

Panel discussion

Who owns the EDF? Political realities and domestic accountability in EU development aid

Date: Wednesday, 25 January 2017 (13:30-17:30)

Venue: Martin's Brussels EU (Topaz room) – Boulevard Charlemagne 80, 1000 Brussels

Since the 1990s and the advent of the oft-cited 'governance turn' in the development field, the crucial significance of democracy and good governance for achieving development results has been upheld in numerous policy documents. Today the fact that the objective of eradicating poverty is inherently intertwined with questions of democracy, human rights, and governance is firmly engrained in the discourse of development. The adoption of Goal 16 in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its widespread perception as an 'enabling goal' is a recent acknowledgement of this link.

The impact of development aid on political realities and state-societal relations is multifaceted. It should never be seen as confined to funding that by definition already has a political dimension, as for instance governance aid does. Instead, as both local actors and development practitioners increasingly argue, all aid ultimately has political effects. For example, support requested by a semi-authoritarian government in the energy, health, or transport sector may enable it to improve its domestic position. Or it may very well skew its accountability from citizens to donors. To that effect, the way aid is delivered is recognised as crucial for its effectiveness but also for the issue of ownership and domestic accountability. Indeed, the concept of ownership has seen some crucial refinement over the years – from 'national ownership' (the co-signing of programming documents by recipient governments) to ownership that is inclusive, participatory and extends across the entire societal spectrum.

The ongoing review process of the European Development Fund (EDF) offers an opportunity to look at how development aid affects democracy, human rights, and good governance and vice-versa. More specifically, it serves as a chance to reflect on practical steps to be taken in order to enhance domestic accountability in development aid.

The European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) kindly invites you to join a discussion with civil society representatives, development practitioners, EU officials, and other policy makers on this subject. EPD will also present the findings of an input paper designed to give practical recommendations for the mid-term review of the EDF.

You may register at [this link](#).

Programme

13:15 **Registration**

13:30 **Welcome and Introduction**

Ken Godfrey, Executive Director
European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)

13:40 **Panel I: Ownership and the EDF – How to tackle politics in development?**

Political outcomes have major consequences for development agendas (in Europe and elsewhere) regardless of whether those outcomes result from an election, a coup or a conflict. At the same time, ownership of development aid (including the EDF) remains a key goal of the international development community. Yet navigating the waters of domestic politics in any regime is never straightforward, not least for those with an international perspective. This panel will look at how development policies in the ACP region can tackle the highly complex issue of politics.

In what ways does the notion of ownership require the acknowledgement of political contexts and engagement with political actors? Can the EU deal with political outcomes and remain 'neutral'? How can the inclusion of multiple local perspectives be ensured? Does the type of regime (democracy, hybrid, authoritarian) necessitate a different approach to aid?

Judith Sargentini, Member of the European Parliament
Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

Domenico Rosa, Head of Unit
European Commission, DG DEVCO D3, ACP Coordination

Fabien Nsengimana, Executive Director
Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP)

Kizito Tenthani, Executive Director Uganda
Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

Moderated by

Anna Knoll, Head of Programme (tbc)
European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)

15:20 **Coffee Break**

15:40 **Panel II: Domestic accountability actors across the EDF programming cycle**

The support and involvement of domestic accountability actors (parliaments, political parties, civil society organisations, media, etc.) in development initiatives can have positive effects on the quality of domestic accountability and consequently on aid effectiveness in general. This panel will look at ways in which actors other than governments can be involved in the implementation of the EDF.

How do concerns for domestic accountability influence the direction of funding going to ACP countries? What are the ways for the EU to integrate context and power structures into programming decisions? How can domestic accountability actors be strengthened in meaningful ways? How can domestic oversight of aid be improved?

Karine Sohet, Senior Policy Officer, EU Development Policy and Practice
ACT Alliance EU

Hermenegildo Mulhovo, Executive Director Mozambique
Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

Isaac Maposa, Executive Director
Zimbabwe Institute (ZI)

Andreia Oliveira, EU Advocacy Officer
Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)

Moderated by

Ken Godfrey, Executive Director
European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)

17:30 **Networking Drinks**