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Deutsches Institut für
Entwicklungspolitik



German Development
Institute

IDDRI

Summary and key results of a joint

IDDRI-DIE workshop on

Options for closer cooperation and joint leadership of France and Germany towards global sustainable development after the Treaty of Aachen

Berlin, April 5 2019

Main takeaways:

- Coordination of France and Germany need to continue with a strong inclusive approach.
- Differing priorities could be bridged and reconciled via regular and frequent exchanges at the working level (e.g., deep dive sessions on specific topics, e.g., climate change mitigation) so as to sharpen a shared vision towards global sustainable development.
- A Franco-German division of labor (in countries/sectors) is only possible with partners on an equal footing and needs to be complemented by joint results frameworks.
- Unilateralist dynamics (including populist movements) need to be considered actively by both countries and could lead to a reflection of development policies.
- France and Germany should contribute to a further sharpening of EU development policy.
- Multilateral approaches as initiated with the French / German “Alliance for Multilateralism” will be key to advance global sustainable development against this background.
- Good partners do not always need to have the same approach and interests, but they must be in a position to understand and engage critically yet constructively with the other side.

1. Background

On April 5th 2019, German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) and the Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales/Institut d'études politiques de Paris (IDDRI) jointly convened a workshop with French and German experts on global development and development cooperation. This workshop built on a [first workshop held in Paris on June 21st 2018](#).

Participants included representatives from various ministries (the French Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs MEAE, German Ministry for Development and Economic Cooperation BMZ, German Federal Foreign Office AA, German Chancellery Bundeskanzleramt), the French Embassy, the implementing agencies (Agence française de développement AFD, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GIZ, Kreditbank für Wiederaufbau KfW), representatives of civil society (VENRO, Welthungerhilfe) as well as research institutes (German Institute of Global and Area Studies GIGA, Fondation pour les études et recherches sur le développement international FERDI), the International Organization for Migration and German political foundations (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Foundation).

The workshop inputs drew from recent research on Franco-German development cooperation towards sustainable development. While one study considered the experiences of cooperation in specific partner countries, a further paper, which will be released this summer, specifically considers the cases of the Sahel Alliance and Nationally Determined Contribution Partnerships (NDCP) for climate change mitigation.¹ Further work considered the Franco-German engine at the EU level as well as effects of populist movements on development policy. Results were discussed within the plenary of development experts as well as during a high level policy round table including the French

¹ Final versions of the concerned papers will be circulated to participants for information once published.

deputy DG on Globalization from the MEAE and the CEO of AFD as well as representatives from the EU division of BMZ and the strategy department of KfW.

The workshop sought to provide an informal platform to identify and discuss the opportunities and challenges of intensifying the Franco-German coordination towards global sustainable development against the background of the recently signed treaty of Aachen and current challenges. Hopes for the treaty of Aachen are high, since the Élysée-treaty, signed 56 years earlier on the 22.01.1963, contributed strongly to bilateral coordination. Continuing on this path is key for both countries in view of the opportunities and challenges of 2019 and beyond: the upcoming EU elections, a potential Brexit, as well as the preparations for a new EU Multiannual Financial Framework and the French G7 presidency. Discussions during the first [workshop in 2018](#) had indicated that shared values should be the basis for formulating joint political commitments. However, cooperation would in reality often be opportunity rather than strategy driven. Thus, the question is how to translate political commitments into more tangible outputs?

2. Bilateral engagement

There is evidence that the joint political will does not fully trickle-down to the policy-making and implementation level. Preliminary research findings offered three major explanations: (i) **institutional differences** in the set-up of French and German development cooperation exist and result in different mandates and accountability structures; (ii) **cultural particularities** affect the working culture, when it comes to the mode of communication or time schedules; (iii) **strategic visions** sometimes diverge, especially when it comes to the security-development nexus and acting in line with the international community.

Participants agreed that Franco-German cooperation needs to accept the given institutional and cultural differences, which might occasionally lead to differing priorities. For a good partnership the important point would be to keep good relations, which allow to understand each other and engage critically yet constructively. Regular meetings as conducted between the involved ministries contribute to good working relations and could be extended via deep-dive sessions. Staff exchanges, which are for instance conducted regularly between the strategic departments of AFD and KfW and are subject to a further extension, can complement those meetings. Regular communication and exchange of best practices would contribute to reaping the benefits of synergies and an effective division of labor.

Moreover, different institutional setups (in terms of ministries and agencies involved in development policy) might constitute a source of comparative advantage for a division of labor. Structured follow-up mechanisms in terms of a progress and results matrix could help to tighten this division of labor, contributing to a deeper cooperation and achieving the aforementioned more strategy-driven approach. The recently completed joint Franco-German Roadmap on Development 2019-2022 will be an important contribution in this regard. However, participants emphasized that there are also limits to a division of labor and jointly determined outcomes. A clear understanding of being partners on an equal footing and flexible strategies would be essential for successful initiatives. Moreover, participants stressed that results frameworks need to consider different procedures in terms of political and technical levels. Those points were also observed in relation to the two case studies on the Sahel Alliance and Nationally Determined Contribution Partnerships (NDPC) that were presented and discussed.

3. Evidence from case studies

The first case study considers the Sahel Alliance, a coordination mechanism of development partners (including the EU and the World Bank) of the Sahel states to improve effectiveness and targeting. The Sahel Alliance was launched in July 2017 as a Franco-German initiative focusing on five priority sectors. For each sector, one partner country would be in the lead, which makes the Sahel Alliance an interesting case considering the division of labor, but also asks for a complex balancing to ensure that partners perceive themselves on an equal footing.

The Sahel Alliance stressed that different political priorities, might result in different speeds and ambitions. Due to the partly fragile contexts, security was added post hoc as a priority sector. While France has more security-driven priorities arising from potential terrorist threats, Germany prioritized developmental outcomes. Diverging priorities result also in diverging speeds, where France follows a more urgency driven approach and would take the lead, whereas Germany works more long-term oriented and follows French initiatives. With twelve other actors in the Alliance as well as different pledging countries, coordination gets even more complex. While the workshop participants identified more strategically set results as a possible solution, those should acknowledge the need of different indicators for the political and technical realm of development cooperation. Further efforts could be made to align priorities without compromising on the targets of the Sahel partner countries.

The second case study on NDCP for climate change mitigation represents the strong commitment of both countries to reduce the negative impacts of global warming. Launched in November 2016 during the 22nd UN Climate Conference in Marrakesh, the NDCP was designed by France and Germany to build capacities and provide technical expertise to finance climate change mitigation. The partnership is now active in more than 40 partner countries. Due to the institutional differences in French and German development policy, actors would perceive a lack of suitable counterparts. While Germany would often be in the lead, there would be insufficient coordination with France. Thus, despite equally strong political commitments from both initiating countries, only limited joint actions and financial commitments would result.

4. The need to keep cooperation flexible for others to join

The discussion on the Sahel Alliance raised the point that diverging interests between France and Germany have previously not limited cooperation but instead provided a basis for identifying innovative and norm-setting solutions. Building on these and other experience, participants agreed that Franco-German cooperation could act as an 'engine' at the EU level for a focused development policy. It was suggested that think tanks should contribute to a reassessment of EU development policies, strengthening its justification as well as its traction with partners in the South. First, due to their strong norm setting role and congruence of values France and Germany should anchor the sustainable development goals in EU development policy. Second, facing several fragile partner countries, integrating development and security (including prevention) via innovative approaches as in the Sahel Alliance would enrich the strategic portfolio. Third, the lessons learned during joint projects and in the framework of the Sahel Alliance could be transferred to the engagement in the EU's joint programming. Revitalizing this concept by Franco-German efforts would improve effectiveness and governance of development cooperation in line with the principles of the Busan Partnership.

However, in order to create tangible outputs, France and Germany need to build coalitions with other partner countries. In this regard, workshop participants agreed that it would be key for a successful cooperation to remain flexible and perceive Franco-German coordination as a pioneer for EU initiatives. It was commonly emphasized that stronger initiatives by the two countries should not

create an image of Franco-German domination; an open dialogue with other EU partners is an essential aspect of the Franco-German relationship. Examples were the revitalization of the Weimar triangle (including Poland) and establishing cooperation agencies in other EU countries to strengthen the dialogue on sustainable development.

Self-evidently, inclusive coordination mechanisms should extend beyond the EU. Regardless of the further process and outcome of Brexit negotiations, participants stressed that future coordination with the United Kingdom, especially, on security questions should be continued. Moreover, the strong coordination of positions in international fora like the UN, World Bank and specialized agencies including the Global Fund and the International Development Finance Club (IDFC) was underlined. Especially, the latter was identified as an opportunity to crowd-in non-concessional finance, which would be key to achieve the 2030 agenda, where ODA funds would not suffice.

Regarding multilateral actions, conveners also highlighted that France and Germany recently initiated the “Alliance of Multilateralism”. On the one hand the Alliance is thought to raise the awareness of the threats imposed by unilateralism and nationalism and on the other hand acts as a visible commitment towards an international rule-based order. This way, the Alliance should act as a forum to support multilateralism and the UN system.

5. Domestic Dynamics

Given the strong traction of unilateral approaches, coordinated Franco-German efforts need also to face political dynamics within the domestic constituency. The rise of populism worldwide presents considerable threats for global sustainable development – by re-interpretation of development cooperation as an instrument for sanctioning action patterns understood as danger, e.g. in-migration, security issues, or denying climate change. Even if populist movements, are not part of the government, their calls for changes in development cooperation towards national interest would already affect development policy. Outcomes can be observed in the fields of security and migration policy.

In order for France and Germany to preserve their commitment and contribution towards the 2030 agenda, their political elites must take the complexities of populism into account. This includes the acknowledgement of non-party movements and a departure from the sole left-right divide. Down-playing populism as a global trend, would not solve the issue. In contrast, a reflective reassessment of populism also includes a critical reflection of the political elites in a dialogue with partners. This could provide new momentum for rethinking development and the rationale for global cooperation. A potential follow-up of our workshop might include fora with civil society to reflect and foster Franco-German development cooperation, especially, to develop an inclusive commitment towards global sustainable development.

The workshop brought together diverse actors from French and German development cooperation. Discussions during the event sharpened the empirical analysis and helped to identify further relevant topics, which are both of interest for academic and political discourse.



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Workshop Agenda

Options for closer cooperation and joint leadership of France and Germany towards global sustainable development after the Treaty of Aachen

5 April 2019

Venue: Mövenpick Hotel, Schöneberger Straße 3, Berlin
9h30-16h30

9.30-9.45

Opening by Sébastien Treyer (IDDDRI, Executive Director) and Stephan Klingebiel (DIE, Program Head)

9.45-10.00

Introductory remarks by Ralf Wyrwinski (BMZ, Division on EU and EU Development Policy)

10.00-11.15

Part I: Stocktaking of Franco-German cooperation

(Moderation: Christine Hackenesch, DIE)

- (1) A structured analysis of Franco-German cooperation in development policy and beyond by Laura Krüger & Julie Vaillé (IDDDRI) (20 Minutes)
 - Discussion: Ralf Wyrwinski (BMZ)
- (2) Partner country case studies: Morocco, India by Lennart Kaplan (DIE) (10 Minutes)
 - Discussion: Tim Glawion (GIGA)

11.15-11.30

Coffee break

11.30-12.30

Part II: Opportunities and challenges for an intensified coordination towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

(Moderation: Damien Barchiche, IDDDRI)

- (3) Populism and its impact on global sustainable development: Populist movements in Germany and dynamics by Paul Marschall (DIE) (10 Minutes)
 - Discussion: Sébastien Treyer (IDDDRI)
- (4) Franco-German cooperation in Europe and beyond by Julian Bergman (DIE) (10 Minutes)

12.30-13.30

Joint lunch

13.30-14.30

Part III: Case Studies

(Moderation: Andy Ramorasata, IRD)

- (5) The Sahel Alliance by Laura Krüger & Julie Vaillé (IDDRI) (10 Minutes)
- (6) Discussion: Véronique Héon-Klin (BMZ) & Christophe Angely (FERDI)
- (7) Nationally determined contributions towards climate goals by Laura Krüger & Julie Vaillé (IDDRI) (10 Minutes)
 - o Discussion: Mark Furness (DIE)

14:40-15:00

Coffee Break

15:00-16:15

Moderation: Sébastien Treyer (IDDRI)

Policy Round Table with Emmanuel Puisais-Jauvin (MEAE, deputy DG International Development), Rémy Rioux (AFD, Chief Executive Officer), Anja Wagner (BMZ, head of Division on EU and EU Development Policy), Patric Shirzadi (KfW) concerning the topics:

- (8) French and German cooperation in General
- (9) Sahel Alliance
- (10) Climate cooperation

16:15-16:30

Closing remarks by Sébastien Treyer (IDDRI) and Stephan Klingebiel (DIE)