

Weekly Compass

No. 36, 23 April 2010

NEW AT ECDPM | POLICY NEWS | OFF THE TRACK | SERVICES | ABOUT

Editor's Pick

Where is Europe's Aid Policy Headed?

ECDPM participated in the Development Policy Forum Round Table Debate: "Where is Europe's Aid Policy Headed?" organised by Friends of Europe on 13 April. Central in the discussion was progress in realising the EU's ambitious goal for aid commitments to reach 0,7% GNI by 2015. Recognising the lack of progress so far, EC Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, called for EU Member States to enact legislation that sets ODA targets, thereby making them legally binding. Another proposal, by an NGO discussant, was for Member States to install an annual ODA Peer Review Mechanism. Both proposals have been incorporated in the twelve-point EU-action plan in support of the MDGs that was released by the Commission on 21 April, for Member States to react upon. Noting that this discussion is not just about aid volumes, there was consensus on the need for improving aid effectiveness, finding additional sources of funding and more policy coherence for development. A full report of the debate will be made available on the Friends of Europe website. [The next Development Policy Forum Debate, focussing on the post-Lisbon Treaty architecture of EU development cooperation](#), will take place on 27 April and will feature as a panellist, ECDPM's Director Paul Engel.

Visit also our Programme home pages

Development Policy and International Relations programme - Economic and Trade Cooperation programme - Governance programme

Policy News

Taking stock of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and Africa's international relations

This year will be a milestone in EU-AU relations. African and European Heads of States will meet at the end of November to discuss the framework guiding the relationship between the two continents, namely the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) and its associated Action Plan. Given this context, the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) and the ECDPM, long-standing partners, hosted [a meeting in Pretoria](#) in March to take stock of the state of Africa's international relations and emerging actors on the continent and the EU-Africa relationship. The meeting was attended by over 40 participants, including European and African embassies, South African government officials and nongovernmental organisations and academics. Participants analysed some of the partnerships' successes and failures to date and considered key challenges and perspectives on revitalizing the innovative framework. A particular focus was on the JAES EU-Africa Peace and Security Partnership and whether this could be considered a model for other JAES

Dear,

This issue substantially longer since it's the first after my break which started on 2 April. I hope that in the meantime you've been checking the [delicious.com](#) database. And I encourage you to look at the [Weekly Compass-Extended Version](#) as there is a lot of new information, papers and upcoming events in relation to economic and trade, governance and development policy and international relations that you won't want to miss. Such as the EC's MDG proposals, including an EU Member States donor atlas and innovative financing options, NGO reactions to these and additional information on preparations for the MDG Summit in light of the OECD's report showing that meeting the targets is under threat. Information and upcoming meetings on the EU External Action Service's preparations are also provided, including the latest proposals from the European Parliament. Debates on the future of the EU's Common Agriculture Policy and Financial Perspectives have also been launched. On EU aid effectiveness, there are new toolkits on division of labour and capacity development and analysis on translating policy into effective implementation in countries. African governance perspectives are also posted.

The latest information is also provided on the EPAs negotiations and Caribbean implementation including the latest on the rum situation as well as links to a new DG Trade website with testimonials from ACP countries. There are also papers on the effectiveness of trade preferences in general, the impact of the financial crisis on Africa, EU plans for a new investment focus, the launch of new EU customs information and value chain promotion websites and plans for an EU study on technical barriers to trade. New reports from the World Bank, IMF and Economic Commission for Africa on economic and development indicators and freeing up data are also included.

New studies on EU CFSP, peace-building and state-building and EU plans on justice and security are

partnerships.

EC kicks off revision of Project and Programme Cycle Management Guidelines

Over the past few years the European Commission has developed a range of methodological guidance on the three approaches it uses to deliver its aid cooperation programme, namely "project approach", "sector approach" and "global approach". Accordingly, the Commission has embarked on a [process to revise its existing Project and Programme Cycle Management Guidelines](#) (PPCM) to incorporate this methodological guidance and merge it into one single coherent, simplified, accessible and user-friendly document. Internal consultations on the revision process are currently underway, and input from external stakeholders is invited. The Commission has given itself until March 2011 to complete the process.

Economic Partnership Agreements and food security

This [discussion paper from Trinity College Dublin](#) investigates whether the commitments undertaken by African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) governments when they signed Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are a threat to food security. Analysis of the tariff liberalisation schedules suggests that ACP states have made use of their flexibility to exempt many food staples from liberalisation, but the EPA provisions on other border measures are more problematic. All of the EPAs require ACP signatories to make commitments which go beyond WTO disciplines. The paper recommends the removal of any WTO-plus provisions that could potentially limit the policy space available to ACP governments to improve food security.

The Sector Approach - version 2.0

This [paper for the EU's Capacity4Dev website](#) argues that the "sector approach" – where donors provide long term support to a particular sector like education, transport or agriculture, aimed at enabling the recipient country to conduct its own multiyear policy – remains relevant to development assistance. But given its mixed track record in enhancing the quality of services for the poor and the rapidly changing global context and new communication tools which are increasing the complexity of the challenges faced, the sector approach has to move to a "version 2.0" where connectivity, collaboration, communication and horizontal knowledge acquisition become central. This requires significant, and difficult, changes in how donors' work.

Aid to Africa: What can the EU and China learn from each other?

With China's increasing role in Africa, the issue of aid to Africa has been high on the China-EU agenda and the subject of considerable debate. Focusing on one area of potential co-operation - China's and the EU's aid policies towards Africa - this [paper from the South African Institute of International Relations \(SAIIA\)](#) argues that these different logics are not necessarily contradictory. The paper recommends a phased approach to improve collaboration, starting with joint research and exchange programmes and joint pilot projects in areas of common interest such as health and human resources development projects.

New Avenues for Sino-African Partnership & Cooperation - China & African Regional Organisations

Despite the increased diplomatic involvement between China and the African continent – with much of this driven through multilateral platforms such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation – it is striking that to date China has developed little formal engagement with the continent's regional organisations. This issue of the [Centre for Chinese Studies at](#)

also posted. And there are reports from the Joint Africa-EU Strategy meetings and information on preparation for the summit in November, including a document from the EC on key deliverables for the JAES and an interview with the African Union Ambassador to the EU. New proposals on climate change funding and a link to the World People's Conference on Climate Change are also included. The latest on the EU-civil society structured dialogue on development cooperation is also posted. And the new ACP Secretary has appointed his new Assistant Secretary Generals.

A series of upcoming meetings are also posted, including on domestic resource mobilization in Africa, EPAs, the Africa-EU Ministerial Troika, the European Investment Bank, and European Parliament meetings which will consider issues such as climate change, rules of origin, EU market access to third countries, the EU's raw material trade strategy, aid effectiveness, the EEAS, EU support for regional economic integration in East and West Africa, EU civil-military cooperation, and the international criminal court review conference.

And finally, on a "non-work" item, its that time of year again – purple flowers in the Hallerboss forest!. This weekend (and next) the forest floor will be covered with beautiful flowers. It's really something to see. Directions are attached [here](#). Stop by and say hello if you make it out here.

All the best,

Melissa

Melissa Julian
mj@ecdpm.org

Extended version in PDF

Find the extended version of this newsletter online

Off the track

System of Indicators of Eurasian Integration

This [tool for comprehensive monitoring and systematic evaluation of Eurasian integration dynamics](#) from the Eurasian Development Bank aims to advance integration and assist in the formulation of strategies and policies for political, economic and social cooperation between the region's countries.

Services

Subscription options

Stellenbosch University's [China Monitor](#) assesses the ways in which substantive partnerships could be developed in areas such as transport, peace and security.

Reforming the African Peer Review Mechanism Process. Call for Submissions

Since its inception in 2003, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has been seen as a novel way for showcasing Africa's thinking on governance. However, its implementation has been fraught with a number of methodological and operational challenges. To address these limitations, the [APRM invites submissions](#) from member countries, technical research institutions, think-thanks, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to provide suggestions for improvements in seven areas. Submissions should be received by 30 April 2010. See also the [APRM website](#).

European Report on Development 2010: Promoting resilience through social protection

Social protection interventions are increasingly considered to be necessary complements of more traditional pro-growth policies, especially in the face of emerging unstable global socio-economic scenarios. This year's [European Report on Development \(ERD2010\)](#) will analyse best practice in social protection schemes across the developing world and propose a policy agenda for national government and the international community to strengthen social protection mechanisms.

The African Union and Security Sector Reform

The last decade has witnessed an increase in international efforts at Security Sector Reform (SSR). Most SSR actors in Africa consider the development of the Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) and the incorporation of SSR to be critical to any successful peace building initiative. The PCRD reflects the AU's desire to be the lead actor in reconstruction efforts on the continent. Noting that the AU already has many SSR related elements in place and is currently developing an SSR policy, this [Friedrick Ebert Stiftung paper](#) calls for African scholars and policy makers to rethink strategies to develop a continental framework for SSR and complement this process by developing sub-regional SSR strategies.

New report assesses APRM's achievements

This Partnership Africa Canada report "[Reviewing Africa's Peer Review Mechanism \(APRM\) A Seven Country Survey](#)", reviews the achievements of the APRM in seven countries - Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ethiopia. It argues that it is at the country level that the value of the APRM should be measured and asserts that the overall picture is generally positive. Dialogue between stakeholders is occurring and changes are being introduced to the ways governments and countries are being run. But the pace of learning and change are slow. The APRM has to be made more straightforward and efficient and human and financial resources must be increased at the national level to help countries carry out their evaluations successfully and implement the priority actions that are agreed on.

Approaches to and methods of managing development assistance.

This April issue of the [Development in Practice Journal](#) focuses on the theoretical frameworks and assumptions that underpin the ways in which 'aided development' is approached. Articles examine: the concept of wellbeing as a social process; an analysis of why Amartya Sen's work on human capabilities lacks comprehensive application beyond the field of development economics arguing it has the potential to challenge existing

Manage your subscriptions (subscribe, unsubscribe or get text / mobile version)

Manage e-newsletter

The information in this e-newsletter is also available: through RSS topic feeds



RSS subscriptions



follow us on Twitter

To prevent this e-newsletter from getting blocked by email filters please add our address (mj@ecdpm.org) to your email address book

Event calendar

Follow the major ECDPM and ACP-EU events on our calendar



ECDPM websites

Discover our thematic websites:
[acp-eu-trade.org](#)
[europafrika.net](#)
[capacity.org](#)

Sharing information with stakeholders



Visit the InfoCentre

paradigms and provide a grounded alternative to 'business as usual'; Systems Thinking as a way to understand development and the need for adequate mechanisms of control and accountability; the importance of informal local narratives as an essential step towards decentring the ways in which development is defined, articulated, and practiced; and the emergence of the Free and Open Source Software movement as a new way to conceptualise development and the need to see knowledges as emergent.

Rethinking Support to Local Governance

To strengthen local governments across Africa, donors would be advised to spend more time and resources in researching and understanding local systems, according to Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi a key expert from the Central African region in this [interview with Capacity4Dev](#). Mr Mbassi, from Cameroon, is a well known expert in decentralisation and has worked for years to promote decentralisation and local governance in Africa. He is currently the Secretary General of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, a gathering of 15,000 local authorities from the continent. Mr Mbassi told Capacity4Dev that there are some gaps in understanding, both at the donor and the local level, that should be addressed to strengthen African local governments.

Achieve complex goals obliquely. The importance of understanding political and economic economy

[Owen Barder highlights](#) John Kay's article in the Financial Times which has important implications for how we think about development policy. Barder says we should think about this both in the context of the way donors try to "redesign" the political and economic process in countries they know almost nothing about, and in the context of trying to reform the aid system, where grand design is unlikely to succeed. He quotes Kay: "It is hard to overstate the damage recently done by leaders who thought they knew more about the world than they did [...] They failed to acknowledge of the complexity of the systems for which they were responsible and the multiple needs of the individuals who operated them."

ECDPM posts the latest news on international relations, development, economic, trade and governance policies daily on its website. [Click here](#) to access the full list of all the news we've collected this week. A convenient "Topics" feature also allows you to quickly scan your specific areas of interest.

Publisher: The Weekly Compass is produced by ECDPM (www.ecdpm.org) with financial resources provided by our core funder, the government of the Netherlands, and other financial partners - Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Luxemburg, Portugal, Switzerland and the UK.

If you received this e-newsletter from a colleague and would like to subscribe, you can do it on the [ECDPM website](#). If you no longer wish to receive Weekly Compass, click on the following link: [unsubscribe e-mail](#). We encourage our readers to circulate this newsletter to interested colleagues.

Editor: Melissa Julian, e-mail: mj@ecdpm.org Call or SMS on mobile +32 (0)47 328 11 65 - Fax +32 (0)2 380 31 55 Visit [Melissa's Profile](#)

Disclaimer: This newsletter has been created with great care though it may contain links to websites which are created and maintained by other organisations and which have information that is not complete or accurate. The contents of this message may express personal views which are not the views of ECDPM unless specifically stated. Reproduction is authorised provided that the source is acknowledged. However, we are not liable for the subsequent use of the information.

The information contained in this e-mail is intended for the person to whom it is addressed and may include confidential and/or privileged information. If you have received this e-mail in error please contact the sender immediately via info@ecdpm.org.

For more information about ECDPM: <http://www.ecdpm.org/about>