDF.
- Have you ever had any direct contact/engagement with the EU/EC delegation in your country and EU-funded activities? Please elaborate.
- Any suggestions on what are barriers to local government engagement in the national policy dialogue and how these could be overcome?

### PROGRAMME/PROJECT FUNDING

- Are you aware of any EDF supported programs related to decentralisation or local governance undertaken with your Ministry of Home Affairs and its Department of Local Authorities or other ministries? Have you been actively consulted/engaged in their design/implementation/monitoring? Please specify.
- Are you aware of any EDF supported programs or projects related to local government capacity-building, including for UCAZ or ZILGA? Have you been actively consulted/engaged in their design/implementation/monitoring? Have the funds for these projects been channeled directly through you? Please specify.
- Please explain the precise nature of the projects eg have they involved policy dialogue, capacity-building and/or provision of technical assistance through decentralised cooperation with partners in the EU and elsewhere.
- Any suggestions on what are barriers to local government access to EDF funding and how these could be overcome?
- What should be priorities for future LRG funding support?

### REGIONAL / INTERNATIONAL

- Are you aware of any engagement of local government in EDF activities at regional level (eg through Commonwealth Local Government Forum, CLGF- Africa, United Cities and Local Governments, UCLG-A) and are you yourself involved with this? How could this be strengthened? Please specify.
- Are you aware of any engagement of local government in EDF activities at pan-ACP or international and are you yourself involved with this? How could this be strengthened? Please specify.

### CONCLUSION

- How would you assess the overall benefit of the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement for your country and specifically for local and regional government?
- Is there scope for more engagement with LRG under the post 2020 EU-ACP agreements and how should this look?
- Do you think that the specific provisions under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with regard to sub-national/local government engagement, ensuring inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements and the idea of localising the SDGs as well as the provisions for sub-national financing in the AAAA can be incorporated into the post-2020 EU-ACP agreements and if so how?



## LIST OF PLATFORMA's PARTNERS

PLATFORMA is the European coalition of local and regional governments – and their associations – active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. Since its creation in 2008, PLATFORMA has been representing more than 100,000 local and regional governments. All are key players in international cooperation for sustainable development.

The diversity of PLATFORMA's partners is what makes this network unique. PLATFORMA reflects the diversity of local and regional governments' realities in Europe and across the world.

The aim of PLATFORMA is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and mutual learning, but also to strengthen the specific role of local and regional governments in development policies.

In 2015, PLATFORMA signed a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with the European Commission. Its signatories commit to take actions based on common values and objectives to tackle global poverty and inequalities, while promoting local democracy and sustainable development.

The Secretariat of PLATFORMA is hosted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR).

[www.platforma-dev.eu](http://www.platforma-dev.eu)



**AEXCID:** Extremadura Agency for International Cooperation for Development  
[www.juntaex.es/aexcid](http://www.juntaex.es/aexcid)



**CALM:** Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova  
[www.calm.md](http://www.calm.md)



**AFCCRE:** French Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions  
[www.afccre.org](http://www.afccre.org)



**CCER/CEMR:** Council of European Municipalities and Regions  
[www.ccre.org](http://www.ccre.org)



**AICCRE:** Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions  
[www.aiccre.it](http://www.aiccre.it)



**CLGF:** Commonwealth Local Government Forum  
[www.clgf.org.uk](http://www.clgf.org.uk)



**AIMF:** International Association of French-speaking Mayors  
[www.aimf.asso.fr](http://www.aimf.asso.fr)



**CPMR:** Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions  
[www.cpmr.org](http://www.cpmr.org)



**ALAL:** Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania  
[www.lsa.lt/en](http://www.lsa.lt/en)



**CUF:** United Cities France  
[www.cites-unies-france.org](http://www.cites-unies-france.org)



**ANCI:** National Association of Italian Municipalities  
[www.anci.it](http://www.anci.it)



**DIBA:** Province of Barcelona  
[www.diba.cat](http://www.diba.cat)



**AUC:** Association of Ukrainian cities  
[www.auc.org.ua/en](http://www.auc.org.ua/en)



**EEL:** Association of Estonian Cities  
[www.ell.ee](http://www.ell.ee)



**Euskal Fundo:** Basque Fund - Association of local authorities from the Basque country for international cooperation  
[www.euskalfundoa.org](http://www.euskalfundoa.org)



**Nantes métropole:** Nantes Metropolis  
[www.nantesmetropole.fr](http://www.nantesmetropole.fr)



**Famsi:** Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity  
[www.andaluciasolidaria.org](http://www.andaluciasolidaria.org)



**Région Sud-Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur:** Region of South-Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur  
[www.maregionsud.fr/](http://www.maregionsud.fr/)



**FEMP:** Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces  
[www.femp.es](http://www.femp.es)



**Regione Toscana:** Region of Tuscany  
[www.regione.toscana.it](http://www.regione.toscana.it)



**Fons Mallorquí:** Majorcan Fund for Solidarity and Cooperation  
[www.fonsmallorqui.org/ca](http://www.fonsmallorqui.org/ca)



**SMOCR:** Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic  
[www.smocr.cz](http://www.smocr.cz)



**Generalitat de Catalunya:** Autonomous community of Catalonia  
[www.gencat.cat](http://www.gencat.cat)



**UCLG/CGLU:** United Cities and Local Governments  
[www.uclg.org/fr](http://www.uclg.org/fr)



**KDZ:** Centre for Public Administration Research - Austria  
[www.kdz.eu](http://www.kdz.eu)



**Ville de Paris:** City of Paris  
[www.paris.fr](http://www.paris.fr)



**LALRG:** Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments  
[www.lps.lv/en](http://www.lps.lv/en)



**VNG International:** Cooperation agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities  
[www.afccre.org](http://www.afccre.org)



**LBSNN:** National Town-Twinning Council Netherlands-Nicaragua



**VVSG:** Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities  
[www.vvsg.be](http://www.vvsg.be)



**NALAG:** National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia  
[www.nala.ge](http://www.nala.ge)



**ZMOS:** Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia  
[www.zmos.sk](http://www.zmos.sk)

*The Cotonou Partnership Agreement will expire on 29 February 2020. It is a comprehensive political, aid and trade accord concluded between the European Union and 79 countries of the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States. It is also one of the few development cooperation agreements which explicitly includes local and regional governments among the key stakeholders in its implementation in article 4.*

*This study seeks to find out if local and regional governments have been actively involved in the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement at national, regional and pan-ACP levels. It also looks at the potential prospects for a stronger role for local and regional governments in the post-2020 ACP-EU relationship.*



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