



EU DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2013-2018

POLICIES, FUNDING, RESULTS

*Study commissioned by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands*

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List of acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AFIF	African Investment Facility
APF	African Peace Facility
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CPA	Cotonou Partnership Agreement
CRS	Common Reporting System
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSO-LA	Civil Society - Local Authorities
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DEVCO	Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development
DG	Directorate General
DG NEAR	Directorate General Neighbourhood and Enlargement
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRM	Domestic Resource Mobilisation
EC	European Commission
ECA	European Court of Auditors
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFI	External Financial Instrument
EFSD	European Fund for Sustainable Development
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EIP	European Investment Plan

EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
EUCAP	European Union Capacity Building mission
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUISS	European Union Institute for Security Studies
EUTF	European Union Trust Fund
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEWE	Gender, Equality and Women's Empowerment
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GNI	Gross National Income
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
HQ	Headquarters
HRVP	High Representative and Vice President
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department
ITF	EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
JP	Joint Programming
LDC	Least Developed Country
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
MS	Member State
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
NIF	Neighbourhood Investment Facility
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAF	Poverty Action Fund
PAP	Pan-African Programme
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
PFM	Public Finance Management
PSD	Private Sector Development
PSE	Private Sector Engagement
QSG	Quality Support Group
ROM	Result Oriented Monitoring
TF	Trust Fund
TRA	Trade Related Assistance
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
UMIC	Upper Middle Income Countries
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States Dollar
WB	World Bank

Executive summary

1. The objective of the study is to provide an overview of the evolution of and the results achieved by EU development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period 2013-2018. It aims to feed into further policy discussion and research inquiry, and complements the Dutch government's regular reporting to parliament of results achieved in EU development cooperation.
2. The study, commissioned by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presents a structured literature review of EU development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa over the period 2013-2018. It addresses three main questions:
 - **Policy commitments:** What were the EU's intentions as regards development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period 2013-2018?
 - **Funding:** To what extent were these intentions reflected in allocation patterns during the same period?
 - **Results:** What do we know about the results of EU development cooperation with SSA during the period under review?
3. The study focuses on EU policies and development spending in areas that are **priority themes** for the Dutch Government's engagement with the European Union in the field of development cooperation, as well as selected **working methods** and practices that are particularly relevant for the EU's development cooperation. It is based on a structured review of policy documents, data on aid allocation patterns, and a systematic assessment of available ex-post evaluation material of the EU institutions (European Commission, European Court of Auditors, European Investment Bank).

The evolution of the policy commitments

4. The direction of EU development policy with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period 2013-2018 was guided by decisions taken before the start of the period under review and before the Juncker Commission took office in 2014. Particularly relevant was the 2011 Agenda for Change that provided the main orientations on the priorities and principles of EU development cooperation. This agenda strongly guided the regular **programming of EU aid** and cooperation for the 2013-2018 period, notably by proposing to concentrate EU aid on a limited number of sectors and to differentiate among aid recipients in order to increase impact.
5. As of 2015, global and regional trends prompted a shift in the EU's policy priorities. The adoption of the **UN 2030 Agenda** on sustainable development, **geopolitical shifts and emerging crises** in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood impelled the EU to fundamentally review its foreign policy and international development cooperation framework. The "Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy" (HRVP 2016) and "New European Consensus on Development" (Council of the European Union 2017) gave new directions for the EU's development policy. Both acknowledge the broad and integrated nature of the sustainable development agenda and put stronger emphasis on the linkages between EU development policy and other EU foreign policy strands. Reflecting the growing attention to and articulation of the EU's own interests within its development policy, themes such as **peace and security, migration, and private sector engagement**, have become increasingly prominent in cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa.

6. Key factors that facilitated the EU's response to these new priorities - besides the regular long-term programming process - included the legal possibility to create trust funds, which allowed co-funding by EU member states and other official actors, as well as the considerable reserves of the European Development Fund that had accumulated over time and were at the EU's disposal. Key initiatives included the creation of **innovative instruments and facilities**, such as the EU's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) and the External Investment Plan (EIP), to respond quickly to emerging priorities and crises through development spending. While different in nature and governance structures, both have in common that they could be resourced from the reserves of the European Development Fund, allowing for allocating ODA additional to those decided upon through the regular programming process.

How did funding instruments follow the changing policy commitments?

7. The African continent as a whole (i.e. North- and Sub-Saharan Africa combined) was the main recipient of EU development funding, with a total of € 32.77 billion disbursed during the period 2013-2018. Over 70% of this amount, representing **€23.76 billion, went to Sub-Saharan Africa**, primarily through bilateral cooperation and additionally through regional and thematic allocations.
8. There is a **time lapse** between the policy decisions made during the period 2013-2018, including the focus on new thematic priorities, and their actual translation into spending decisions. The EU programmes its development aid on the basis of seven-year periods that are reviewed at mid-term but leave little space for fundamental shifts. Hence, it was mainly through the launch of new initiatives and instruments after 2015, notably the EUTF and the EIP, that EU spending demonstrated a stronger focus on investment, job creation, security/stability and migration-related expenditure. These initiatives have important effects on the cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa, not only due to the new funding priorities entailed, but also because they came with their own structures for deciding on funding allocations.
9. In line with the EU's policy commitment to target aid to the poorest countries, over 75% of the EU's bilateral aid to Sub-Saharan Africa was disbursed to Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The top three LDC recipients of EU aid were Mali, Ethiopia and Niger. While **aid to African LDCs remained still**, aid to Upper Middle-Income Countries considerably declined during the 2013-2018 period as a result of the differentiation principle in the Agenda for Change.
10. The sectoral distribution of EU aid to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2013-2018 shows a considerable reduction in commodity aid and general programme assistance during the period under review, which reflects the gradual shift from general to **sector budget support**. Economic as well as social infrastructure and services saw the strongest increase in the last two years. Another key trend is the increasing shift towards **migration-related expenditure and blended finance**, following the creation of the 2015 Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the 2016 External Investment Plan.
11. In terms of funding modalities, the choices made by the EU reflect an increasing use of the **project modality** and, correspondingly, an increasing use of various intermediaries that include international organisations, EU member states' implementing agencies, development finance institutions and civil society organisations. This trend shows a departure from the previous reporting period, as analysed in the 2013 IOB evaluation of the European Development Fund (EDF), where the EU's cooperation portfolio was characterised by a strong focus on general budget support and other types of programme-based approaches, which were directly managed by the European Commission.

What do we know about the results of EU development cooperation?

Based on the review of evaluations, the following specific findings can be highlighted concerning the results in the eight policy areas and working methods.

12. In relation to **peace and security**, EU development aid has had a positive impact and contributed to more stability in African crisis regions, as capacities for conflict prevention and management were enhanced. Evidence of more fundamental long-term effects remains unknown, while there are concerns over ownership deficits and financial sustainability.
13. The EU also made important contributions to **private sector development** by means of long-term finance of small and medium enterprises and strengthened partners' trade policy environments, international trade standard setting, capacity of public institutions, and trade development. The sustainability of these results however shows a mixed picture. A similar picture is seen in relation to **rural development**, where important and tangible results were achieved – including in terms of direct poverty reduction – but where transformative change and reversing worsening trends in some cases (e.g. in the environment and climate change sector) require more time and an up-scaling of support.
14. Results were also achieved in relation to **social development**, notably through improved living standards and equitable access to basic social services (education, health, water and sanitation) and with positive effects on access for women and girls. **Budget support** also played a key catalytic role in this regard, though there remained challenges in terms of strengthening the quality of the social services and the sustainability of the increased access. **Policy dialogue** is a key aspect of budget support operations, yet its effectiveness requires consistent and frequent engagement, while also being influenced by changes in the overall relationship between the government and its external partners.
15. Although many programming documents included **gender** in their project design, there was no evidence of gender being systematically addressed in the implementation of the projects and activities, resulting in the impression that results were achieved by default. Important results were nonetheless achieved in gender equality in the education, social protection, health and agriculture sectors.
16. In the area of **donor cooperation**, the joint programming process did not, by itself, reduce overall aid fragmentation in the countries where it took place. It did contribute to harmonisation, coordination and aid complementarity and fostered convergence among the EU and member states regarding strategies and policies at country level. It has however remained an EU and member states exercise, thus limiting the potential ownership of the process by the partner country. The impact of delegated cooperation has also been limited to date, mainly due to insufficient linkages with other initiatives such as joint programming and the lack of a comprehensive policy framework.
17. Although the EU's **policy coherence for development** commitment is enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, there is no common understanding of the approach and a lack of clarity among institutional stakeholders on the operational aspect of this commitment towards developing countries. Policy coherence is looked at by various evaluations, but generally in a brief manner without offering detailed evidence.
18. Finally, the evaluations presented findings on the **coherence between the EU's various financial instruments**: they found relatively little overlap between the 11th EDF and other

instruments, as they often funded different priorities or actions, though the comparative advantage of each instrument was not always clear. At thematic level, there were positive examples of coordination and complementarity for instance in the areas of rural and agricultural development and peace and security. Some evaluations found risks of thematic overlaps between different instruments, which in part was due to insufficient coordination between Brussels and EU Delegations.

19. All in all, and similar to the findings of the 2013 IOB study, the evaluations present rich and detailed evidence of the relevance of the choices made and approaches taken, as well as the results accomplished. By comparison, across the board the evaluations reviewed are less robust as to the sustainability of these results, as well as to what extent these helped to advance key development outcomes and advanced the overall objectives of EU development policy. This is not unique to the EU as a donor, but in fact represents a shared evaluation challenge faced in different degrees by all DAC members.

Conclusions and recommendations for further inquiry

20. The EU's development policy and operations overall, and with Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, are characterised by a **high degree of transparency** and adequate investments in independent evaluation. This results from the governance of this policy area, with policy directions and overall allocation decisions reflecting the collective values and interest of the European Commission and External Action Service, the member states and the European Parliament. Overall policy decisions, specific thematic and country-based decisions as well as project-level data are thus available and shared through dedicated platforms, thus reflecting a policy area geared towards and generally receptive of external scrutiny.
21. The study confirms a broad and rich evidence base on the EU's development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa. The independent evaluations confirm the **overall relevance** of the EU's cooperation and point to important results achieved. Yet, the evaluations also confirm earlier concerns over the **challenges in assessing long-term impact and sustainability** of the EU's cooperation engagement. They also highlight unused potential for increasing collective effectiveness – both internally in the EU (including with the European Investment Bank) and in cooperation with the member states.
22. With the exception of a dedicated, yet mainly process-oriented, evaluation of joint programming and a limited number of joint evaluations conducted together with EU member states, the evaluations reviewed did not present detailed evidence on the **EU's added value** vis-à-vis the bilateral development cooperation of EU member states active in the same countries or regions. While there is merit in critically evaluating the EU's engagement as a development actor in its own right, the degree to which the EU's and member states' activities complement each other warrants a dedicated evaluation.
23. In addition to this evaluation gap on collective EU development cooperation effectiveness, four further **gaps** are observed:
 - First of all, the EU's support to and through Civil Society Organisations, and the aid the EU delivers through international organisations, particularly – but not limited to – the World Bank and UN agencies, have not been subject to evaluation in recent years.
 - Secondly, as a result of the establishment of the EUTF and the EIP, the role for member states' implementing agencies and development finance institutions in implementing EU development cooperation interventions has increased. Further discussion is needed as to

how the EU and the member states may best evaluate these forms of cooperation that have gained prominence in recent years.

- Third, the EIB should consider further investment in independent evaluation of its operations in Africa, especially in view of its stronger profile today, as appropriate in direct cooperation with the European Commission's evaluation services.
- Finally, a dedicated review would be welcome on the effectiveness of EU cooperation in terms of democracy promotion through the EU's range of external financing instruments.

Introduction: purpose and objectives of this study

In 2013, the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the ministry of Foreign Affairs (IOB) published a comprehensive policy evaluation of the EDF (IOB 2013). This policy evaluation showed that the Commission has an elaborate system of monitoring and evaluation, comprising different types of evaluations and reports annually, amongst others, on the EU's development and external assistance policies and their implementation. The minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation has committed to inform Parliament more systematically on EU aid effectiveness.

To contribute to this information sharing process as well as to prepare future evaluations on this topic, IOB commissioned a *literature review of EU development cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa in the period 2013-2018*.¹ Its Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) identified three main questions to be addressed:

1. How have EU overall development policies and the EU's overall policies vis-à-vis Sub-Saharan Africa in particular evolved in the period 2013-2018 and what explains the developments that have taken place?
2. How has EU development spending in Sub-Saharan Africa developed in the period 2013-2018 and what explains these developments?
3. What is known of the results accomplished by EU development aid in Sub-Saharan Africa and what explains these accomplishments?

This study analyses these questions on the basis of a comprehensive desk review of key EU policy documents, data on EU development cooperation as well as available evaluation material of the EU institutions on EU external assistance. While broad in coverage, the study pays particular attention to EU policies and development spending in specific areas that are priority themes for the Dutch government as communicated to the parliament.

In relation to the first question, the review looks at how EU development and broader foreign policies have evolved between 2013 and 2018, especially vis-à-vis Sub-Saharan Africa. It assesses how the changing global environment, a new internationally agreed framework for sustainable development, emerging policy priorities and strategic interests for Europe have impacted EU policy discourse and instruments. The review also captures recent debates and on-going processes (e.g. post-Cotonou, Multiannual Financial Framework, Europe-Africa Alliance, etc.) and their potential impact on EU-Africa cooperation.

Regarding the second question, the review is principally based on the Commission's annual reports on the implementation of the EU's instruments for financing external action, supplemented by annual activity reports and financial reports produced by the Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB). It includes an analysis of (1) the evolution of EU aid allocations (geographic and sectoral disbursements), (2) the use of diverse modalities (programmes, projects, budget support, blended finance), and (3) the diversification of channels and actors to implement EU development aid (through budgetary financial instruments, trust funds, implementing agencies). Tables and graphics are used to highlight key trends and patterns of EU development aid in Sub-Saharan Africa over the period 2013-2018.

Finally, for the third question, the review is based on 55 evaluation reports (see list in Annex 2) that were published from 2013 to 2019, and were associated with the various Dutch thematic priorities. A structured data collection grid was prepared to process and compile the evaluation evidence in spreadsheets to enable the horizontal analysis required (for more information see Annex 4 and 5).

¹ At the time of preparing this study, no evaluations were available that covered activities beyond 2018. The 2013-2018 period mostly fits within the current EU multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 and the ensuing programming period of EU aid towards developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

As a consequence of the choices made in the study's design and approaches, three limitations should be presented here for the reader's awareness. First of all, allocation patterns for the period 2013-2018 were in part influenced by earlier decisions, most notably due to the European Development Fund that allows for funds to be disbursed several years after having been committed. A comparison between the EU's intentions and allocation patterns is feasible as long as this caveat is kept in mind. Secondly, while conducted in a structured and transparent manner, the analysis of evaluation reports is of a qualitative nature, since different methodologies were used to gather data to support the findings as analysed. Third, a considerable number of evaluation reports cover operations prior to the 2013-2018 and are hence somewhat dated.

The study is structured around the three research questions analysed in consecutive chapters.

Chapter 1: Policy commitments

Introduction

This chapter analyses the European Union's (EU) overall intentions and priorities as regards development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in the period 2013-2018, based on a review of policy documents. These policies have evolved significantly within this period as a result of external events, new EU strategic priorities, evolving international development agendas and wider contextual changes. Moreover, the strategic global, political and economic importance of Africa has increased in recent years.

As shown in figure 1 and as will be described in the following sections, the evolution of the EU's development policy was driven by two trends. On the one hand, it has moved away from the strong poverty focus of the 1990s and 2000s to a more 'sustainable development' approach that is broader, encompassing all dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, environmental and political) in a more comprehensive manner. On the other hand, the EU's development policy is increasingly being linked to other foreign policy fields and driven by the EU's own internal economic, migration and security interests and priorities. Overall, the EU's development policy has pursued a more integrated and interest-driven agenda.

From 2013 to 2018, echoing the evolution of the EU's development policy framework, Europe's relationship with Africa has undergone a substantial transformation. This transformation is characterised by a growing emphasis on interest-driven cooperation as well as a gradual move away from a relationship built on aid towards one based more on trade and closer economic and security ties. Over the past decade, the EU's policy prioritised a transition to a partnership model based on mutual interests and a win-win relationship. It is pursuing these desired changes through several partially overlapping frameworks, as analysed in box 1.

Box 1. Overlapping EU-Africa cooperation frameworks

EU cooperation policies and instruments vis-à-vis Africa are guided by multiple and overlapping frameworks. The EU has developed a number of different frameworks for its trade, aid, and later political cooperation with African partners, which has resulted in the fragmentation of EU-Africa relations. In particular, there is still a legal and policy separation between North and Sub-Saharan Africa – the former being governed by the Neighbourhood Policy and four individual association agreements with all North-African states apart from Libya, while cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa is governed by both the Cotonou Partnership Agreement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy with the African Union.

The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2000 and constitutes the legal and financial framework for cooperation – development cooperation, economic and trade cooperation and political dialogue – between the EU and the ACP. Since 2000, the CPA has lost traction on trade and political debates and has become very focussed on aid. The Agreement was due to come to an end in February 2020 and both parties are currently negotiating the successor agreement.

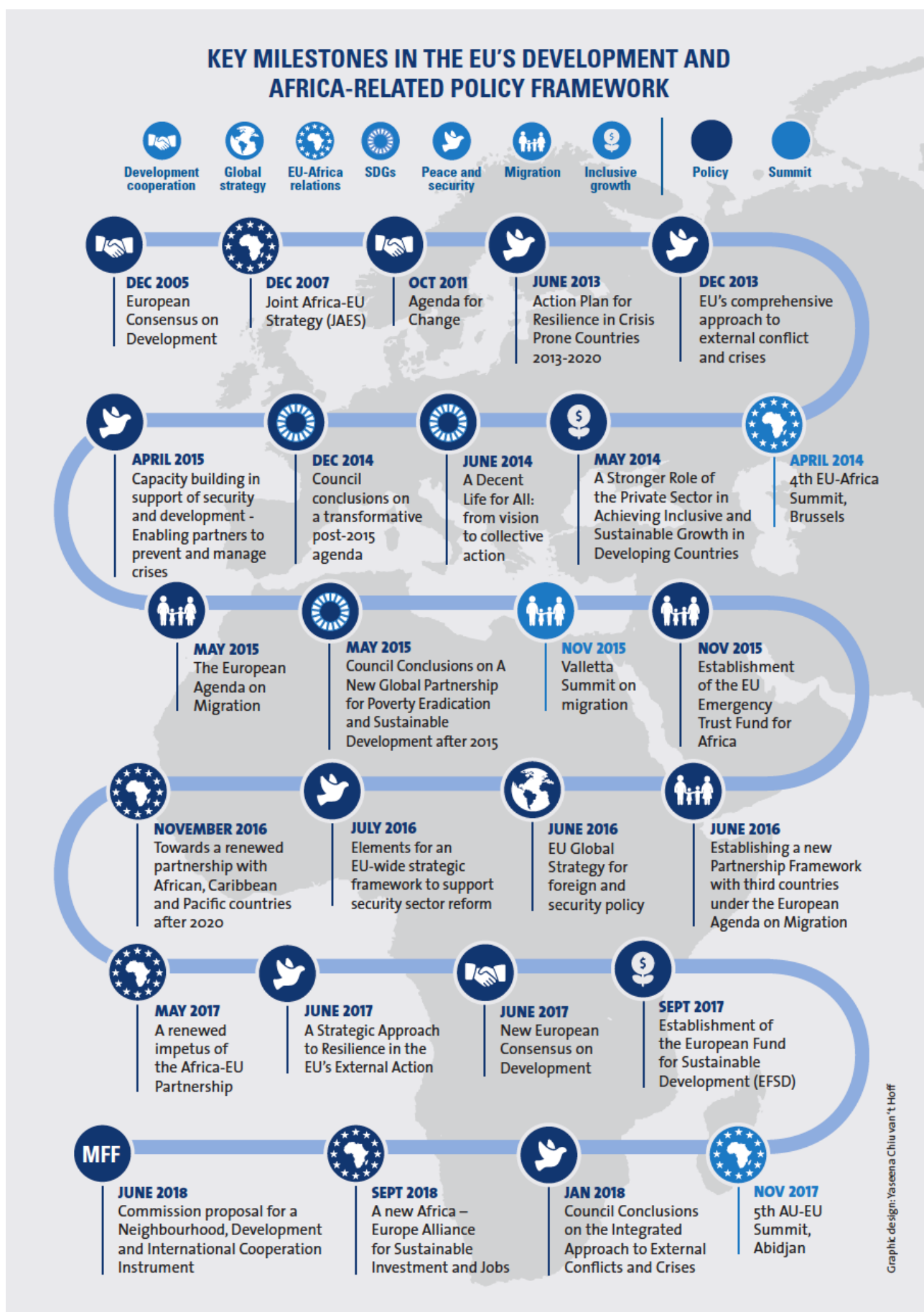
The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) provides the overarching long-term political framework for cooperation at the continental level. It was adopted at the second EU-Africa summit in December 2007. The purpose was to take the Africa-EU relationship to a new strategic level with a strengthened political partnership and enhanced cooperation at all levels. Despite these ambitions, the JAES has lacked means of implementation. For this and other reasons, it has lost momentum and significance. The relations between the EU and Sub-Saharan Africa related to aid and bilateral cooperation have, in practice, continued to rely on the Cotonou Agreement.

On the 9th of March 2020, and in preparation of the next AU-EU summit foreseen for October 2020, the EU published a Communication titled **“Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa”**. This

Communication sets out ideas to intensify cooperation in all aspects of the EU-Africa partnership, notably on areas of common interest such as (1) green transition and energy access, (2) digital transformation, (3) sustainable growth and jobs, (4) peace and governance, (5) migration and mobility. It further stated that coherence should be maintained between the proposed EU-Africa strategy and the legally binding agreements between the EU and African states: the ACP-EU framework for Sub-Saharan States and the association agreements with North-African states.

In the sections below, we analyse the overall evolution of EU development policy in the period 2013-2018, before looking at some of the key EU thematic policy priorities and how they translated into the policies and frameworks vis-à-vis Sub-Saharan Africa.

Figure 1: Key milestones in the EU's development and Africa-related policy framework



1. Overall evolution of EU's development policy 2013-2018

1.1. The Agenda for Change and its implementation in the 2014-2020 programming process

Since 2005, the EU's development policy has been framed by the European Consensus on Development (European Parliament/European Commission/Council of the European Union 2006). The Consensus built on the common agenda the EU member states had set together during the various big UN conferences of the 1990s that led up to the Millennium Declaration in 2000. It provided the first common policy framework for the EU and its member states² on the objectives and principles of the EU's development policy.

As of 2011, this policy framework was complemented by the “**Agenda for Change**” (European Commission 2011a), a reform strategy aimed at increasing the impact and effectiveness of the EU's development assistance. The reform took place against the background of a fast-changing global environment, and in particular the financial and economic crisis, growing aid fatigue, and the Arab Spring, all of which called for a significant refocus of EU's development policy. The Agenda for Change also placed a strong emphasis on the need for EU aid to demonstrate strong value for money and to ensure that resources are targeted where they were needed most to address poverty and where they could have the greatest impact.

The Agenda for Change established two overarching priorities: (i) ‘human rights, democracy, rule of law and governance’ and (ii) ‘inclusive and sustainable growth for human development’ as the two basic pillars of EU development policy. It highlighted the importance of working in the areas of social protection, health and education, business environment and regional integration, sustainable agriculture, food security and energy. It also introduced two key principles: the principle of differentiation and the principle of concentration:

- The principle of differentiation stressed the need to target EU ODA on countries most in need, including low income and least developed countries (LDCs) and fragile states – while reducing or phasing out EU aid for a number of so-called graduated countries.³
- The second was the principle of sector concentration, according to which EU resources in country-level programmes would focus on a maximum of three sectors. By doing so, the EU sought to avoid aid fragmentation and ensure a more strategic use of scarce resources through a critical mass of funding in a limited number of sectors where it could bring added value.

The principles of the Agenda for Change benefited from high-level political sponsorship at headquarters and were successfully enforced in the field. They were notably incorporated in the specific regulations of the EU external financing instruments (EFIs)⁴, and also influenced the programming of EU aid for the period 2014-2020.⁵ The preparatory process of programming EU aid started in 2011, just after the adoption of Agenda for Change. According to the programming guidelines, all new EU multiannual indicative programmes were

² The Consensus on Development was divided in two parts, the first one on common principles and objectives for the EU and its member states, and the second part on the Community's development policy.

³ Two categories of countries would graduate from bilateral aid programmes under the DCI: upper middle-income countries on the OECD/DAC list, and countries that contribute to more than 1 percent of the global GDP. A few exceptions were however made following negotiations between the EU institutions, and some countries were kept for political reasons, including South Africa.

⁴ The use of the EU's budget for development cooperation is governed by distinct external financing instruments, i.e. legal texts as proposed by the Commission and jointly agreed by the member states and the European Parliament. These state overall objectives, financial resources and the allocation thereof and implementation procedures, among others. The most important ones for cooperation with SSA in terms of the volume of funding are the European Development Fund (EDF), an intergovernmental fund outside the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI).

⁵ In the context of EU development policy, the term ‘programming’ refers to the process of determining country and thematic cooperation needs and, on that basis, decisions on the focus of EU development cooperation for a specific period of time (typically the duration of the EU budget cycle or the specific fund or initiative concerned).

to progressively reflect the new guiding principles of the Agenda for Change (European Commission/European External Action Service 2012).

Yet, their impact on EU aid to Sub-Saharan countries was finally quite limited. Indeed, no Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) country was 'graduated' out of ODA eligibility because of the differentiation principle, although Upper Middle-Income Countries in Africa did see considerable reductions in bilateral allocations under the 11th EDF (see chapter 2). The main reason is that the Cotonou Agreement and the EDF which frame the EU aid towards ACP countries did not allow for such graduation, but instead required bilateral allocations to be determined based on needs and performance.⁶ The principle of sector concentration was translated in the EU national programming documents, most of which did focus on a maximum of three sectors of intervention. Yet, these sectors were in some cases defined quite broadly and spread over a multitude of activities which were loosely connected (Herrero et al 2015).

An important novelty in the programming process in 2014 was the involvement of **the European External Action Service (EEAS)** as per its new mandate⁷ to ensure the overall political coordination of the Union's external action, including consistency between the programming of development aid and other EU external action objectives.⁸ This was meant to bring new dynamics, notably a drive to promote a stronger and more consistent EU external engagement overall. Yet, the newly established EEAS had only a minimal influence over the geographic programming process in 2014-2020 (Herrero et al 2015). The European Commission (EC) continued to take the lead in designing and implementing programming documents.

The **EU's 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)** was approved in December 2013. The EU's budget for external relations (under Heading 4 "Global Europe") was agreed at €66.3 billion, including €19.6 billion for the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). In parallel and covering the same period, EU member states adopted the **11th EDF** (€30.5 billion), an intergovernmental fund outside the MFF framework and the EU's main instrument for providing development aid to 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and to overseas countries and territories signatories of the CPA.

The table below presents the main EU external financing instruments which are relevant for Sub-Saharan Africa.

⁶ Likewise, there was no graduation out of ODA for cooperation with North African countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy which introduced differentiation in amounts and modalities in line with countries' needs, commitments, capacities and achievements, as well as an incentive-based approach known as 'more for more'.

⁷ Under the Lisbon Treaty and the 2012 Interinstitutional Agreement, the EEAS and the European Commission share responsibility for the strategic programming of EU external aid. Together, they prepare the European Commission's decisions on country and regional financial allocations.

⁸ The EEAS role is outlined in the 2010 Council decision which led to its establishment, stating that "throughout the whole cycle of programming, planning and implementation of the instruments ... the High Representative and the EEAS shall work with the relevant members and services of the Commission." Cf. 2010/427/EU: Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service.

Table 1. EU External Financing Instruments, 2014-2020

Name	Overall budget	Earmarked / reserved for SSA	In or outside budget
11th European Development Fund	€30.5 billion	77% of total funding earmarked for SSA, excluding Africa Peace Facility funded through intra-ACP budget (European Commission 2017a)	Outside
Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)	€19.6 billion	- €845 million reserved for Africa under Pan-African Programme ⁹ - African countries are eligible for thematic programmes (€7 billion total)	Inside
Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)	€2.4 billion	No earmarked funds, though all SSA-states are eligible	Inside
European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR)	€1.3 billion	No earmarked funds, though all SSA-states are eligible	Inside
Humanitarian Aid Instrument	€7.1 billion	No earmarked funds, though all SSA-states are eligible	Inside
Bêkou Trust Fund	€243 million (incl. MS support)	Central African Republic	Outside
EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (2015-2020)	€4.7 billion ¹⁰ (incl. MS support)	€3.1 billion funded from EDF reserves	Outside
ACP Investment Facility	€4.1 billion	Funds managed by the European Investment Bank (EIB) in the period 2000-2020, earmarked for ACP-states	Outside
<i>Source: own elaboration based on EU websites and legal texts</i>			

1.2. The EU's contribution to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The EU took an active role in the international negotiations leading to the adoption of the UN *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, a process which it prides itself on having strongly influenced (European Commission 2019a).

In the run-up to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, a Commission Communication published in February 2014 and titled **A Decent Life for All: from vision to collective action** (European Commission 2014a)

⁹ The creation of the Pan-African Programme (PAP) within the DCI aims to support activities of trans-regional, continental or global nature that have continental added value for the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). The PAP is meant to complement national and regional EU cooperation programmes and to also compensate for the fragmentation of cooperation with Africa across three instruments (DCI, EDF and ENI).

¹⁰ The overall resources allocated to the EUTF as of 31 December 2019 amounted to almost €4.7 billion, of which €590 million was provided by EU Member States and other donors (Norway and Switzerland).

proposed 17 priority areas¹¹ covering all dimensions of sustainable development and potential targets for the post-2015 development agenda. Later that same year, the EU's Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of December 2014 on **A transformative post-2015 agenda** (Council of the European Union 2014) set out the EU's position and guiding principles for the international negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They notably emphasised that the post-2015 agenda should integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, environmental) in a balanced and integrated manner, be global in coverage and universally applicable, and be guided by the principles of accountability, ownership and transparency.

During 2015, the Council Conclusions on **A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015** (Council of the European Union 2015a) further elaborated the EU's and member states' position in preparation for the Third UN Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July 2015, which was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. The EU's position stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach¹² to development finance and means of implementation, as well as a strong monitoring, accountability and review framework.

These principles and priorities did not directly make their way through the overarching EU's development policy framework, in particular the 2005 European Consensus on Development. They nevertheless pointed to the need to update the latter so as to reflect the changes in the new global development agenda which had become universal and more integrated. This represented a major shift compared to the poverty-focused and donor-driven Millennium Development Goals (MDG) agenda.

1.3. A new strategic framework for EU foreign and development policy

As of 2015, the EU undertook an update and revision of its foreign and development policy in line with the new global development agenda, geopolitical shifts, emerging crises and a stronger focus on new strategic priorities. This notably led to the adoption of the EU **Global Strategy** (2016) and the **New European Consensus on Development** (2017).

1.3.1. The EU Global Strategy for foreign and security policy

In June 2015, the European Council mandated the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP) to prepare a global strategy to replace the European Security Strategy of 2003 (European Council 2015). The objective was threefold: to take stock of the evolution of the EU's global environment, to set out the EU's core interests and principles for external action, and to provide a vision for a more credible, responsible and responsive EU in the world.

The **Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy** (EEAS 2016) was presented by the HRVP and welcomed by the European Council in June 2016. The Global Strategy emphasises the need to use all strands of foreign policy to address the global threats and seize the opportunities that the new global landscape offers. The main novelty is its integrated nature which extends beyond the traditional security domain to cover all aspects of EU external action, including development cooperation. The Global

¹¹ These were: Poverty eradication, Inequality, Food security and nutrition, Sustainable agriculture, Health, Education, Gender equality and women's empowerment, Water and sanitation, Sustainable energy, Full and productive employment and decent work for all, Sustainable and inclusive growth, Sustainable cities and human settlements, Sustainable consumption and production, Oceans and seas, Biodiversity and forests, Land degradation, including desertification and drought, Human rights, the rule of law, good governance and effective institutions, Peaceful societies.

¹² The EU and its member states stressed the importance of: (i) establishing an enabling and conducive policy environment at all levels; (ii) developing capacity to deliver; (iii) mobilising and making effective use of domestic public finance; (iv) mobilising and making effective use of international public finance; (v) mobilising the domestic and international private sector; (vi) stimulating trade and investments; (vii) fostering science, technology and innovation; and (viii) addressing the challenges and harnessing the positive effects of migration.

Strategy also recognises that a more integrated and effective EU external action calls for a more joined-up approach¹³ and depends on intensifying collaboration with EU member states as well as employing resources and instruments both internally and externally. The Global Strategy explicitly notes that “development policy also needs to become more flexible and aligned with our strategic priorities” (EEAS 2016). This is a clear sign of the EU’s development policy being more explicitly interest-oriented.

The references to Africa are numerous in the Global Strategy: in addition to stressing the importance of security and support to peace and resilience operations in Africa as “an investment in our own security and prosperity,” the Global Strategy mentions the need for a renewed political partnership of equals that goes beyond development. It also stresses the need to “build stronger links between our trade, development and security policies in Africa, and blend development efforts with work on migration, health, education, energy and climate, science and technology, notably to improve food security” (EEAS 2016).

1.3.2. The New European Consensus on Development

Following the adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015 (UNGA 2015), the EU began preparations for revising the 2005 European Consensus on Development, which focused on the Millennium Development Goals and was no longer in tune with the global development policy framework. In November 2016, more than one year after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Commission put forward a proposal for a **New European Consensus on Development** (European Commission 2016a) to update and guide the development policy of the EU and its member states until 2030.

Following negotiations between the Commission, Council and Parliament, the New European Consensus on Development (Council of the European Union 2017) was adopted in June 2017. Given the nature of the document and the fact that it needed the approval of all EU member states, the Commission and the Parliament, it is inevitably very broad in scope so as to satisfy all parties.

The Consensus puts forward a balanced and integrated approach to sustainable development by interlinking sectors (such as development, peace, and humanitarian assistance), increasing effectiveness of EU’s development assistance, and combining traditional financing with private sector and domestic resources. It also promotes a comprehensive approach to implementation, drawing on the framework agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development,¹⁴ combining aid with other resources (investment, domestic resources mobilisation, trade etc.), and with sound policies. The New Consensus further proposes a strengthened approach to Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) as part of the EU’s contribution to the SDGs and to the broader objective of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (Mackie et al 2017).

In addition, the New Consensus includes a restated commitment to a more coordinated EU and member states’ approach to development, promoting development effectiveness, joint programming and joint implementation. It puts emphasis on better-tailored partnerships with a broader range of stakeholders and partner countries.

Poverty eradication remains the primary objective of development policy under the New Consensus, in line with the objective for EU development policy as stated in the EU Treaty. In that sense, the EU policy

¹³ The Global Strategy stresses in particular the need to work towards a “joined-up external action” based on closer linkages between external and internal policies, inter-agency cooperation, coordination with member states, comprehensive programming, etc.

¹⁴ The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is the new global framework to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It stresses the importance of aligning all financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental priorities.

framework adopted in 2015 remains aligned and consistent with the EU Lisbon Treaty objective. Yet, it also stresses the integrated nature of sustainable development and the interlinkages between the SDGs.

Like the Global Strategy, the New Consensus underlines the links between development and other EU policies. It acknowledges in particular the importance of promoting synergies between peace and security, humanitarian aid, migration, the environment and climate. The New Consensus also sets out the principles for EU institutions and EU member states in their cooperation with partner countries towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, agreed by the UN in 2015, and the Paris Agreement on climate change (signed in 2016).

While it recognises the development challenges faced by developing countries in Africa and the importance of targeting Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the continent, the Consensus is global in scope and does not set any specific objective - or foresee any particular approach - for the EU and its member states vis-à-vis Africa. This was a change from the 2005 European Consensus, in which the EU and its member states agreed that at least half of the planned increase in ODA should go to Africa (Council of the European Union 2017).

2. Thematic priorities and approaches to development cooperation

A number of key thematic priorities have become increasingly prominent in the EU's development policy, in particular private sector engagement, migration, and peace and security. These topics have also featured more prominently in the EU's cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa, as illustrated by the key priorities of the EU-Africa Summits in the period 2013-2018 and of the special summit on migration in La Valletta of 2015 (box 2).

In May 2017, shortly before the adoption of the New European Consensus on Development and in preparation for the 5th AU-EU Summit held in November 2017, the EU adopted a joint **Communication for a renewed impetus of the Africa-EU Partnership** (European Commission 2017b). This policy document underlined the EU's interest in deepening political dialogue and laid out a vision for a stronger strategic EU-Africa partnership based on increasing cooperation on common interests and on frequent political interaction. The Communication stressed that the EU's external policy framework and Africa's own reform Agenda 2063 (African Union 2014) provide the right guidance for a transformative agenda structured around two main strands: building more resilient states and societies; and creating more and better jobs, especially for youth.

Box 2. EU-Africa Summits

EU-Africa summits constitute the highest political level of cooperation at continental level between the EU and Africa. Between 2000 and 2018, five summits were held both in Africa and Europe. They have sought to establish deeper cooperation on common priorities for the AU-EU partnership. AU-EU ministerial meetings also take place on an ad hoc basis to monitor the progress achieved between summits, and to advance cooperation between both continents in certain fields. In the period 2013-2018, these joint ministerial political dialogue meetings were infrequent, thus undermining the continuity and political direction of the partnership (Bossuyt 2017).

In April 2014, the **4th EU-Africa Summit** took place in Brussels, under the theme "Investing in People, Prosperity and Peace". The Summit confirmed the continued commitment of European and African partners to the objectives set out in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) and recognised the need to work jointly to promote each other's growth and prosperity. The Summit Declaration (EU-Africa Summit 2014) was structured around these themes, whereas the Roadmap (EU-Africa Summit 2014) outlined five priority areas:

1. peace and security;
2. democracy, good governance and human rights;
3. human development;
4. sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration;
5. global and emerging issues.

In addition, a separate declaration on migration and mobility was approved, along with an action plan to fight irregular migration and human trafficking, enhance international protection, better organise legal migration and strengthen the migration-development nexus.

Against the background of the refugee crisis in Europe, the extraordinary **Summit on migration in La Valletta** took place outside the framework of the JAES in November 2015. At the summit, EU and African leaders acknowledged that migration is a shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination and committed to addressing the root causes of irregular migration. While the primary aim was to strengthen cooperation and find common solutions to address the current European migration crisis, the Summit also underlined the importance of well-managed legal migration and mobility between the two continents, which

was a key request from the African partners. This led to the adoption of a Political Declaration (Valletta Summit 2015) and the Valletta Action Plan (Valletta Summit 2015) focusing on five priority domains:

1. addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement;
2. enhancing cooperation on legal migration and mobility;
3. reinforcing the protection of migrants and asylum seekers;
4. preventing and fighting irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings;
5. working more closely to improve cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration.

In November 2017, the **5th AU-EU Summit** was held in Abidjan under the theme “Investing in Youth for a Sustainable Future”. At the summit, both partners stressed the need for a stronger economic agenda for the EU-Africa partnership and agreed that economic investment, job creation and trade were common priorities requiring joint commitment. The joint Declaration (AU-EC Summit 2017) outlined common priorities for the EU-Africa partnership in four strategic areas:

1. economic opportunities for youth;
2. peace and security;
3. mobility and migration;
4. cooperation on governance.

However, the AU and EU could not agree to sign off on a follow-up action plan to this Summit.

At the time this study was completed, the **6th EU-AU Summit** is due to take place in Brussels in October 2020. It will be an opportunity to rethink and scale up the partnership, in line with the Communication of the European Commission “Towards a comprehensive strategy with Africa” presented on 9 March 2020.

2.1. Engaging and working more closely with the private sector

Private sector involvement and leveraging private investment for development are increasingly prominent priorities in the EU’s development policy. The starting point of this increased focus on the private sector came soon after the start of the global financial and economic crisis in 2008. The growing emphasis on private and productive sector engagement represents a major paradigm shift in the EU’s development policy. It was notably driven by a push from EU member states with strong private sector agendas, such as the Netherlands. The underlying narrative is that of a win-win relation between achieving local and European private sector profits and development outcomes. It is a response to the need to mobilise additional development finance to meet the SDGs, as stressed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.

The promotion of private sector investments in Africa is also a response to a strong demand from African partners who have stressed the need to boost trade and job creation for inclusive growth and sustainable development as the top priority in Africa’s Agenda 2063.

Enhancing private sector engagement has in turn led to a more explicit move to use aid to leverage private finance and investment for sustainable development and job creation. The focus on private sector investments was also prompted by the increased competition with other actors in Africa and the need to seize economic opportunities. It follows the priority given by the European Commission to promote jobs and growth both inside and outside Europe.

2.1.1. The EU’s strategy on private sector for development

In May 2014, the European Commission published a landmark Communication on '**A Stronger Role of the Private Sector in Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Developing Countries**' (European Commission 2014b). Building on the Agenda for Change, this new policy presented a framework for engaging more strategically with the private sector in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth. It provided

more elaborate and concrete guidelines for the Commission's engagement with the private sector and brought it up to date with other longstanding donor practices, notably those of the Netherlands. This new policy aims at supporting private sector development in partner countries as well as a deeper engagement with both local and European businesses to achieve impactful development outcomes. In doing so, it clearly acknowledged the crucial role of the private sector for sustainable development, economic growth and job creation, notably in sectors such as energy, agriculture and infrastructure.

On 14 October 2015, the Commission issued a new trade and investment policy titled '**Trade for all**' (European Commission 2015a). Its primary focus is to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the EU's trade policy and strengthen the link with the promotion of EU values. Among the objectives pursued, the policy aimed to better integrate sustainability issues into trade policy, notably through the incorporation of Trade and Sustainable Development chapters in Free Trade Agreements (FTA) negotiations. A stronger coherence between trade and development policies was also called for, and the Commission launched a discussion on how to implement and enforce sustainable development provisions in FTAs.

In December 2017, the updated **Joint EU Aid for Trade Strategy** (European Commission 2017c) was adopted with a view to strengthen and modernise EU support to partner countries and to better target its aid for trade on LDCs and countries in situations of fragility. The EU's updated strategy is designed to deliver more relevant aid that makes use of all EU tools, including a commitment to enhance synergies with trade agreements and trade schemes.

2.1.2. Leveraging private investment for development

The achievement of the SDGs requires the mobilisation of significant amounts of additional resources, for which ODA alone will not suffice. The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* stresses the need to leverage more private resources to move from the 'billions to trillions' (World Bank 2015a) of dollars required to bridge the financing gap to achieve the 2030 Agenda. One way of doing so is through the use of blended finance mechanisms.

Since 2007, the EU has set up eight regional investment facilities¹⁵ in order to leverage additional finance by blending grants provided by the European Commission with loans from European development finance institutions (DFIs). These facilities were designed to contribute to financing key infrastructure projects that require considerable financial resources. The EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (EU-AITF) was established in 2007 with the main objective to promote investment in infrastructure in four different sectors of activity (water, energy, transport, ICT) throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. The Africa Investment Facility (AfIF), set-up in 2015, combines EU grants with other public and private sector resources, such as loans, equity and other financing, for investments that promote sustainable and socially inclusive development.

Building on these facilities, the EU launched the **European External Investment Plan (EIP)** (European Parliament/Council of the European Union 2017) for sustainable investment in Africa and the European Neighbourhood in 2017. The EIP is inspired by the internal Investment Plan for Europe (so-called "Juncker Plan") and is designed to attract more investment in particular from businesses and private investors - and especially in fragile states - to promote decent job creation, sustainable development and tackle the root causes of migration. Through an EU input of €4.5 billion, the EIP is intended to leverage €44 billion of investment by 2020.

¹⁵ EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund / African Investment Facility (ITF/AfIF), Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF), Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF), Latin America Investment Facility (LAIF), Asia Investment Facility (AIF), Investment Facility for Central Asia (IFCA), Caribbean Investment Facility (CIF), Investment Facility for the Pacific (IFP).

The EIP is structured around three pillars combining 1) blended finance, 2) technical assistance, and 3) policy dialogue on the investment climate in developing countries. Under its first pillar, the **European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD)** combines the aforementioned blending and investment facilities¹⁶ with a guarantee instrument for de-risking investments, targeting five thematic investment windows.¹⁷

2.1.3. Promoting economic growth, investments and job creation in Africa

Since 2014, the EU has put a more explicit emphasis on economic relations with Africa, acknowledging the prospects of increased economic and investment opportunities as well as growing competition in Africa. The EU wants to consolidate trade relations with Africa and take advantage of the continent's rapid growth and economic transformation.

The 4th EU-Africa Summit in 2014 reflected these priorities and put a stronger emphasis on economic transformation in Africa through investment and growth. The 5th AU-EU Summit in 2017 also put a strong emphasis on job creation under the theme 'Investing in Youth for a Sustainable Future'. At the Summit, both sides stressed the need for a stronger economic agenda for the EU-Africa partnership and agreed that economic investment, job creation and trade were common priorities requiring joint commitment.

In September 2018, almost one year after the AU-EU Summit, the Commission President Juncker unveiled during his State of the European Union Address a new '**EU-Africa Alliance for sustainable investments and jobs**' (European Commission 2018). The Alliance proposes to boost investment in Africa, strengthen trade, create jobs, and invest in education and skills in areas of shared EU-AU interest. Four key sectors have been identified under the Alliance: agriculture, digital economy, energy and transport. The External Investment Plan, with its European Fund for Sustainable Development, is to be one of the main instruments for the implementation of the Alliance.

The EU-Africa Alliance brings together relevant initiatives that were launched by the EU in recent years and has been given the highest political priority within the European Commission. In partner countries, including in Sub-Saharan Africa, EU delegations develop so-called 'Jobs and Growth Compacts' (JGC). These Compacts include the identification of value chains with the highest potential in terms of job creation, increased capacity and enhanced market access. Their objective is to support structural transformation and creation of up to 10 million decent jobs through stimulation of private sector investment and fostering a more conducive investment climate. The JGCs serve as a source for the programming exercise and are EU internal documents that are not negotiated with partner countries nor binding documents. They neither supersede nor replace the National Indicative Programmes (NIP) but are meant to complement them by identifying synergies between investment operations and the EU's bilateral cooperation programmes.

The Alliance also stated the EU's support for the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**, which is one of the flagship projects of the AU's Agenda 2063. It was adopted at an extraordinary AU Summit in March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda. The AfCFTA seeks to create a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of persons, and thereby promote expanded intra-African trade and enhanced industrial competitiveness of the continent. Its intention is to integrate 55 African economies, many of which are too small to attract substantial investment alone. Once fully implemented, the AfCFTA aims to harness a market of over one billion people and a combined gross domestic product of more than €3 trillion.

¹⁶ Namely, the African Investment Facility (AfIF) and the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF). In September 2017, the African Investment Facility became an integral part of the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) as the Africa Investment Platform (AIP).

¹⁷ The Guarantee Facility that has been set up addresses five priority areas (or investment windows): 1) sustainable energy and connectivity (renewable and clean energy as well as energy efficiency and sustainable transport connections); 2) affordable finance for micro, small and medium enterprises; 3) agriculture; 4) digitalisation; and 5) sustainable cities.

The strong push observed in recent years in the EU's development policy towards engaging and working more closely with the private sector is a response to both the challenges of mobilising additional financial resources for development, and the booming economic opportunities in African markets. In that respect, the approach and the mechanisms put in place by the EU increasingly seek to link European and African investment and trade interests.

2.2. Addressing root causes of irregular migration

Migration is another topic that has gained increasing prominence in the EU's development policy framework and its relations and cooperation with Africa.

2.2.1. The growing impact of the EU's migration policy on development cooperation

In May 2013, a Communication on *"Maximising the development impact of migration"* sought to strengthen the development-migration nexus under both the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (European Commission 2011b) and the EU's development policy. The Commission proposed a broadened approach which gave greater attention to South-South flows, effective integration of migration into national development and poverty reduction plans as well as the inclusion of refugees and other displaced persons in long-term development planning.

However, in 2015, as several European member states faced a sharp increase in irregular migration flows, the Commission presented a new Communication on **A comprehensive and cross-cutting European Agenda on Migration** (European Commission 2015b). The aim was to improve the management of migration in all its aspects, including immediate actions to address the current crises and long-term measures. It provided a renewed approach to migration that also covered relations with countries outside the EU and showed the new involvement of the EEAS with a broader scope of tools (Faure et al 2015).

The growing impact of the EU's migration policy on development cooperation can be noted in the emergence of the concept of "addressing the root causes of irregular migration" which has arguably become the new mantra in the EU development policy discourse. The expression is broad in scope and easily links with many other EU development policy objectives (such as poverty reduction, boosting jobs and growth, strengthening resilience to conflicts and climate change). This policy shift is based on the assumption that greater investment in development assistance and addressing the assumed "root causes" (poverty, instability, etc.) of irregular migration will provide an incentive for people to stay where they are and avoid people taking dangerous journeys to Europe. This goal was increasingly evoked in the EU's development policy to respond to a strong domestic political pressure for action. Yet, the evidence on the link between development aid and curbing of migration is limited and debated (Knoll and Sherriff 2017).

2.2.2. Strengthening cooperation with Africa to address common migration challenges

To complement the EU's external action on migration, and in line with the EU Global Strategy, the European Commission and the HR/VP set out a new **Migration Partnership Framework** (European Commission 2015c) with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration, in June 2016. It is specifically aimed at African countries and sets up a reinforced EU approach on migration cooperation combining immediate and longer-term measures and involving a mix of political, aid and security engagements.

The Partnership Framework is unequivocal about using development aid through positive and negative incentives to ensure cooperation on migration, notably on return and readmission. This approach presented a shift away from the EU's established development principles that focus aid on needs and capacities to reduce poverty (Castillejo 2017). First agreements (named "migration compacts") were concluded at the end of 2016 with Jordan and Lebanon, followed by Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali and Ethiopia, as well as Tunisia and Libya. The European Commission published five specific progress reports on the Partnership

Framework between October 2016 and September 2017; no progress report has been made public since. The latest progress report on the European Agenda on Migration mentions the need for “deepening partnerships with third countries to become a fully-fledged part of long-lasting relationships” (European Commission 2019b).

2.2.3. Establishing an Emergency Trust Fund for Africa

The **‘Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa’** (EUTF) was launched at the Valletta Summit in 2015. Originally, it was intended to finance the EU’s Sahel Action Plan adopted in April 2015. However, as irregular migration was generating a political crisis in Europe, the Trust Fund’s focus shifted towards bringing stability and addressing the root causes of destabilisation, displacement and irregular migration in Africa. The EUTF aims to do so “by promoting resilience, economic and equal opportunities, security and development and addressing human rights abuses”, in three vast and very different regions: the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and Lake Chad, and North Africa.

To achieve these objectives, four broad types of interventions can be funded by the Trust Fund:

1. Economic programmes, with a focus on employment creation, particularly for youth and women, and the reintegration of returnees;
2. Resilience projects, geared to improving food security and to providing services for local communities and refugees;
3. Migration management, including fight against irregular migration and smuggling, return, readmission, international protection and legal migration;
4. Governance and security, including interventions in the fields of rule of law, security and development, border management and conflict prevention systems.

The EUTF rapidly mobilised €1.8 billion, drawing massively from the reserves and regional programmes of the European Development Fund (EDF). The expectation by the Commission that EU member states would match it with an additional €1.8 billion was not met (Herrero Cangas and Knoll 2016). Several EU member states have however contributed substantial funds to the EUTF, with Germany (€225 million) and Italy (€123 million) providing the largest contributions by far, compared to proportionally low contributions by France (€9 million) and the UK (€11.9 million) (EUTF 2020). The Netherlands contributed €26.4 million. The EU has significantly increased funding for migration-related issues via the EUTF, especially for origin and transit regions for migrants.

2.3. Furthering the framework for peace and security - development nexus

As highlighted above, peace and security are a key pillar in the EU Global Strategy which states that security in Europe is strongly linked to peace in neighbouring and surrounding regions, including North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The new European Consensus on Development also establishes “peace” as one of its five focus areas. The EU has been intensifying its work over the past decade in pursuit of peace and security in its development policy, including in the framework of its relations with Africa, both at continental and regional level.

This increased focus on peace and security in EU development policy can be explained by an increase in violent conflicts in Africa and in the EU’s Neighbourhood since 2014. Sub-Saharan Africa has seen an increase in violence since 2010 and in 2016, four of the ten most lethal conflicts in the world were situated in Africa (Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan) (EUISS 2017). The growing EU investment in peace and security is thus not surprising given the emerging sources of tensions and conflict in its immediate vicinity as well as in countries that are “neighbours of the neighbours”. The instability these conflicts create is also

increasingly felt at the EU's borders (e.g. through unprecedented levels of forced displacement) (Sherriff et al 2018).

2.3.1. Towards an integrated approach to external conflicts and crises

The EU has gradually addressed global instability and fragility in a holistic way, noting the importance of deploying all relevant policies, players and tools in a well-coordinated manner.

In 2013, the European Commission and the HRVP adopted a joint Communication on the **EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crises** (European Commission 2013a) to make more strategic use of EU tools and instruments. The so-called Comprehensive Approach established as a guiding principle the joined-up deployment of EU instruments and resources when dealing with situations of crisis and conflict. It also highlighted the shared responsibility of EU actors and member states, emphasising that the engagement of member states is a prerequisite for success. In 2018, the Council Conclusions on an **Integrated Approach to External Conflict and Crisis** (Council of the European Union 2018) called for a more holistic and coherent EU conflict response, stressing the need to invest more in conflict prevention and mediation and introducing a focus on stabilisation efforts.

In June 2013, with the finalisation of its '**Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries 2013-2020**' (European Commission 2013b), the EU stepped up its efforts to build resilience in crisis prone countries. In June 2017, the Joint Communication on a Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action (European Commission 2017d) recognised the need to move away from crisis containment to a more structural, long-term non-linear approach to vulnerabilities, with an emphasis on prevention. This requires a tight integration of efforts by EU political, development and humanitarian actors.

In June 2016, the HRVP and Commission published a Joint Communication on Elements for an **EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform** (European Commission 2016b). In December 2017, an amendment (European Union 2017) to the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) was approved to add an element of Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (European Commission 2015d) to support partner countries in addressing their security needs and to prevent and manage crises on their own. The amendment allows the European Commission to support military actors in – and with approval from – partner countries, in exceptional circumstances, and only in cases when the military contributes to a development objective.

2.3.2. EU support to peace and security in Africa

In 2007, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) defined peace and security as one of the eight areas for a specific EU-Africa partnership (the Africa-EU Peace and Security Partnership). The intent of this partnership is to support "African solutions for African problems", amongst others by supporting the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

The EU's main instrument to support peace and security in Africa is the **African Peace Facility** (APF). Initially agreed by the European Commission and African leaders at an AU Summit, the APF was established in 2003 within the framework of the Cotonou Agreement and is funded with resources from the intra-ACP budget of the EDF.¹⁸ It is based on the principle of African ownership and supports the African Union and the regional African organisations which have a mandate to promote peace and security. It has supported both African-led peace support operations as well as capacity-building and institutional development activities in the context of the APSA (Deneckere 2019). A small share of the funding also supports Africa-led mediation and conflict prevention initiatives.

¹⁸ The reason for using the EDF for this purpose is that it is not part of the EU's budget, which under the Treaty is prohibited from being used for military expenditure.

Complementary to the continental framework, in 2015 the EU has developed three regional strategies and multi-annual action plans to provide a holistic response to peace and security challenges, in the Sahel (Council of the European Union 2015b), the Gulf of Guinea (Council of the European Union 2015c), and the Horn of Africa (Council of the European Union 2015d). These strategies are characterised by their integrated approach that brings together different foreign policy instruments and stresses the security-development nexus.

In July 2014, the **EU Trust Fund for the Central African Republic** (Bêkou Trust Fund) was created to address the political and security crisis of 2013 in the Central African Republic (CAR). It brought together the EU, as well as France, Germany and the Netherlands. Italy and Switzerland joined the Trust Fund in 2015. The Bêkou Trust Fund is a critical instrument to bridge the gap between humanitarian needs and development in the CAR and to implement the Linking, Relief, Rehabilitation and Development approach.

3. Key on-going policy processes and frameworks

In 2018, the Commission put forward its proposals for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and instruments for the period 2021-2027, emphasising the need for a more ambitious budget and financing instruments that are more streamlined, coherent and flexible. The proposals reflected the Global Strategy's call for development cooperation to become more strategic and aligned with broader EU foreign policy objectives.

In 2018, the Commission also started negotiations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) on the successor to the Cotonou Partnership Agreement after 2020.

3.1. Towards a broad instrument for development and international cooperation in the new EU budget for 2021-2027

In May 2018, the European Commission presented its proposal for an 'EU budget for the future', consisting of a package of proposals to the Council of the EU and European Parliament for the EU's **2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework** (MFF). Negotiations are still on-going and were expected to be closed by the end of 2020. The Commission's proposals are ambitious, particularly on future funding for external action, with a proposed budget of €123 billion under a new Heading 6 called 'Neighbourhood and the World'. This proposal underlines the traction that external action has gained in recent years (Jones et al 2018). If approved, this would correspond to a 13% real increase in budgetary resources for external action, compared to the 2014-2020 commitments.

As part of the proposals, the Commission presented a more streamlined, coherent and flexible financing instrument for EU external action under Heading 6: the new '**Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument**' (NDICI). The mid-term review of the external financing instruments (European Commission 2017e) and the 'Coherence Report' (European Commission 2017f) stressed the need for greater simplification, flexibility and transparency in the current financial architecture, as well as a need for stronger political steering.

The proposed NDICI aims to address these shortcomings by grouping together a number of existing EFIs, including the off-budget European Development Fund (EDF) under which EU assistance to ACP countries is financed. This 'budgetisation' of the EDF could have implications for the level of funding for Sub-Saharan Africa, though Africa would probably not lose out from the new instrument.

3.2. Towards updated EU-ACP and EU-AU partnerships

The EU's position on the EU-ACP partnership after 2020 was reflected in a Joint Communication published in 2016 by the Commission and the HR/VP on **Towards a renewed partnership with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries after 2020**, which sets out different policy options for the future and proposed building blocks for a political partnership with the ACP. The EU's preferred scenario would be to agree with the ACP partner countries on a foundation agreement with common values and interests and facilitating increased cooperation at international level. This should go together with regional tailored partnerships for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, to better address specific regional opportunities and challenges faced.

In December 2017, the Commission presented a recommendation to the Council on negotiating directives to this end. In May and June 2018, both the ACP Group and the EU formalised their respective negotiating mandates on the future agreement and formal negotiations started in October 2018. The EU's negotiating mandate reflected the Commission's preferred approach set out in 2017, notably on the combination of a foundation agreement with three regional partnerships, which the ACP negotiators agreed to pursue in December 2018. Due to some delays in the negotiations, both parties have agreed to extend the Cotonou Agreement to December 2020, with a view to having concluded negotiations by then. December 2020 also coincides with the end point of the 11th European Development Fund.

In 2020, the preparation of a **New comprehensive strategy on Africa** was launched by the European Commission in view of the 6th EU-AU Summit expected to take place in Brussels in October 2020.

4. Conclusion on the EU's development policy commitments

In the first half of the period under review (2013-2015), the 2005 European Consensus on Development and its strong poverty focus framed the EU's development policy. The "Agenda for Change" completed this framework by emphasising the need to concentrate aid on countries most in need, including fragile states, a stronger focus on inclusive and sustainable growth, with priority on social protection, business, agriculture and energy, and a decision to focus on a maximum of three 'focal sectors' per country. These principles and priorities were then reflected in the programming of EU aid for the period 2014-2020, and to a certain extent also in EU funding as is explained in chapter 2.

In 2015, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, as well as the internal and external crises the EU was facing, prompted a review of the EU's strategic framework for international and development cooperation. The Global Strategy (2016) and the New European Consensus on Development (2017) today provide the overall strategic framework of the EU's development policy, with the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs as the main blueprint. An important change is the universal and multidimensional nature of the 2030 Agenda that is much broader than the MDGs.

At the same time, the EU has moved towards a more interest-driven and integrated EU international and development cooperation. Development cooperation objectives and foreign policy objectives are increasingly tied, and the EU's development policy is also increasingly influenced by domestic European concerns. This evolution has been further specified in recent years in a number of thematic approaches of the EU's development policy where EU interests have become more prominent. These priorities have also been fully reflected in the policy frameworks, summits and cooperation priorities with Africa, which have put political objectives such as trade, migration and security at the centre of the partnership. The analysis shows that these recent policy priorities have been further concretised and operationalised in the EU's development cooperation instruments. In order to put these new priorities into practice and to respond quickly to emerging

crises, the EU has set up a number of new modalities and instruments such as the EU trust funds and the External Investment Plan.

The next chapter will look at the extent to which EU aid spending in 2013-2018 has effectively responded to the policy orientations defined in that same period, and through which modalities and instruments.

Chapter 2: Funding patterns

Introduction

The first chapter of this study analysed key features and milestones of the EU's development policy intentions and cooperation priorities with Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) during the period 2013-2018. This chapter assesses the extent to which these policy intentions were reflected in the EU's development cooperation spending and investigates key aspects of the EU's patterns of cooperation, including dominant modalities and the actors involved in aid management. It discusses these observed patterns of cooperation in reference to key development trends in the Sub-Saharan region during the period under review.

The first chapter observed that policy frameworks agreed prior to the 2013-2018 period, specifically the 2011 Agenda for Change, had a significant influence on the programming of the EU's development cooperation with SSA during this period. As a consequence, the allocation patterns analysed in this chapter are in part also strongly determined by decisions prior to the period under review, also since the European Development Fund which – as the largest financial instrument used by the EU in SSA – allows for funds to be disbursed several years after having been committed. Bearing this caveat in mind, a comparison between the EU's intentions and allocation patterns is feasible.

The analysis presented in this chapter is based on available information on the disbursement of funds, which were primarily derived from OECD statistics, annual reports published by the Commission, and the website 'EU Aid Explorer'.¹⁹ Due to the variety of OECD and EU data sources used, the financial figures presented in this chapter use the original currency in which these were reported (resp. US Dollar and Euros) and have not been converted.²⁰

The chapter is structured in four sections: (1) key development trends in Sub-Saharan Africa during 2013-2018; (2) overall geographic and sectoral distribution of EU aid, as well as top recipients and sub-groups of countries; (3) channels (or intermediaries) used for aid delivery; and (4) the modalities used for implementation, with specific attention to budget support, EU-managed trust funds and blended finance.

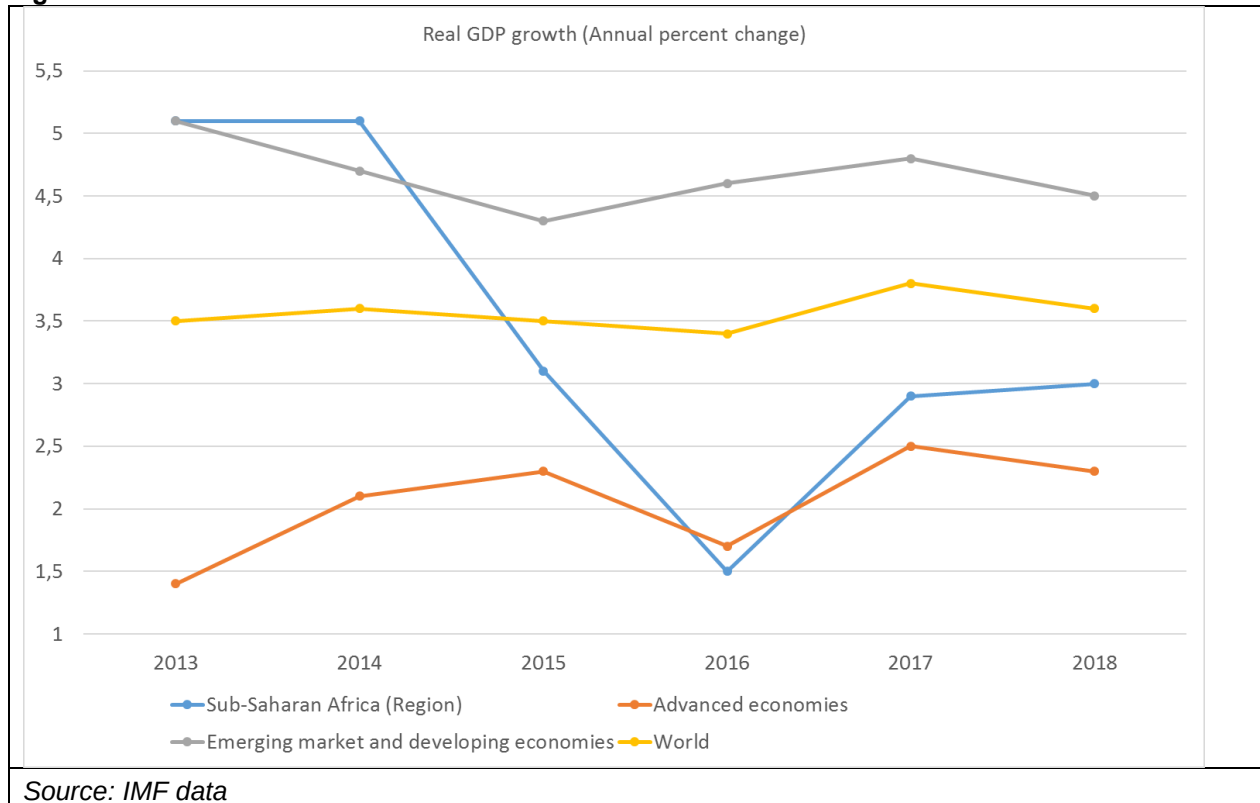
1. Sub-Saharan Africa development trends in 2013-2018

Despite including a high proportion of the world's least developed countries, of which some are classified as 'fragile states', SSA saw continued economic growth during the period of review. The considerable drop in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the sub-period 2014-2016 was linked to falling commodity prices, underlining the volatile nature of the balance of trade between Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the world, primarily the European Union as its major trade partner (World Bank 2015b).

¹⁹ The EU's development cooperation differentiates between aid commitments (expenditure planned during a financial year or longer period) and disbursements (expenditure actually made during a given financial year).

²⁰ See Annex 4 for further information on the sources used, as well as some reflections on EU results reporting.

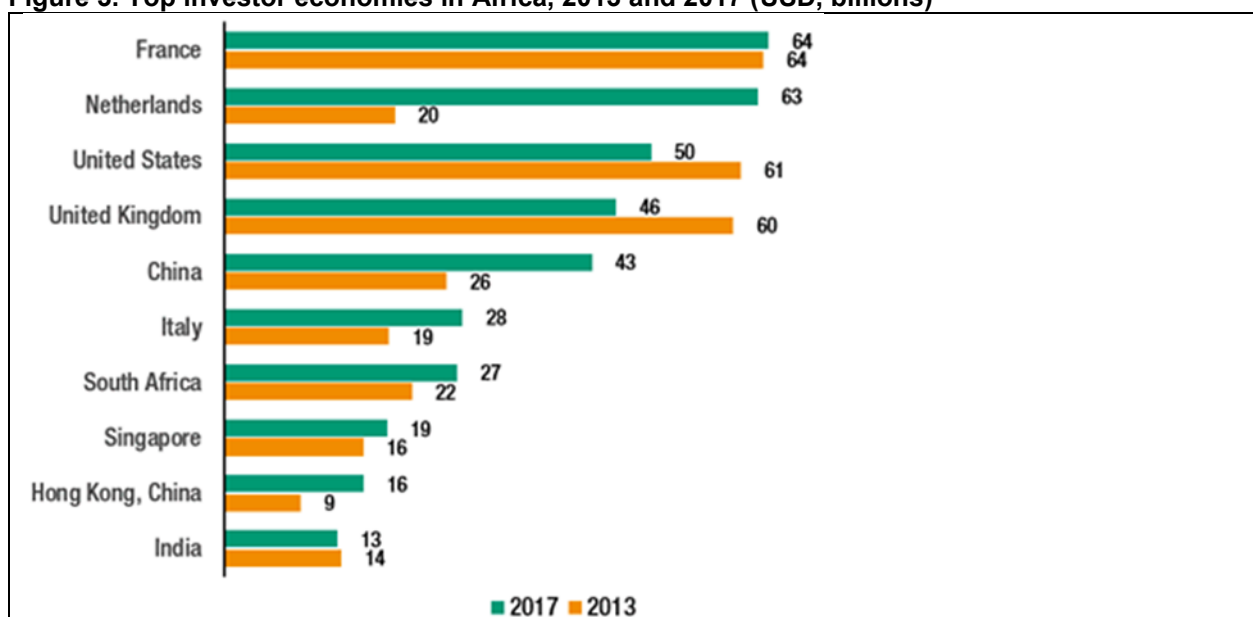
Figure 2. Real GDP Growth 2013-2018



Recent studies suggest that Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP growth contributed to poverty reduction only to a limited extent. As analysed in a detailed IOB study, many SSA-states experience the phenomenon of 'jobless growth' (IOB 2018). Since young people are overrepresented in the group of the 'working poor', African states face challenges both in the quantity and quality of jobs (ILO 2019).

The high GDP growth figures are accompanied by increasing amounts of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). In 2018, the African continent as a whole recorded a 11% increase of investments, whereas the investment to Sub-Saharan Africa rose by 13% with the highest jump recorded in Southern Africa. While African states took their own measures to attract investments (e.g. through the creation of Special Economic Zones), the increased investments reflect expected returns on investment but also an increasingly pronounced geopolitical struggle for influence. This is reflected in increasing FDI levels by various third countries engaging in Africa (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Top investor economies in Africa, 2013 and 2017 (USD, billions)²¹



Source: adapted from UNCTAD 2019

The following table compares the population growth in Sub-Saharan Africa with the total amount of EU aid disbursed, in order to measure the change in EU aid “per capita”. Over the period as a whole, Sub-Saharan Africa’s population increased by 24%, while ODA disbursed increased by 26%. Overall, as a result of the high demographic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, EU aid ‘per capita’ saw a marginal decrease: the SSA-population increased by 27.5% from 2009-2018, while EU aid increased by 26%.

Table 2. Population statistics and EU aid disbursed to Sub-Saharan Africa

Population (million) – World Bank data									
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
845.6	868.9	892.2	917.6	942.9	968.9	995.4	1022	1050	1078
	2.76%	2.68%	2.85%	2.76%	2.76%	2.74%	2.67%	2,74%	2.67%
EU aid disbursed (USD billion, constant prices) - OECD data									
4.2	4.3	4.2	4.6	4.1	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.7	5.3
	2.38%	-2.33%	9.52%	-10.87%	12.2%	-4.35%	4.55%	2.17%	12.7%

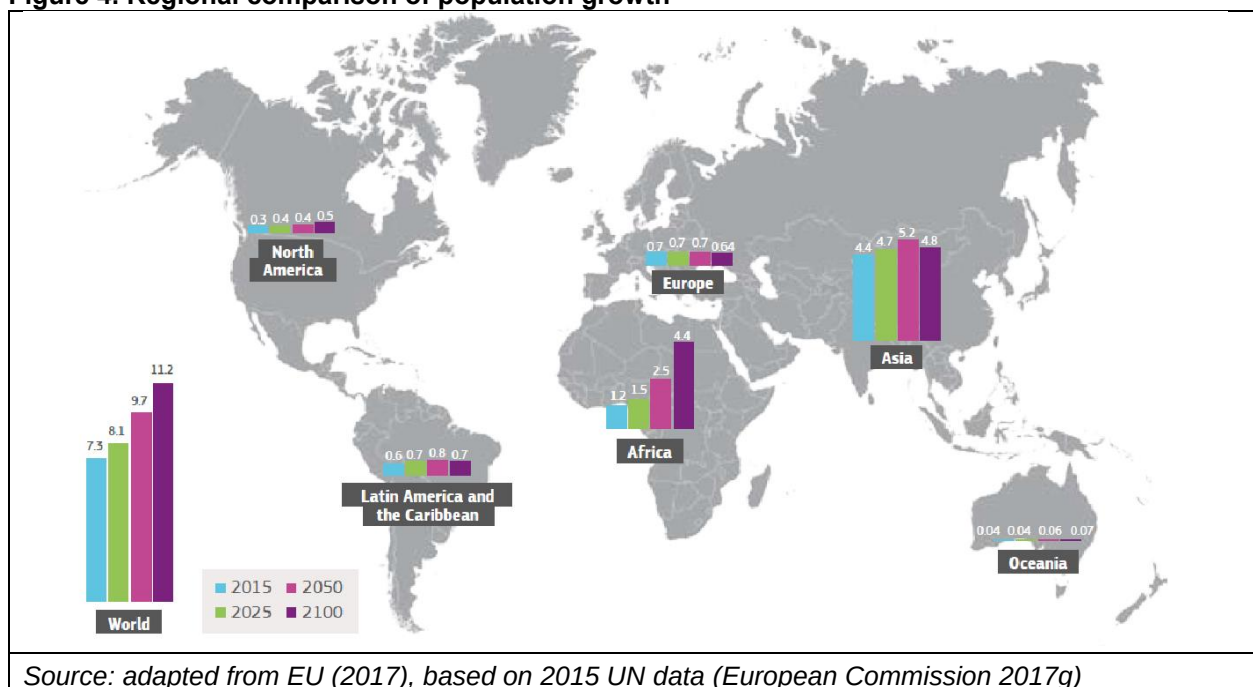
Source: own elaboration, percentages concern relative change from the previous year

The stable EU aid disbursement figures to SSA compare positively to French bilateral aid, which declined during this period. The same goes for the Netherlands, for which bilateral aid to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2018 was 9% lower than the amount disbursed in 2013 (resp. USD 763 million and USD 837 million). On the other hand, both German and British bilateral aid to SSA has increased (OECD 2019).

It is projected that demographic growth will continue to increase in Africa during the remainder of this century, up to the point of almost reaching East Asian levels. It is estimated that Sub-Saharan Africa will need to create 18 million jobs each year until 2035, to accommodate young labour market entrants. For this reason, during the period under review development policies, including those of the EU as analysed in the previous chapter, are increasingly emphasising the importance of decent and sustainable job creation.

²¹ Page 38 of the UNCTAD report notes that “The Netherlands holds the second largest foreign investment stock in Africa, more than two thirds of which is concentrated in only three countries, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa.” Interpreting the strong increase between 2013 and 2017 lies beyond the scope of this report, but research shows that most Dutch FDI concern external investments that foreign multinationals own via Dutch holdings, which can explain the strong changes over time (for more information see Weyzig 2013).

Figure 4. Regional comparison of population growth



2. Overall sectoral and geographic distribution

This section presents evidence on the EU's development cooperation allocation patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa during the period 2013-2018, looking into the overall sectoral distribution and geographic distribution, channels of delivery and the modalities used.

In the period 2013-2018, the EU institutions (European Commission and European Investment Bank) disbursed a total of \$28.5 billion (EUR 23.7 billion) in ODA to Sub-Saharan Africa. The average disbursement was \$4.77 billion per year, which is slightly higher than the \$4.3 billion average for 2010-2012. During this period, the European Union as a whole (EU institutions and 28 member states) disbursed EUR 76.8 billion to 49 Sub-Saharan African states.²² This means that the EU institutions' ratio represented roughly a third (or 31%) of total European Union aid.²³ In the remainder of the chapter, the term 'EU aid' is used to refer to the aid disbursed by the EU institutions.

Reflecting both the unique history of EU development cooperation and its approach to decision-making, the EU institutions do not work with a single budget for financing development cooperation with SSA. Instead, a wide range of external financing instruments – legal bases governing the use of a dedicated budget – are used to fund cooperation, both within or closely associated to the EU's long-term budget framework (see table 1). The following sections will analyse collective disbursement patterns of these instruments in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2.1. Sectoral distribution

EU aid to the 49 Sub-Saharan African countries is spent on a wide variety of areas and sectors. This diversity is inevitable given the EU's broad development policy agenda and the fact that allocation choices need to

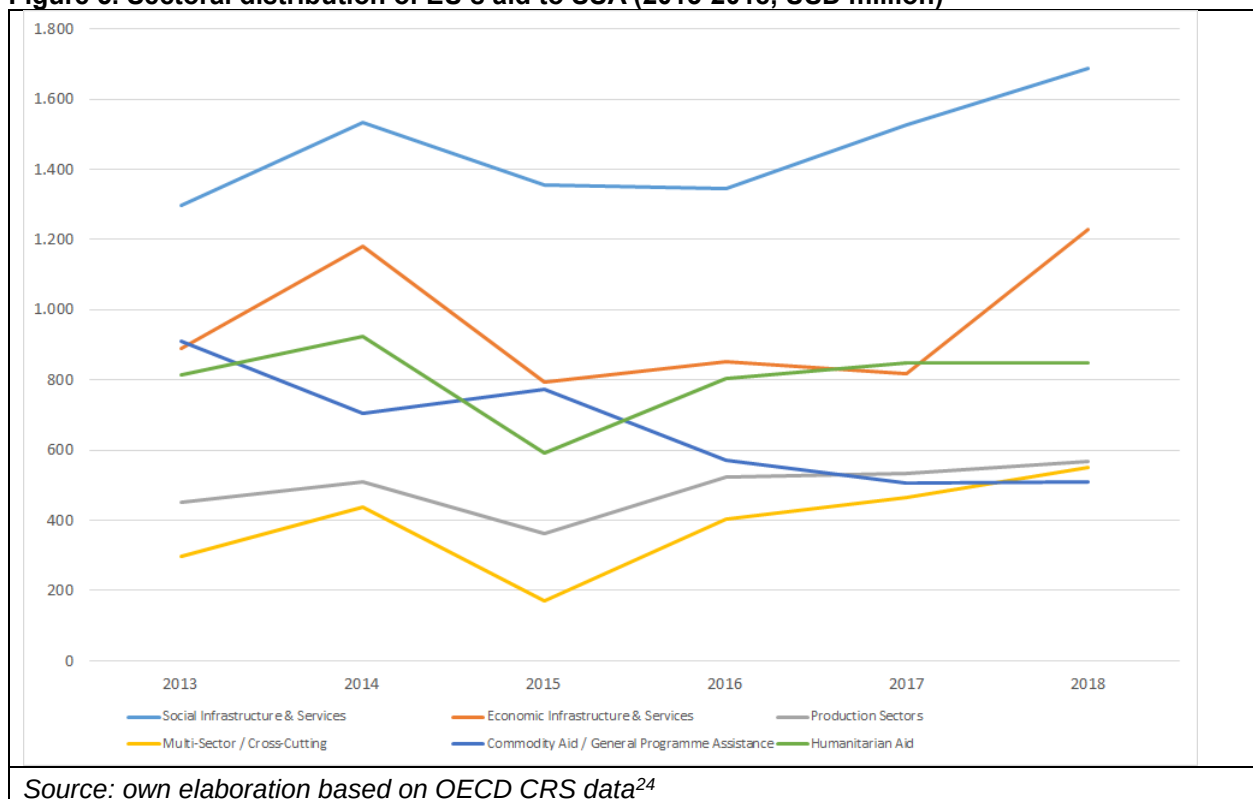
²² Note to the reader: the EU and the UN have different views on the geographical composition of Sub-Saharan African States (respectively 49 and 46 states), with the UN considering the Comoros, Mauritania and Sudan to be part of North Africa.

²³ European Commission. EU Aid Explorer. <https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu>

reconcile the various priorities of the European Parliament, member states, partner countries and interest groups (see chapter 1).

Figure 5 presents the sectoral distribution of the EU's development cooperation with SSA during the period 2013-2018.

Figure 5. Sectoral distribution of EU's aid to SSA (2013-2018, USD million)



The figure shows a considerable reduction in commodity aid and general programme assistance during the period under review, which reflects the gradual shift from general to sector budget support. Economic as well as social infrastructure and services saw the strongest increase in the last two years. Table 3 presents trends within these six wider sector categories.

²⁴ The total 'sector allocable' portion of EU's aid to SSA in the period 2013-2018 ranged between 60% and 69%. Donor administration costs, debt relief and unallocated were left out as main categories for representing minimal amounts (i.e. below 1%).

Table 3. Secondary sector code distribution of EU development aid to SSA (USD million, disbursements)

		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Social Infrastr. & Services	Education	109,997	126,897	142,371	102,817	145,838	150,110
	Health	203,272	312,825	274,775	284,888	323,311	238,776
	Population Policies/Programmes & Reproductive Health	59,033	58,597	58,682	39,895	22,785	8,904
	Water Supply & Sanitation	287,019	308,961	177,197	261,635	220,402	289,212
	Government & Civil Society	554,246	594,938	580,435	575,943	716,625	865,615
	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	81,784	131,541	120,529	79,202	99,055	133,915
Economic Infrastr. & Services	Transport & Storage	573,068	679,788	503,28	552,51	439,883	429,646
	Communications	14,907	5,059	1,945	3,909	4,882	19,867
	Energy	266,625	460,837	259,151	279,005	292,964	296,248
	Banking & Financial Services	28,772	16,056	24,308	5,000	63,762	468,242
	Business & Other Services	7,229	18,587	6,463	12,531	14,474	15,738
Production Sectors	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	325,539	370,536	285,192	421,503	462,021	483,819
	Industry, Mining, Construction	27,086	32,617	20,96	56,249	21,522	32,51
	Trade Policies & Regulations	89,153	107,582	55,195	44,96	46,763	48,061
	Tourism	10,692	0,339	1,364	0,578	2,577	2,448
Multi-Sector / Cross-Cutting	General Environment Protection	111,528	139,704	88,801	95,812	113,788	123,519
	Other Multi-sector	185,765	296,747	80,607	306,153	351,314	427,161
Commodity Aid / General Programme Assistance	General Budget Support	784,382	610,698	641,449	442,545	403,697	338,077
	Development Food Assistance	127,033	94,951	130,44	127,947	101,79	171,119
Humanitarian Aid	Emergency Response	782,142	843,65	575,035	778,238	781,535	784,522
	Reconstruction Relief & Rehabilitation	11,537	14,694	5,159	3,209	8,488	16,849
	Disaster Prevention & Preparedness	19,553	66,027	9,698	22,528	59,838	47,413
Other	Unallocated / Unspecified	16,983	6,952	1,824	1,101	1,606	2,104
Source: own elaboration using OECD CRS data (gross disbursements, millions of Euros)							

Although the OECD uses a list of sectors for aid reporting purposes, these are not further defined which means some subjective choices are made by all donors reporting on ODA. It is not possible to come to a more rigorous assessment of the extent to which the disbursement patterns presented reflect the EU's policy priorities because different sector descriptions are used in the Agenda for Change than the ones listed here (see also annex 4).

2.2. Geographic distribution

The following overview of the regional distribution of development funding to Sub-Saharan Africa is based on the 'EU Aid Explorer' platform.

Top Recipient Continent and Region 2013-2018

With a total amount of €32.77 billion, the African continent as a whole was the main recipient of EU development funding between 2013-2018. More than 70% of this amount (€23.76 billion) went to Sub-Saharan Africa, mostly through bilateral cooperation and additionally through regional and thematic allocations.

When looking over a longer reporting period (2005-2017), aid to Sub-Saharan Africa declined from around a third to nearly a quarter of total EU aid, while an increasing share of EU aid is going to other regions, including Europe (Turkey in particular) as well as the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood. Yet, in absolute terms the volume of aid to Sub-Saharan states has remained reasonably stable over time, from €3.5 billion in disbursements in 2005 to between €4.1 and €4.6 billion during the period under review. However, the declining percentage shows that this growth was outpaced by the EU's development policy engagement in other parts of the world (see table 4).

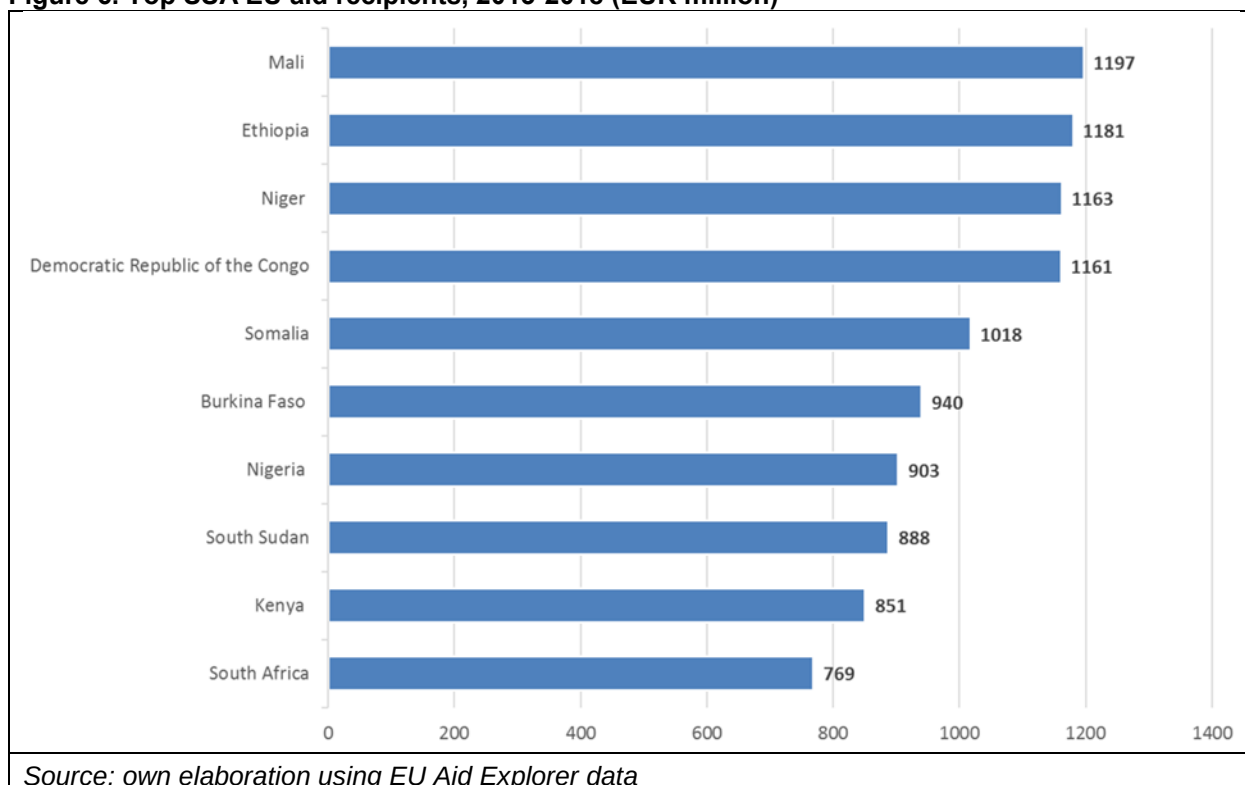
Table 4. EU Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa as a percentage of total EU aid

	Total EU aid disbursed	EU aid disbursed to SSA	EU aid to SSA as % of total aid disbursed
2005	9.549,880	3.570,081	37.38%
2006	10.417,788	3.654,800	35,08%
2007	10.559,230	3.913,389	37,06%
2008	11.037,417	4.229,285	38,32%
2009	11.577,821	4.226,494	36,51%
2010	11.615,893	4.341,017	37,37%
2011	15.550,810	4.216,369	27,11%
2012	16.755,072	4.690,327	27,99%
2013	15.194,932	4.141,872	27,26%
2014	16.198,484	4.652,603	28,72%
2015	16.106,343	4.189,126	26,01%
2016	19.198,101	4.635,934	24,15%
2017	18.706,086	4.699,116	25,12%
2018	19.664,049	5.393,876	27,43%

Source: own elaboration using OECD CRS data, gross disbursements in USD million

The following diagram shows the top recipient countries in Africa during the period of the study.

Figure 6. Top SSA EU aid recipients, 2013-2018 (EUR million)



The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Somalia, and Ethiopia have consistently been among the top ten SSA recipients of EU ODA over the last 6 years. A comparison with the EU's top ten SSA recipients in 2004-2005 shows an increasing focus on West Africa (Nigeria being a notable 'new entry') and a corresponding decline in aid to Southern Africa (e.g. Zambia leaving the top ten). The relatively small differences between the top ten recipients, especially the top four, can be put into perspective when compared to the top EU aid recipients overall. Turkey received more than tenfold the amount disbursed to SSA top recipient Mali. The aid disbursed to Turkey was four times the size of EU aid to runner-up Morocco, and over half of the €23.76 billion disbursed to Sub-Saharan states altogether during the same period.²⁵

While the above diagram shows only minor differences between the amounts of aid received by the top four recipients Mali, Ethiopia, Niger and the Democratic Republic of the Congo over the period under review, the following graph demonstrates that there were in fact strong fluctuations in the amount of funds the individual countries received from year to year.

²⁵ For further information on the overall distribution of EU aid, refer to the most recent DAC Peer Review as published in 2018 (DAC 2018).

Table 5. Top ten EU aid recipients in Sub-Saharan Africa (2013-2018)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	average disbursement per year
Ethiopia	118,662	247,085	172,744	350,059	218,235	273,226	230,002
Mali	262,653	271,065	156,147	254,755	210,439	210,439	227,583
Niger	162,551	229,228	235,246	238,104	241,342	239,203	224,279
DRC	297,660	208,460	213,321	220,474	182,721	217,932	223,428
Burkina Faso	181,073	175,003	195,843	162,695	187,542	196,779	183,156
Kenya	227,272	183,770	136,051	157,654	169,461	109,896	164,017
South Africa	151,196	174,581	275,826	111,144	132,662	132,656	163,011
Tanzania	102,204	92,855	132,462	104,107	134,105	165,152	121,814
Sudan	105,469	89,253	66,643	97,654	112,771	166,654	106,407
Mozambique	115,371	101,817	87,337	99,729	93,946	65,484	93,947

Source: own elaboration using OECD CRS data (gross disbursements, USD million)

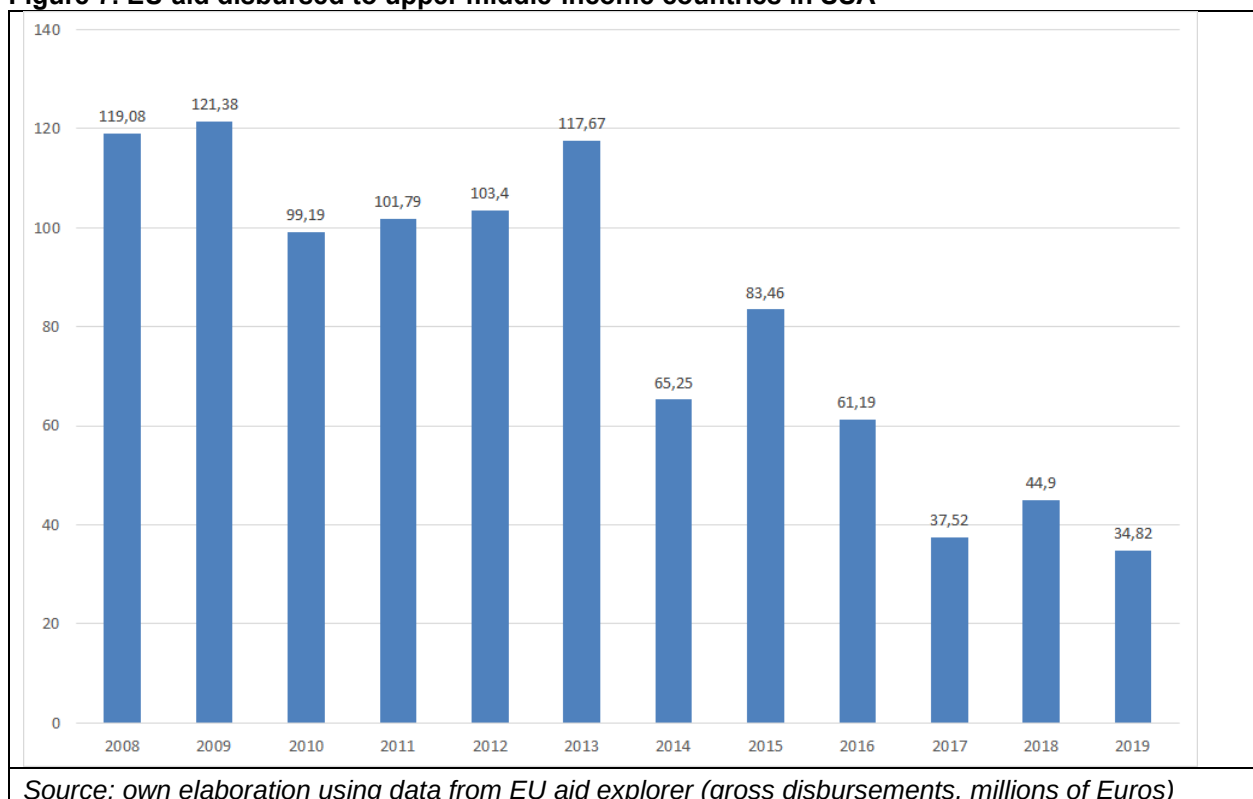
Cooperation with Least Developed Countries and Fragile States

The 2005 European Consensus on Development stated that the EU would “continue to prioritise support to the least developed and other low-income countries (LDCs and LICs) to achieve more balanced global development”. Similarly, with the Agenda for Change, in addition to prioritising development support for Europe’s neighbourhood, it was decided to continue to support LDCs in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere and to reduce bilateral aid to economically more advanced developing countries.

Though this was not spelled out in the document, the application of this so-called ‘differentiation’ principle concretely meant a decision to phase out bilateral cooperation to upper middle-income countries (UMICS), which for instance meant ending such cooperation in several Latin American states. As parties to the CPA, which guaranteed bilateral cooperation for the duration of the agreement, UMICS in Sub-Saharan Africa (Botswana, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Namibia, Mauritius) received much smaller aid grants under the 11th EDF than under its predecessor in the period 2005-2013. This trend is shown in figure 8. Since the Agenda for Change’s differentiation principle mainly influenced the EDF in terms of the bilateral allocations to Upper Middle-Income Countries (UMICS), which in SSA are small in terms of population size, these figures do not show significant difference with the 75% provided to LDCs under the 9th and 10th EDF (resp. 2000-2007 and 2008-2013).²⁶ In other words, the differentiation principle had significant effects on bilateral EU aid to UMICS, but did not significantly affect the overall percentage of aid disbursed to LDCs in Africa.

²⁶ See the 2013 IOB evaluation of the European Development Fund for further info. The 75% to LDCs figure concerns the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group as a whole.

Figure 7. EU aid disbursed to upper middle-income countries in SSA



The 2017 EU Consensus reiterated the EU's and member states' commitment "to meet collectively the target of 0.15 – 0.20% of ODA/GNI to LDCs in the short term, and to reach 0.20% of ODA/GNI to LDCs within the timeframe of the 2030 Agenda" (UN 2008).²⁷ Out of the 47 states that are listed on the UN list of LDCs, 33 (or 70%) are in Sub-Saharan Africa.²⁸ Among those 33, the African LDCs receiving most EU aid between 2013 and 2018 were Mali, Ethiopia and Niger (see also table 6).

Table 6. EU Aid disbursed to Sub-Saharan African LDCs

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total EU aid to SSA (\$ billion)	3.81	4.14	3.96	4.22	4.28	4.4
Total bilateral EU aid to Sub-Saharan LDCs (\$ billion)	2.78	3.19	2.87	3.31	3.27	3.42
EU aid to SSA LDCs as % of total bilateral EU aid to SSA	72.8%	77%	72.5%	78.3%	76.6%	77.6%

Source: OECD, gross disbursements

Fragile states: The EU has also set priorities for cooperation with so-called fragile and conflict-affected states. Based on the OECD's multidimensional understanding of fragility that distinguishes five interrelated dimensions (OECD 2018a)²⁹, 36 out of 49 Sub-Saharan African states (i.e. 73%) are considered to be fragile on one or more of the five dimensions of fragility. As these countries include large recipients such as Mozambique and Ethiopia, EU aid to SSA includes a strong focus on fragile states (see figure 6).

²⁷ This commitment predates the Consensus and was first agreed upon at the 2008 UN Conference on Financing for Development in Doha:

²⁸ <https://unctad.org/en/Pages/ALDC/Least%20Developed%20Countries/UN-list-of-Least-Developed-Countries.aspx>

²⁹ These dimensions concern political, societal, economic, environmental and security-related fragility.

Some differences can be seen between LDCs and Lower and Upper Middle-Income Countries in terms of modalities and areas of cooperation.³⁰ Whereas in all groups there is a strong focus on general budget support (and thus support to the public sector), LDCs receive more humanitarian aid. While aid to lower middle-income countries focuses on agricultural development, aid to upper middle-income countries on investment and financial services.³¹

3. Delivery channels used in EU-SSA cooperation

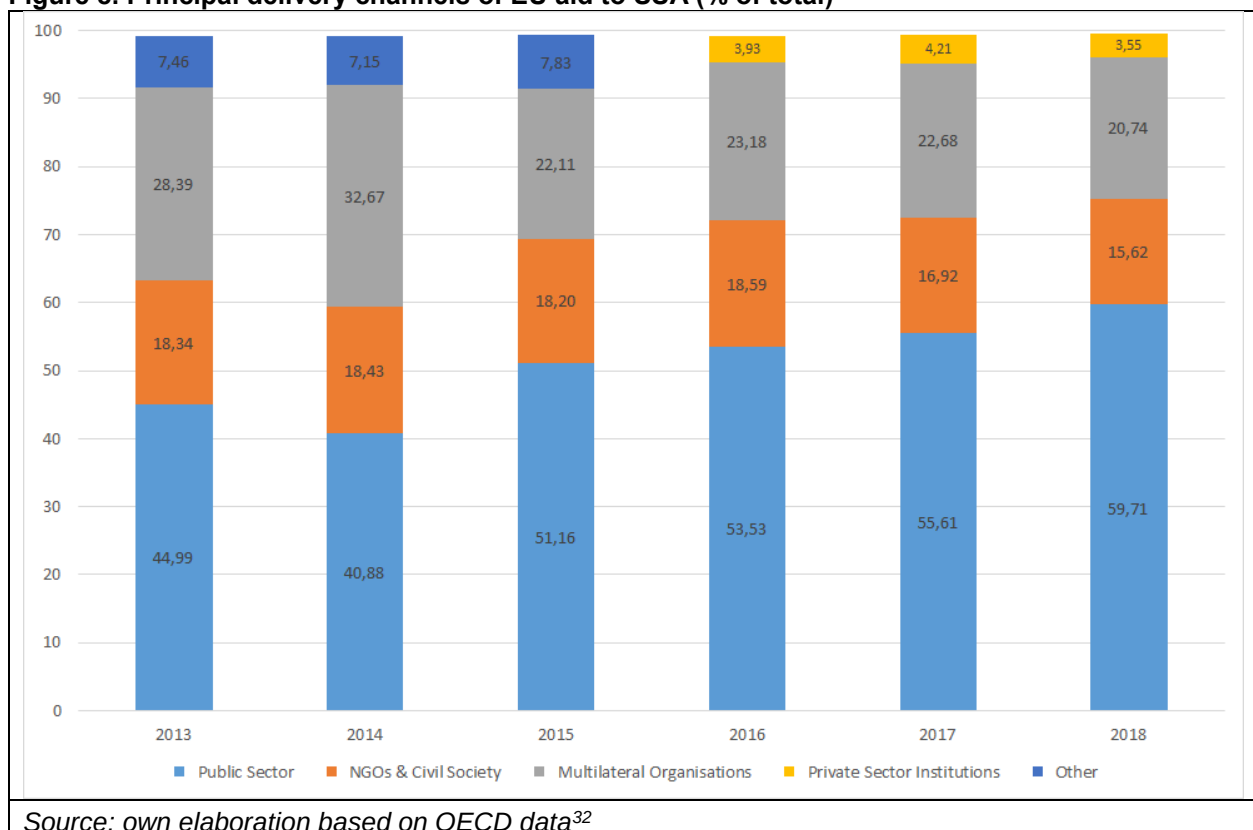
OECD data (see figure 8) for the channels of EU development aid shows that:

- the public sector (which includes both the donor's and the recipient's administration) is the dominant delivery channel, and that its ratio has increased in the period 2013-2018
- aid delivered to and through NGOs & civil society proved to be more or less stable
- aid channelled through multilateral organisations declined. While peaking in 2014, EU support channelled through multilateral organisations represents roughly a fifth of total EU support to Sub-Saharan Africa. The 2018 DAC Peer Review observed that this proportion is in line with the EU's overall development cooperation portfolio, and that the EU does not have a strategy or specific goals for its cooperation with multilateral organisations (OECD 2018b).
- a significant portion of cooperation from 2013-2015 was categorised as 'other' a term which according to the DAC statistical reporting directives "includes any other implementers that cannot be placed in another channel category" (DAC 2018). This 'other' category disappeared in more recent years. Since the EU reported no expenditure on the private sector channel before 2016 and subsequently no expenditure on 'other', it is assumed that the expenditure is related and reflects a change in aid reporting practices. A detailed look at activities reported under 'other channels' in 2015 furthermore shows a combination of election observation projects, technical cooperation and EIB loans in the field of energy.

³⁰ Top recipient LMICs during the period under review: Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Cameroon; Top recipient UMICs: South-Africa, Mauritius and Namibia.

³¹ These comparisons were made using the EU aid explorer website. European Commission. EU Aid Explorer. https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/content/homepage_en

Figure 8. Principal delivery channels of EU aid to SSA (% of total)



The European Investment Bank

Although the large majority of EU aid to Sub-Saharan Africa was managed by the European Commission, around 5% (€1.1 billion out of €23.7) was disbursed by the European Investment Bank (EIB). This ratio is much lower than the share of EU aid disbursed by the EIB globally during 2013-2018, which represented almost a quarter of EU aid (€20.6 billion of the €88.1 billion disbursed in this period) (DAC 2018).³³

The EIB's operations in Sub-Saharan Africa are governed under the CPA, which created a dedicated investment facility for the EIB. This facility was budgeted at €3.6 billion and concerns a revolving fund managed by the Bank, with reflows re-invested in new projects.³⁴ In 2013, €500 million was added to this facility with the specific aim of impact financing, which the EIB defines as *"private sector projects that promise high development impact but which we could not otherwise support due to the risks involved."*³⁵ In addition to the facility, the CPA provided the EIB with €1.2 billion for technical assistance and interest subsidies, while finally €6.2 billion from the EIB's own resources were made available with the backing of a comprehensive guarantee provided by EU member states (Bending et al 2016).

This overview of funding shows that the aforementioned €1.1 billion in EIB managed ODA represents the tip of the proverbial iceberg relative to the Bank's full operations in Sub-Saharan Africa which totalled €11.8 billion in the period 2000-2016 for 36 SSA-states. 40% of the EIB's overall operations (ODA and non-ODA) was spent in the financial sector, 25% went to the energy sector, 11% each to water and sanitation and industry and agriculture and 14% to transport and other sectors (Bending et al 2016: 166). This distribution broadly corresponds to the EU's development cooperation priorities for the period under review.

³² Data on public-private partnerships and teaching institutions were not included as these represented small amounts, averaging around slightly above 0% of total.

³³ European Commission. EU Aid Explorer. https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/content/homepage_en

³⁴ The term reflow refers to developing country loan repayments.

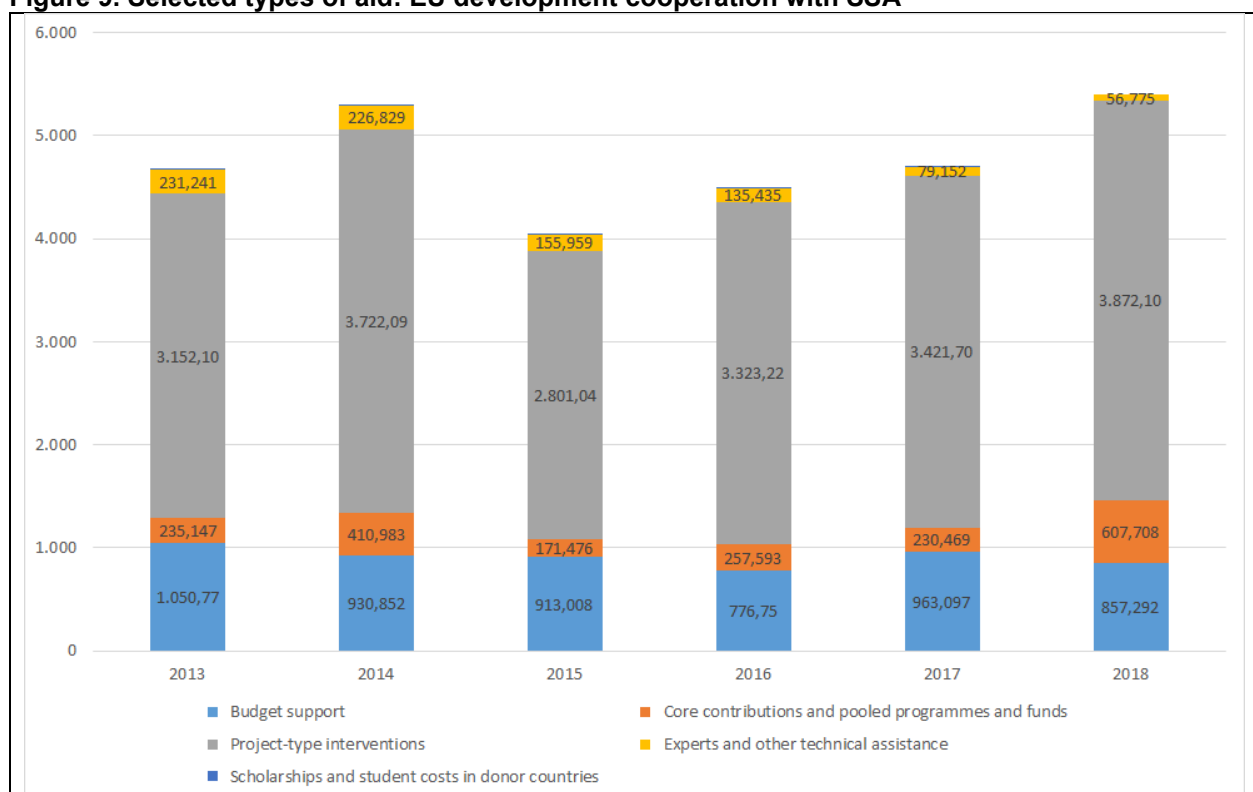
³⁵ EIB. Impact Finance. <http://reports.eib.org/the-eib-outside-the-eu-2017/impact-finance/>

4. Modalities used in EU-SSA cooperation

Overall trends during the period under study

The statistical annexes of the EU's annual reports include information on the four 'aid mechanisms' the EU uses: 'projects', 'sector budget support', 'general budget support', and 'other mechanisms'. The data in these annexes are however not disaggregated for the regions in which the EU is active. For this reason, the below analysis uses OECD data on the modalities of EU cooperation (in the OECD's jargon: types of aid) (see figure 9).

Figure 9. Selected types of aid: EU development cooperation with SSA



Source: own elaboration based on OECD statistics³⁶, gross disbursements in USD millions

The OECD figures show that all types of aid fluctuated slightly from year to year between 2013 and 2018. **Budget support remains a key modality and a specific feature of the EU's approach to development cooperation** – in particular since EU member states have all but completely phased out the use of this aid modality in their bilateral aid portfolios, yet still tacitly support its use by the EU and the World Bank. When comparing the average distribution for 2013-2018 with the three years preceding the period under review, the shift from budget support to project support becomes more visible - while all other types of aid are shown as less significant (see table 7).

³⁶ The categories (a) administrative costs not included elsewhere, (b) debt relief, (c) scholarships and (d) other in-donor expenditures were not included in this diagram as they represented negligible amounts.

Table 7. Types of aid compared: 2010-2012 vs 2013-2018

	Average 2010-2012	Average 2013-2018
Budget support	25.52%	22.57%
Core contributions and pooled programmes and funds	5.42%	4.24%
Project-type interventions	63.14%	69.25%
Experts and other technical assistance	4.84%	3.86%
Scholarships and student costs in donor countries	0.08%	0.08%
Debt relief	1.00%	n.a.
<i>Source: own elaboration based on OECD CRS data (gross disbursements)</i>		

More specifically, data shows that EU general budget support has increasingly been replaced by sector budget support. This was also the case in SSA where general budget support fell from \$694.3 million in 2013 to \$403.7 million in 2017, while sector budget support increased from \$235.8 million in 2013 to \$559.4 million.³⁷

Overall, Sub-Saharan Africa received 41% of the total budget support provided by the EU institutions to developing countries in 2018 making it the biggest recipient of this type of aid (European Commission 2019c). The size of the average budget support contract provided in Sub-Saharan Africa (some €70 million) was higher than in any other region.

Trust Funds

The Treaty on the European Union, which entered into force in December 2009, created the legal possibility for the EU to manage multi-donor funds, which thus far were exclusively managed by the World Bank and UN bodies. In 2013, the EU's Financial Regulation created the legal basis that permitted the Commission to create European Union Trust Funds.³⁸ EU Trust Funds are composed of funds pooled from one or more financing instruments of the EU budget or the European Development Fund, together with contributions from one or more other donors, including member states and non-EU donor countries. The legal justification for resourcing these funds using existing EU instruments mainly lies in the Trust Funds' assumed ability to attract additional funding.³⁹ EU Trust Funds for emergency or post-emergency action can be implemented either by the Commission or by entrusting budget implementation tasks to specific other bodies, such as NGOs or aid implementing agencies in EU member states.⁴⁰

The Bêkou Trust Fund. The Bêkou trust fund was established in July 2014 to address the political and security crisis of 2013 in the Central African Republic. The main financial contribution is provided from the EDF and additional bilateral contributions are provided by France, Germany, the Netherlands, and, since

³⁷ OECD. Creditor Reporting System (CRS). <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=CRS1#>

³⁸ Reports for 2016-2018 can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/content/about_en

³⁹ It should be noted that the largest EUTF for Africa was predominantly resourced through reserves of the European Development Fund. Due to the specific nature of this inter-governmental fund, unspent resources do not flow back to the EU member states' national budget, but are instead accumulated in reserves until they are used up. Contrary to the regular programming of the EDF, which on paper requires to be co-decided by the EU and its counterparts based in African, Caribbean and Pacific states or, in the case of the intra-ACP budget, their Brussels-based representatives, the use of the EDF reserves can be decided solely by the EU and its member states.

⁴⁰ More information on the key partners involved in implementing the EUTF can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/our-partners_en

2015,⁴¹ Italy and Switzerland.⁴² The Bêkou TF supports the Central African Republic in the transition from emergency response recipient to long-term development cooperation (reconstruction, state building, re-establishing economic activity and security of supplies). It also provides relief to affected neighbouring countries.

A total of €64 million was disbursed in 2014 on top of the EU's humanitarian assistance through the EU budget in 2012 (€84.5 million) (European Commission 2014c). Following this careful start, resources nearly quadrupled in five years to €243 million in 2019. The same year also saw a decision to extend the trust fund until the end of 2020, with the EU, France, Germany and Switzerland pledging a total of around €55 million for this period.

According to a 2019 press release, the Bêkou Trust Fund “has launched 17 programmes, which have already provided tangible results for half of the population of the Central African Republic” (European Commission 2019d). The health sector represents the largest share of payments (42%), followed by rural development and peacebuilding and conflict prevention projects.

*Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa*⁴³. The EUTF was launched in 2015 at the Valletta Summit on Migration to address the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons on the African continent (European Commission 2015e). In 2015, 25 member states and Norway and Switzerland contributed €81.3 million to the fund; total contributions amounted to €1.8 billion (including those from EU financing instruments, predominantly the EDF reserves) (European Commission 2015e). In 2018, the EUTF stood at €4.5 billion with the main share (89%) provided by the EU institutions and 11% provided by member states and other donors (EUTF 2020).

The EUTF focuses on the most fragile states and popular migration routes in Africa: Sahel & Lake Chad region (40% of contributions), Horn of Africa (40% of contributions), North Africa (20 % of contributions). In 2019 it benefitted 26 African states.⁴⁴

Since 2018, programmes are defined according to six priority areas:⁴⁵

1. return and reintegration;
2. refugee management (Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework);
3. completing progress on the securitisation of documents and civil registry;
4. anti-trafficking measures;
5. essential stabilisation efforts in the Horn of Africa (in particular in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia) and in the Sahel/Lake Chad region;
6. supporting migration dialogues (EU 2020).

The EUTF has its own governance structure, which includes a Board structure where recipients may observe but do not take part in decision-making, and where EU member states have greater control over funding decisions. This choice was merited by the focus on quick results and the ‘emergency’ setting of the EUTF. While the dominant modality used remains project support, the EUTF shows an increased use of

⁴¹ Annual Reports 2014-2017 available in French only https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/countries/central-african-republic/eu-bekou-trust-fund_en

⁴² European Commission. International Cooperation and Development, Where we work. https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/countries/central-african-republic/eu-bekou-trust-fund_en

⁴³ Monitoring reports on different regions: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/content/results-monitoring-and-evaluation_en

⁴⁴ EU Commission Press Release 2015; EUTF Annual Reports 2016-2018; EUTF for Africa Fact Sheet 2019

⁴⁵ Initially it was four areas as defined in the Annex to the founding document - https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/eueta/files/original_constitutive_agreement_en_with_signatures.pdf

budget support. Overall, budget support increased from €12 million in 2016 to €71 million in 2018, representing an increase from 7% of disbursements in 2016, to 13% in 2018.⁴⁶

Blended finance

Another key change in the EU's cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period under review was the increased focus on and use of so-called 'blended finance'. The reason for the move towards the use of this type of finance was elaborated in the 2011 Agenda for Change: *"In order to leverage further resources and increase the EU's impact on poverty reduction, new financial tools will be promoted, including blending grants and loans and other risk-sharing instruments. The issues of debt sustainability and proliferation of funds and facilities will be taken into account."* (Council of the European Union 2012).

In the EU's development policy, blended finance is understood as a combination of EU grants with loans or equity from public and private financiers. The grant aspect can be provided in various ways, be it in the form of direct investment grants, interest-rate subsidies or loan-guarantee schemes (Lundsgaarde 2017). The EU's blended finance operations were first organised in the form of regional 'investment facilities' that provide blended finance in different regions, eight in total with one specifically catering to Sub-Saharan Africa. The EU Africa Investment Facility (AfIF) is the second largest regional facility after the Neighbourhood Investment Facility that is twice the financial size of the AfIF (European Commission 2016c).

To give an indication of the support provided, the 2015-2016 annual budget of the AfIF⁴⁷ largely focused on the transport sector (63.5% of total engagement), followed by the energy sector (29.5%). 77% of the budget was used to finance investment grants and 23% for technical assistance. The facility's annual report for 2015-2016 claims that €288.5 million in AfIF grants helped to leverage €2.3 billion (Lundsgaarde 2017).

5. Conclusions on the evolution of EU development spending in Sub-Saharan Africa

The patterns of cooperation analysed in this chapter broadly correspond with the EU's overall intentions for cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period 2013-2018. The EU's wide-ranging set of priorities is partly explained by the collective interests of the 28 member states, those of the European Parliament and the many interest groups associated with its development policy. Furthermore, the variety of EU funding instruments and programming modalities (geographic and thematic funding, trust funds, investment funds and the European Investment Bank) meant that the EU's aid usually went beyond the three priority sectors identified during the programming stage for each country, as called for in the Agenda for Change (OECD 2018c).

Another key trend in funding patterns happened in 2015 and 2016 and concerned an increasing shift towards migration-related expenditure and blended finance. They respectively concern the creation of an Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and an External Investment Plan. While different in nature and governance structures, both were resourced from the reserves of the European Development Fund. The new initiatives brought along a stronger policy focus on security/stability and migration-related expenditure as well as on the promotion of blended finance, priorities that were later reflected in the new European Consensus on Development of 2017.

⁴⁶ EUTF Annual Report 2016, 46; EUTF Annual Report 2017, 71; EUTF Annual Report 2018, 47. Monitoring reports on different regions: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/content/results-monitoring-and-evaluation_en

⁴⁷ The ITF was the instrument that covered blending operations over the 2007–2013 financial framework. Following Council and Parliament request to harmonise blending set-ups in the different regions, the AfIF was set up for the 2014–2020 Multiannual Financial Framework.

The data presented in this chapter show that the EU has a predominantly bilateral development cooperation relationship with the 49 SSA states, complemented with regional and continental cooperation. The main focus was on LDCs, whereas aid to UMICs declined in line with the differentiation principle introduced under the 2011 Agenda for Change.

Notwithstanding considerable differences in disbursements from year to year, the predictability of the EU's development cooperation is shown in the patterns of cooperation analysed. Concretely, unlike bilateral donors where stronger variations in support may occur in response to emerging priorities or national politics the EU works with seven-year budget cycles and follows the allocation decisions made at the beginning of each cycle. A change in the Commission's leadership cannot fundamentally change the decisions taken at the beginning of the cycle. In practice, this means that the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development who took office in November 2014, Neven Mimica, was bound by aid allocation decisions made in 2013 for the entire duration of his mandate. For this reason, the Agenda for Change of 2011 was the dominant strategy in determining the regular programming of cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period under the review.

The EU's implementation choices reflect a focus on the project modality, EU-managed trust funds and blended finance, which shows in an increasing use of various intermediaries that include international organisations, EU member states' implementing agencies, development finance institutions and civil society organisations. This trend shows a departure from the previous reporting period, as analysed in the 2013 IOB evaluation of the EDF, where the EU's cooperation portfolio was characterised by a relatively stronger focus on budget support and other types of programme-based approaches, which were directly managed by the EC.

Chapter 3: Results

Introduction

This third and final chapter analyses the evidence on the results accomplished by the EU's development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa. It does so by means of a structured analysis of external strategic level evaluations that were commissioned by the European Commission, reports of the European Investment Bank, as well as special reviews conducted by the European Court of Auditors (ECA). These reports cover various thematic and geographic areas of EU cooperation, including with Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as various instruments and modalities of EU cooperation.

The list of all evaluation reports reviewed for the purpose of this study can be found in Annex 2. To facilitate the readability, the 55 evaluation reports analysed for this study have been numbered and are referred to using their respective numbers in brackets throughout this chapter.

The evaluation evidence is assessed against 10 evaluation questions (see Annex 1) and discussed in relation to the overall development policy priorities set by the Netherlands' government. The evaluation reports were analysed using a structured data collection grid (more information on the methodology and analytical grids can be found in Annexes 4 and 5).

The evidence is assessed according to the following six criteria (see Annex 1 for further details):

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Impact and sustainability
- Policy coherence for development
- Complementarity
- Efficiency

The evidence furthermore zooms on the following eight Dutch priorities vis-à-vis European development cooperation and working methods (see table 8 and figure 10):

- Private sector development
- Rural and agricultural development
- Social development
- Donor cooperation
- Gender as a key cross-cutting theme
- Budget support
- Political dialogue.

The chapter is structured in four sections. First of all, an introductory section describes and discusses the Netherlands' priorities in more detail, as well as the evidence base and the analytical approach. The second section presents the evaluation evidence gathered from the 55 evaluation reports in relation to the Netherlands' eight priority goals and working methods. The third section presents findings in relation to horizontal considerations that the evaluations also looked into. A final section presents an appreciation of the evaluation evidence as well as under-evaluated areas, discusses the findings and seeks to identify key factors that explain the (in)effectiveness as observed.

1. Dutch priorities vis-à-vis EU development policy, evaluation evidence and approach

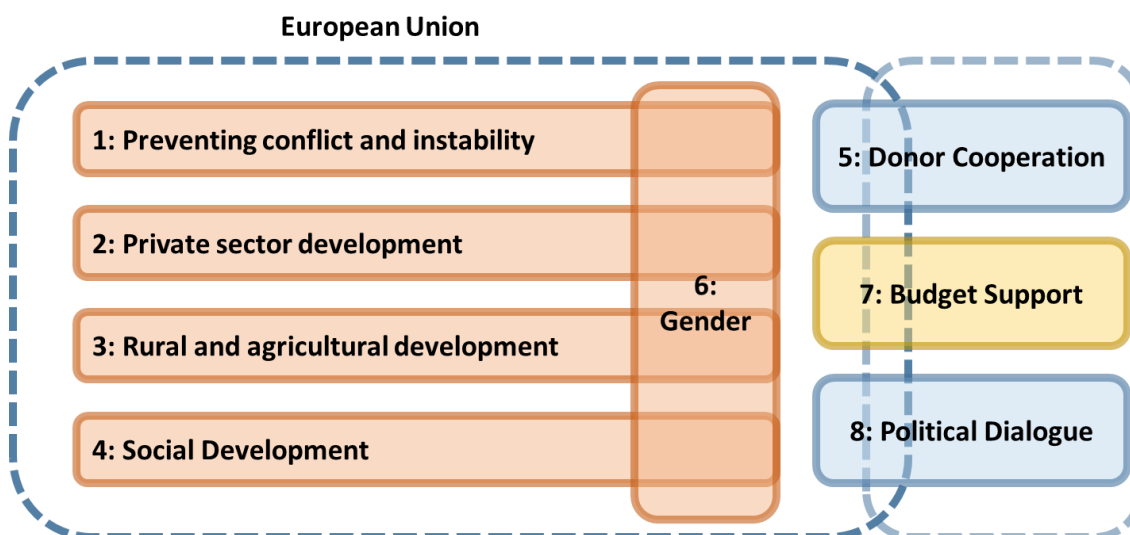
The Dutch priorities were previously reported to the Netherlands' Parliament as guiding the government's engagement in the EU, though they do not identify specific priorities vis-à-vis cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa. The following table presents and further defines the five policy goals and three working methods concerned, based on recent government strategies and communications with Parliament.

Table 8. Eight EU development policy goals and working methods of the Netherlands' government

1: Preventing conflict and instability	- Including EU support for the African Peace and Security Architecture
2: Private sector development	- Trade-related assistance and infrastructure development - External Investment Plan: government welcomes the stronger focus on investment promotion
3: Rural and agricultural development	- Including climate action - Also a key focus of the EUTF, which the Dutch government supports
4: Social development	- Including education, both the Netherlands and the EU support the Global Partnership for Education and the Education Cannot Wait Initiative - Water and sanitation - Health and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)
5: Donor cooperation	- Working better together, progress in joint programming engagement - The Netherlands strives for complementarity between bilateral and EU geographic programming choices
6: Gender as a key cross-cutting theme	- EU-UN Spotlight Initiative launched in 2017, focused on gender-based violence and SRHR - Education for girls prioritised - Availability of gender-disaggregated project data in EU development cooperation
7: Budget support	- Potential synergies when combining budget support with other approaches - EU budget support can only be effective if accompanied with a critical dialogue, clear criteria and concrete risk mitigation measures - Criteria should become more demanding and strict, and judged with a political (i.e. not technocratic) lens
8: Political dialogue	- The Netherlands seeks strong policy dialogue with its partner countries, for which the EU provides one channel
Sources used: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018). <i>Investing in Global Prospects</i>. https://www.government.nl/documents/policy-notes/2018/05/18/investing-in-global-prospects Government of the Netherlands (2018). <i>Kabinetsinzet EU ontwikkelingssamenwerkingsbeleid</i>. Kamerbrief BZDOC-403887767-108. 21 December 2018. Den Haag: Rijksoverheid Government of the Netherlands (2019). <i>Jaarlijkse brief over EU ontwikkelingssamenwerking</i>. Kamerbrief BZDOC-1201041128-35. 16 July 2019. Den Haag: Rijksoverheid	

These five policy goals and three working methods concerned differ in their degree of prioritisation in the Dutch development policy overall. They also consist of a mix of topics, cross-cutting issues and process objectives. Some can be pursued by the EU on its own initiative, while others can only be furthered in cooperation with other donors including the EU member states. The following visual representation groups the different topics and guides the approach to analysing EU evaluation evidence in relation to these topics.

Figure 10. Clustering the eight policy goals and working methods



Source: own elaboration based on table 8

Given the large volume of evaluation evidence analysed for this study, the chapter uses a common approach and structure for analysing each policy goal and working method and makes ample use of comparative tables. Key 'takeaways' are summarised at the end of each relevant section.

2. Evaluation evidence in relation to the policy goals and working methods

The main purpose of the analysis presented in this chapter is to determine to what extent the EU's development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa during the period 2013-2018 was effective, specifically in the eight above-mentioned priority areas. The latter can be divided into policy goals (2.1) and working methods (2.2).

2.1. Policy goals

Policy goals include four priority themes (i.e. preventing conflict and instability, private sector development, rural and agricultural development, social development) and gender as a cross-cutting theme.

2.1.1. Priority themes

a. Preventing conflict and instability⁴⁸

Relevance

The EU's peace and security interventions were considered as relevant (31, 34, 35, 36, 38, 48) and have addressed a widely recognised need. They notably sustained the African Union's (AU) ability to respond to peace and security crises on the continent (1, 3). There is consensus that the EU has added value in support of peace and security and especially peace support operations (1).

⁴⁸ The evidence for this section is based on the information provided in eight evaluation reports directly related to peace and stability (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 33, 54, 55), two reviews of strategic evaluations (31, 48) as well as seven geographic/budget support evaluations that addressed these issues (16, 21, 34, 35, 36, 38, 42, 43). Three reports covered periods from 2002 to 2013 while six only covered the early years of the period 2013-2018 (until 2015).

Table 9. Key factors in EU's relevance in preventing conflict and instability

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
• Appropriate needs assessment, in line with the priorities identified and the needs expressed by beneficiary governments, the African Union and Regional Economic Communities (1, 2, 3, 55) • There is a balance between beneficiary countries' needs and priorities and the EU priorities (e.g. in the IcSP) (33, 54) • Relevant and appropriate instruments (e.g. the Békou Trust Fund's integrated humanitarian and development approaches; the African Peace Facility addressed peace and security in Africa and promoted EU policy priorities) (1, 4) • Alignment of EU's interventions with both AU and EU evolving policies and strategies and revision of those as new threats to peace and security emerged (1, 2)	• The absence of a comprehensive analysis of beneficiaries' needs under the EUTF limited the Commission's ability to demonstrate that the right priorities had been identified and that actions approved were the most relevant to address them (5) • Limited investment in conflict analysis or the political economy analysis of the country (31, 34, 36, 48) • Lack of a proper long-term vision and strategy (e.g. on capacity-building for the APSA and the APF) (1, 2) • Very broad objectives and priorities resulting in an EU support that lacked focus (1, 2, 4, 5) • Support not geared to tackling the root causes of conflict but rather to mitigating their consequences or to provision of "classic" development support in a conflict context (31, 42, 43)

Effectiveness

EU development aid in the field of preventing conflict and instability mostly or partially delivered the outputs and results it was meant to achieve (2, 4, 35) in areas like conflict prevention, management and resolution. Furthermore, the capacity of African regional organisations to intervene in conflict management and peacebuilding has been enhanced. Besides, the Commission's support contributed positively to conflict mitigation, stabilisation, reconstruction and rehabilitation through capacity-building initiatives to security forces, demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants, rehabilitation of victims of conflict, among others (31). However, despite improved approaches over the last decade, **effective support to fragile states remains a challenge** (31).

EU support through the African Peace Facility (APF) and to African peace support operations have been key factors in keeping the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) operational. It notably had positive effects on peace and security and contributed to more stability in African crisis regions (1, 2). The **EU Capacity Building (EUCAP)** missions in the Sahel played an important role in strengthening the capacity of the security forces in Niger and Mali and in supporting other activities of the EU and its member states (3). Yet, the European Court of Auditors observed that the information and monitoring systems of the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) did not allow for a comprehensive overview of the results achieved (5). Besides, the EU's support to reforms to improve the financial, operational and institutional capacity of the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) has yielded few results to date (2).

Table 10. Enabling and inhibiting factors for the effectiveness of EU support to preventing conflict and instability

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
Programme-/intervention-related enablers • Relative stability and size of EU regional cooperation (35); reliable and considerable APF funding (1) • Combination of different tools, state building and non-state actors' mobilisation and short- and medium-term approaches (31) • Building on the results of previous actions and consolidating outcomes over time (54) • Quality of the work of the implementers and overall programme management (33, 54)	National context • Lack of absorption capacity of the partner countries (33, 54) • Lack of political commitment by some AU member states • (Challenging) context and the nature of the conflicts (1, 3, 4, 35) Programme-/intervention-related limitations • Lack of an explicit strategic framework that guides efforts to strengthen peace and security architectures and captures EDF and other EFI support (54) • Inadequate management of the support to the APSA and peace support operations (1) • Limited ability of the AU Commission to channel available resources to concrete support actions resulting in minimal APF support arriving on the ground (e.g. for the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram) (1) • Limited funding (due to a shortfall in contributions by the AU member states to the AU budget and the Peace Fund), and the timeliness and predictability of external funding, limiting the APSA's capacity and the effectiveness of institutional support (2, 54) • Unsatisfactory human resources management within the AU (1) • Difficulties in delivering equipment as part of the capacity building measures (due to administrative issues such as delays in procurement; asynchrony of project and procurement cycles) (54) • Knock-on effects of delays on the overall effectiveness and impact (54)

Efficiency

The evaluations pointed to important **operational inefficiencies** that differed across operations. For example, different AU peace support operations were affected by:

- poor communication, bottlenecks in finance, poor recruitment practices and procurement processes, shortage of staff and inefficient management on the AU side
- cumbersome and bureaucratic procedures on the EU side
- lengthy procedures on both sides (even in the case of the Bêkou Trust Fund and the EUTF, which were supposed to be faster)

Operational inefficiencies in the EUCAP Sahel missions were linked to their timeframes: their 2-year mandates and annual budgets and the short secondment of staff did not encourage medium or long-term planning (3). Amidst these critical notes, the **IcSP** was found to be an efficient instrument in the field of preventing conflict, thanks to a lower than average percentage of administrative costs, a satisfactory budget

execution, flexible management and contractual procedures and direct selection of implementing partners. However, the fact that there was no facility to fund small actions, such as conflict analyses or feasibility studies, without a formal decision-making procedure had negative effects on efficiency (33, 54).

Impact and sustainability

It is generally more difficult to provide detailed **evidence at the level of outcomes** than it is of outputs because more fundamental long-term effects take more time to render and have not yet been captured by evaluations (1, 4). It was also hard to **attribute outcomes** solely to EU regional support in Eastern and Southern Africa given the predominance of local drivers of peace and security, the complex institutional setup, the involvement of multiple actors (35). Yet, according to the review of strategic evaluations to assess the European Consensus on Development, EU development aid had a positive impact on peace and security during the period under consideration (48). The EU has significantly contributed to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, especially in recent years, although the actual effects of its actions are **not yet fully measurable** and still appear marginal in the evaluations (31).

Box 3. Examples of positive EU impact on peace and security

- In West Africa, positive impacts were observed in electoral diplomacy, increased political involvement, successful mediations, early warnings, peacekeeping operations, often with the EU as primary international donor, and with sufficient evidence to plausibly establish the EU's contribution to conflict attenuation (43).
- EU support in Eastern and Southern Africa increased the capacity in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region to conduct credible elections and to contain election-related crises (35).
- In some countries, like Sierra Leone, general budget support funding had a stabilising role that ensured macro stability during periods of crisis and promoted peace and security (21).
- There is some evidence of improvements in local communities' capacities to ensure peaceful co-existence between communities. For example, a conflict prevention and management project implemented in Guinea led to a significant decrease in the number of conflicts in the community, and a reinforcement of social cohesion, although the durability of this result could not be confirmed (16).

EU funding through the **APF has contributed to peace and security** across different parts of Africa and has helped to make the APSA indispensable at institutional and field-level (1). The APF has supported African efforts to establish and run peace support operations by funding troop allowances and operational costs, which ensured continued operation, and for building up the APSA institutions to enable African management of conflict on the continent (1, 2). Still, it was difficult to provide evidence on APF outcomes and its impact on capacity and institutional development (1).

The main **risks to the sustainability of the results achieved** in building the APSA's capacity were found to be rooted in the weak financial, institutional and operational capacity of the AU and the RECs. Moreover, EU-funded technical assistance often focused on general management and had limited long-term impact on the development of the APSA (2). The evaluations stress that key **local stakeholders' political commitment and ownership** were important factors for sustainability (2, 3, 54). Governments were not always ready to pass some of the reforms necessary for sustainable capacity-building and the progress on activities to promote sustainability often depended on the extent to which the authorities prioritised them (3). Furthermore, **financial sustainability** was a major issue: the shortfall in contributions by the AU member states to the AU budget and the Peace Fund left the APSA heavily dependent on the support of donors, including the EU.

There were several promising examples of IcSP actions where outcomes have outlived external funding. For example, in Sudan's border regions with South Sudan, support to micro-level peace processes contributed to stability and peace outcomes that have lasted for more than a year. Factors contributing to sustainability included the emphasis on capacity-building, the involvement of local stakeholders in the design phase, implementation within broader multi-actor response frameworks and the early planning of sequencing with other external sources of funding (33, 54).

Evaluations nevertheless concluded that while the EU managed to successfully tackle the effects of conflicts, the **root causes of instability and conflicts** were not adequately addressed, which raises questions about the sustainability of its actions since conflicts are likely to reoccur (31, 42, 48).

Box 4. Key takeaways from the evaluations on preventing conflict and instability

- EU development aid has had a positive impact on peace and security and has contributed to more stability in African crisis regions. Capacities for conflict prevention and management have been enhanced. EU financial support through the APF and to the African peace support operations has contributed to the establishment of an operational and indispensable African Peace and Security Architecture.
- However, it is difficult to provide detailed evidence at the level of outcomes and on impact because more fundamental long-term effects take more time to realise and cannot yet be captured by evaluations.
- While the factors and effects of the conflicts were successfully addressed and mitigated, EU support has generally not been geared enough to tackling the root causes of conflict.
- Inhibiting factors to the impact and sustainability of the EU's support in the field of peace and security included the weak financial, operational and institutional capacity of the AU and RECs, as well as the limited political commitment and ownership of local stakeholders. Financial sustainability was also a major issue, as the APSA was heavily dependent on the support of donors, including the EU.

b. Private sector development⁴⁹

Most of the evaluations that assess private sector development (9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 48) analyse a wider geographic evidence base (often including some African case studies) and present general findings and recommendations. However, they do not present specific evaluation findings on the cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa. Where possible, the following analysis highlights specific findings in relation to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Relevance

The overall assessment of the relevance of the EU's support to private sector development (PSD) is positive. While one report found that the EU's trade-related assistance was not highly relevant for the poor (10), another observed a clear poverty reduction focus in the EU's PSD support in the ACP regions (11).

⁴⁹ The evidence for this section is based on the information provided in six reports which covered the period 2000-2013 (10, 11, 15, 17, 19, 24) and four reports (14, 16, 31, 48) which covered the early years in the period 2013-2018.

Table 11. Key factors in EU's relevance in EU support to private sector development

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
• Alignment to partner countries' priorities and consistency with other EU strategies (9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 48) • Appropriate use of a wide range of instruments and modalities (10, 35). The project approach was particularly appropriate when used to complement and overcome weakly-developed trade policy strategies in partner countries (10) • Partner ownership and commitment of stakeholders (10)	• EU's Trade Related Assistance had only limited results on poverty reduction. It lacked focus on key socio-economic aspects and poverty reduction has not been sufficiently mainstreamed in Trade Related Assistance design and implementation. Although poverty has fallen in most countries and regions during the period evaluated, the causation between the EU's trade related support and the decreasing poverty is too weak • At the same time vulnerability has increased primarily due to economic reforms, in which trade reforms had a significant share (10)

Effectiveness

The reports demonstrate mixed results on the effectiveness of EU support to PSD, with some activities being evaluated as highly satisfactory (10, 12, 14, 15). PSD support seemed **more effective in middle-income countries** as compared to low-income countries (11) and the use of **budget support** was most effective in supporting trade-related reforms when managed by committed and capable governments (10). However, although some activities at macro-level, including institutional and regulatory reform, showed positive results, others were less effective (9, 11, 15). Table 12 presents some of the enabling and inhibiting factors that influence the effectiveness of EU PSD support.

Table 12. Enabling and inhibiting factors for the effectiveness of the EU's support to PSD

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
Programme design • Quality of the design: needs assessment, planning, estimation of resources and risks (10, 12, 25) • Partners' capacity to implement envisaged strategies (9, 10, 11, 12, 15) • Consideration of aspects that are key to PSD (e.g. development of infrastructure, health, education and vocational training) (9, 12) • Coordination of trade-related mechanisms between the EU and other development partners (10)	Programme design • Lack of or unsuitable strategic approach (11) • Lack of consultation with the private sector (11) • Insufficient context analysis (10, 12, 15) • Inadequate technical, financial and economic assessment of key beneficiary agencies and their human and financial capacities (15) • Insufficient analysis of baseline conditions against which success can be measured (12) • Poor risk analysis and insufficient application of lessons learnt from past experiences (12) • Limited focus on capacity development in project design (15) • Underestimation of the complexity and length of reforms and projects (11) • Lack of focus on the long-term institutional building of private sector business service organisations (11, 48)

Political commitment, management & ownership • High partner ownership and commitment of stakeholders, including clients and beneficiaries, due to the ability to forge and sustain working relationships with all stakeholders (9, 12) • Partner government's commitment and strong leadership to implement trade reform processes and to mainstream national strategies (31, 48) • Strong, pro-active management (12)	Political commitment, management & ownership • Low level of partner ownership, poor (knowledge) management and capacity (14, 15)
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Results achieved by the EU include:

- **Improved access to finance** by small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in particular long-term finance and local currency liquidity. This is considered a crucial aspect of EU support to private sector development (11, 14, 48).
- The EU has contributed to enhancing **trade policy** by supporting partner countries in working towards legal and regulatory adjustments and helping them improve their **trade policy environment** and the capacity of public institutions involved in trade policy and regulation (10, 11, 12, 15, 48).
- The EU played an instrumental role in strengthening partners' trade related systems and in increasing trade. Its Trade Related Assistance (TRA) also enabled them to strengthen their capacity to manage issues related to **international trade standard setting**, especially in relation to **quality infrastructure** and capacity development (10, 15, 48). Furthermore, the EU has contributed to the adoption of regional and national policies on improving business and investment climate and regional infrastructure (12). The EU's activities supported the stabilisation and modest expansion of trade from poorer developing countries and fostered enterprise competitiveness (10, 11). However, TRA was less successful in diversifying trade and many LDCs and sub-Saharan countries have experienced trade concentration, which undermined their ability to increase inclusive employment opportunities (10).
- The EIB strengthened financial sectors and encouraged financial intermediaries to develop lending approaches that better address small and medium enterprises' needs (14).
- The results of the EU's TRA to increase employment were limited (11, 48). Generally, employment support strategies focused on education and employability but employment concerns were not systematically mainstreamed in private sector support. Even if job creation was often one of the objectives of the EU's PSD support, it was generally not the primary objective of the EU's TRA (11, 48). Job creation currently features among the key priorities of the EU's development policy overall (as for instance seen in the EUTF and External Investment Plan), yet the TRA evaluations analysed here show this was less the case a few years ago.

Efficiency

The assessment of the efficiency of the EU's PSD support was mixed. Evaluations judged the efficiency of the operations as partially satisfactory or unsatisfactory (15). They pointed out that efficiency was particularly problematic for large investment projects (15). A crucial aspect for efficiency was **timeliness and cost-effectiveness** which were not always satisfactory. Some operations were launched too early while others lasted much longer than initially foreseen and had considerable cost overruns and needed (substantial) budget increases (15). Furthermore, the Commission's approach of delivering aid to the private sector via the public sector often proved to be not the most efficient one because it was insufficiently flexible and responsive to private sector actors and dynamics (11). One report pointed out that PSD operations did not

easily lend themselves to traditional measures of efficiency, such as rate of return calculations and that retrofitted ratings that measure efficiency should be treated with caution (9).

Impact and sustainability

Evaluations pointed out that it was **difficult to assess** the impact and sustainability of the EU's PSD support, one reason being that many activities at macro or meso levels did not show an immediate impact. Evaluation reports thus failed "to provide an unambiguous assessment of project performance" (9, 50). Other evaluations stressed that **baseline information and impact indicators** were neither detailed nor quantified which made it hard to measure achievements (12). Most reports pointed out that, in many cases, PSD support was fragmented, did not follow longer-term strategies for institutional strengthening, and was insufficiently mainstreamed in national strategies. Moreover, it was not always embedded in strategies geared towards the **maximisation of the impact** of PSD support (9, 10, 11, 24, 48). Only two reports observed the impact to be positive (12, 10). Similarly, sustainability was sometimes evaluated as satisfactory (12, 15), other times as weak (9, 15), while one evaluation stated that it had insufficient evidence to determine this (10).

Despite these caveats, the EU has reportedly improved **trade policy environments** by strengthening and mainstreaming trade policy formulation, reducing trade-related transaction costs and enhancing partners' trade negotiation capacity. The impact of these changes was expected to occur only in the longer term (10, 12, 48). One report pointed out that when preparing and undertaking the institutional and regulatory reforms, the private sector was generally not consulted (48) and hence, the Commission's activities in the area of policy dialogue were weak (11). In the absence of well-established impact M&E, there was little evidence of the impact of such reforms on the functioning and growth of partner country enterprises (11).

Furthermore, EU TRA has effectively improved the **capacity of public institutions** involved in trade facilitation, export and investment promotion (10). In several cases, the EU did not follow longer-term strategies and missed opportunities for long-term institutional building of private sector business service organisations that would provide sustainable support to SMEs (10, 11, 24, 48). A key challenge has been to **maintain capacity levels** that the TRA had contributed to (9, 10). Equally, the **sustainability of assistance that aimed at compliance with standards**, a key element for international trade, has proven to be challenging (10). The EU TRA has been assisting partner countries successfully to overcome the basic capacity constraints, by providing equipment and by training scientific officers. However, this support has not yet shown a significant increase in the partners' capacity to interact with international standards-setting bodies or to participate effectively in standard-setting. The main explanation presented is the lack of scientific data availability and the lack of coordination between government bodies (10).

In the area of **trade development**, the EU has contributed to reducing supply-side constraints, increasing the international **competitiveness** of supported enterprises and improving their market access. The EU's support to **trade promotion** services that focussed on specific sectors tended to be more effective, as confirmed in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (10). The EU has supported the **trade-related productive sector**, often focusing on traditional exports (e.g. agriculture and fisheries) and has contributed to the stabilisation of export levels in these sectors (10). In West and Central Africa, support to sectors with a smaller-scale productive structure, such as cocoa and coffee, tended to have a stronger impact on trade development, employment creation and poverty reduction (10).

However, at the broader national level, the **impact and sustainability of the EU's TRA on increased international competitiveness has been less evident** and the EU's contribution to changing the trade and production structure towards high-productivity activities has been limited. A key shortcoming of TRA to the productive sectors was its inability to target more long-term, high-productive and newly emerging economic sectors that could facilitate much-needed structural transformation and foster integration into

global markets, including through diversification (10, 48). One report pointed out that there was little evidence of comprehensive support to private sector development and sustainable agriculture, and that particularly in fast-growing low-income countries, the private sector's specific opportunities were overlooked (Zambia, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Mozambique). Economic growth and trade increase, especially for the poor countries in conflict-prone environments, were not fully sustainable because the growth recorded was linked to the increased international demand for raw materials, including oil, gas, other minerals, cocoa and coffee. Structural changes – agriculture and rural development, competitive value chains, employment policies, and sustainable energy – were needed to increase sustainability (48).

EU support did **not emphasise the sustainability of access to trade finance** (10). Although its TRA supported the development of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) strategies and legal frameworks, it hardly contributed to an enhanced investment climate or increased FDI flows (10). This has weakened the EU's contribution to changing the trade and production structure towards high productivity activities that were key drivers of sustained economic development (48). The EU's TRA had therefore only limited success in contributing to the integration of poorer countries into the world economy, which featured prominently among the formal objectives of the interventions concerned (10, 11).

Box 5. Key takeaways from the evaluations on private sector development

- EU support to private sector development was considered relevant overall and has achieved mixed results. In particular, the EU has contributed to improved access to finance by small and medium enterprises, which is considered a crucial aspect of EU support to PSD, while the EIB has strengthened financial sectors and encouraged financial intermediaries.
- EU TRA has contributed to enhancing trade policy environments as well as international trade standard setting, capacity of public institutions, and trade development but the sustainability of these results is mixed.
- The EU has been less effective in diversifying trade in LDCs and sub-Saharan countries where trade remains concentrated on few sectors, which undermined their ability to increase inclusive employment opportunities.
- The efficiency of EU support to PSD was particularly problematic for large, multi-million trade assistance operations that focus on the implementation of large investment projects. The Commission's approach of delivering aid to the private sector via the public sector proved in many cases not to be the most efficient because it was insufficiently flexible and responsive to adjust to private sector actors and dynamics.
- Difficulty to assess the impact and sustainability of the EU's support to PSD as many activities supported at the macro or meso levels may not show an immediate impact.

c. Rural and agricultural development⁵⁰

Relevance

A couple of evaluation reports suggest that agriculture and rural development policies as well as energy related policies were not given enough priority given their potential role for growth and poverty reduction (31, 48). When these policies were given a priority, they were considered relevant overall (41). This was also the case for EU support in the field of environment and climate change (17) and to the transport sector in Africa (19).

⁵⁰ The evidence for this section has been drawn is based on the information provided in four evaluation reports directly related to food security, energy, climate change or transport (16, 17, 18, 19), two reviews of strategic evaluations (31, 48) as well as 19 geographic/budget support evaluations that addressed these issues (8, 15, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 52). 12 reports covered periods from 2000-2013 while 11 only covered the early years of the 2013-2018 period (until 2015).

Table 13. Key factors in EU's relevance in EU support to rural and agricultural development

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
• Coherence with partner countries' policy priorities and needs (16, 17, 19) • Choice of agriculture and food security as a focal sector in the 11th EDF was fully in line with some countries' growth priorities (36) • Greater access to energy services as provided by the ACP-EU Energy Facility was particularly important for the poor (18) • EU support paved the way for increased prioritisation of environment and climate change issues in programming and partner countries' national development processes (17) • EU resilience approach as a direct response to the food security context (16)	• In some countries (e.g. in Ghana), actions in environmental sectors remained limited in size and time compared to the scale of the needs (20) • Lack of consideration of different countries' situations in the support to the standardisation of transport policies across Africa as regards capacity, governance, economic situation and social stability (19) • The EU approach to resilience paid little attention to the root causes of food crises (16)

Effectiveness

In several countries, EU support contributed to improving the economic infrastructure in rural and (peri) urban areas and the governance of commodity chains (36), thus facilitating the sale of agricultural products and strengthening economic exchanges (38). Mixed results were reported in the support to productive sectors – namely, in boosting employment for the poor, in agriculture and rural development and energy (31, 52). Still, in Kenya, the EU contributed to improved agricultural practices that might lead to improved food security (41).

In some countries, the levels of spending attained in agriculture would not have been possible without EU budget support (25, 27). However, despite the provision of resources and technical support, the results of budget support in agriculture were limited due to the weak implementation of programmes, the lack of ownership or inappropriate policies (20, 21, 25, 26).

In other sectors, positive results were reported:

- Most of the **ACP-EU Energy Facility** projects that supported renewable energy in East Africa were successful and rural electrification projects improved the life of rural communities (18).
- In the **transport sector**, the EU's and other donors' support to institutional reorganisation at national levels has contributed to more effective sector institutions (19).
- EU support has contributed to tangible results across the **environment and climate change** sector. Results were accomplished in areas such as biodiversity conservation, use of sustainable energy, mitigation of greenhouse gases, improved resilience and ability to adapt to climate change, management of natural resources, control of pollution, and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production (43, 52).
- The EU influenced national priorities towards a **gradually increased emphasis on environment and climate change** and strengthened developing countries' capacity to translate international commitments into national policies and plans (17).
- Budget support succeeded in strengthening the **environmental policy and legal framework** in **Ghana** (20).

On a more critical note, the evaluation of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) pointed out that the scale of the support was not sufficient to reverse worsening trends in the environment and climate change sector. There was still a long way to go before the results of EU support would lead to transformative

change (52). Moreover, the EU's contribution to sustainable natural resource management for West Africa as a whole was considered as meagre (43).

Efficiency

Findings on efficiency were mixed, depending on the area concerned. Good practice examples included (16):

- The EU Africa Trust Fund, by consolidating DEVCO and ECHO funding for building resilience to food crises, has reduced fragmentation and overhead costs, with the two Services managing a single project;
- The evaluation on the EU approach to resilience found some examples of joint programming or division of labour (e.g. with the Netherlands and Austria in Ethiopia), although these were the exception rather than the rule.
- In a favourable institutional context, budget support could reduce transaction costs and improve aid effectiveness and aid efficiency (e.g. in Niger). However, the evaluation on the EU approach to resilience did not gather a large evidence base on the cost-effectiveness of budget support.

On a more critical note, putting the **approach to building resilience to food crises** in practice has increased **transaction costs** at multiple levels. The collaborative inter-agency and inter-sectoral nature of the resilience approach notably entailed additional coordination costs and additional investment of staff time, principally related to increased inter-service cooperation (16). A few cases also suggest that some of the most efficient and effective partners for building resilience to food crises didn't necessarily have access to EU instruments and funding (e.g. scepticism was expressed by EU staff on UN effectiveness and efficiency and this contributes to reduced operational partnerships).

Regarding **environment and climate change**, the strategy of working through already well-established international programmes increased efficiency and reduced the danger of **proliferating different approaches** (17).

Overall, the **EU support to infrastructure** has been relatively efficient (35). In some countries however (e.g. Togo), the implementation of infrastructure projects, while generally satisfactory, experienced significant deficiencies and delays (38). In the **transport sector**, EU Delegations effectively managed EU aid strategies and modalities that changed with each EDF programme but delayed programming resulted in concurrent implementation of different modalities and strategies (19). EDF procedures gave rise to complaints about lengthy bureaucratic procedures for programming and decision-making.

Impact and sustainability

Overall, the EU support has led to significant improvements in long-term **food security** in the Sahel, the Horn, and in West Africa. This is due to the prioritisation of support for food security and agriculture in development budgets, the introduction of new financing instruments and mechanisms that ensured timely, flexible and predictable funding, and the development of tools to analyse food and nutrition insecurity (16, 43). Furthermore, food security, nutrition and agriculture have benefited from research and innovation results derived from DEVCO-supported projects which show impact at the farmer level in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania (8). In other countries however (e.g. Burundi, Chad and Cameroon), EU support did not resolve food security issues because of the geographical dispersion and limited duration of actions and an uncoordinated project-based approach that was insufficient to reverse the worsening trend in food security (34, 40, 42). Moreover, national authorities paid little attention to the issue of food security.

While in Mozambique, good aggregate agricultural growth brought by budget support has not been enough for poverty reduction (26), geographic evaluations highlight **positive impacts of EU support on the living**

conditions and the well-being of populations, with an appreciable role in the reduction of poverty (e.g. through infrastructure rehabilitation, access to drinking water etc.) (28, 39, 40).

EU support has also assisted the countries in **preventing environmental degradation and slowing down the loss of biodiversity** (17, 43). In Eastern and Southern Africa, however, the impact on ecosystem and biodiversity management and sustainable livelihoods was limited (35). In Chad, the effects and impacts of EU support on the management of natural resources were fragmented and non-systemic (34). In terms of green economy,⁵¹ positive results were seen in Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Burkina Faso. South Africa established a National Green Fund and included a green economy chapter in its Sustainable Development Strategy following capacity-building activities (17).

Successful projects of the **ACP-EU Energy Facility** had a **positive impact on the day-to-day life** of communities and had cascade effects, such as improving the availability of public services and creating ancillary employment, which are essential for contributing to poverty reduction (18).

From a macroeconomic perspective, **EU transport sector support** policies, strategies and interventions have contributed indirectly but significantly to **poverty reduction** in Africa (19). EU support to regional corridors was well targeted as a contribution to economic development because it reduced the cost of being landlocked for almost all of the 18 landlocked countries of the continent (19). In countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, for instance, the building of a national highway enabled the development of economic activities, mainly in the agricultural sector (39).

Sustainability prospects were found to be mixed. Insufficient sustainability of transport infrastructure in Africa impacts negatively on the contribution of the EU's transport sector support to social and economic development in Africa (19, 38, 39, 41, 42). The ACP-EU Energy Facility's projects on the other hand had good sustainability prospects (18).

Table 14. Enabling and inhibiting factors for the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of EU support to rural and agricultural development

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
National context - Local context, in terms of poverty, stability, government buy-in, institutional set-up and capacity (17, 18, 19, 28, 40, 41) - Adequate sector governance frameworks combined with procedural, managerial, technical and monitoring competence and a clear understanding of SBS principles and procedures in countries; capacity and ownership of the sector implementing agency (19) Political commitment & ownership - Prioritisation of support for food security and agriculture in development budgets (16), implementation of the necessary	National context - Organisational and functional limitations (e.g. in the forest governance sector in Cameroon) (40) - Absence of adequate institutional framework defining the roles and responsibilities of the state, local authorities and partners to implement policies in a concerted manner (38) - Insufficient funding compared to needs (e.g. in terms of road maintenance), lack of access to affordable finance (17, 19, 39, 40, 42) Political commitment & ownership - Limited political priority given to some issues (or lack of understanding/political will from partner countries) and as a result, weak

⁵¹ The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Green Economy Initiative defines green economy as: the reshaping and refocusing of policies, investments and spending towards a range of sectors, such as clean technologies, renewable energies, water services, green transportation, waste management, green buildings and sustainable agriculture and forests. In the evaluation concerned, resource efficiency is the key element of a green economy (17).

measures envisaged (18) • Shared commitment between DEVCO and ECHO to the goal of building resilience which has been translated into the allocation of resources at global, regional and country levels (16) • Cross-ministerial and stakeholder consultation to achieve broad "buy-in" to the goals and activities of the plan (17) • Embedding in national development plans and processes, level of in-country demand and presence of a favourable institutional and political environment (17) Programme-/intervention-related enablers • Timely, flexible and predictable funding through adapted financing instruments; combination of tools (e.g. policy dialogue, bilateral programme support, thematic funding) (16, 17) • Innovative approaches and tools supported by local stakeholders (17) • Extensive international cross-sectoral cooperation efforts within the EU and globally (17) • High volume and geographical and thematic scope of support (17, 19) • Strategic support provided for knowledge generation, promotion of peer exchange events (17) • Proactive cooperation with identified 'reform champions' facilitating reform (19)	national-level capacity for improved planning and management (e.g. climate change, biodiversity conservation) (17, 31, 48, 52) • Lack of partner governments' and sector institutions' political commitment to implement reform measures or multilateral environmental agreements (17, 18, 19, 43) • Difficult adoption of improved legal frameworks in some countries (48) • Lack of national ownership (25) and an overdependence on external assistance Programme-/intervention-related limitations • Major implementation gaps and delays in programmes (35) • Insufficient appropriation or institutionalisation of the results achieved (35, 39, 40) • Lack of link with broader national or regional strategic frameworks (52) • Inadequate institutional support (42). Technical assistance focused on technical rather than management issues, resulting in limited capacity enhancement (19). The relatively short intervention period meant that many of the benefiting structures have remained fragile (40). • Interventions were not sufficiently comprehensive or coordinated (42) • Project design weaknesses, technical complexity of the project and shortage of local capacity (18) • Lack of sustainable financing; insufficient attention paid to the financial means of partners for continuation (17, 35)
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Box 6. Key takeaways from the evaluations on rural and agricultural development

• EU interventions in the energy, transport, resilience and environment sectors brought overall tangible and positive results that improved the living conditions of populations, and contributed to the reduction of poverty. • Long-term impacts were however mixed, as transformative change and reversing worsening trends in some cases (e.g. in the environment and climate change sector) require more time and more support. • Prioritisation of the issues of climate change, food security and road maintenance by national authorities was crucial for achieving impact and sustainable results. Political commitment and ownership were essential to ensure the necessary broad buy-in and implementation of the necessary reform measures. • The extent to which EU interventions used innovative tools and financing instruments, took into account local capacity issues and paid sufficient attention to institutional development was critical for effectiveness, impact and sustainability.
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d. Social development⁵²

Relevance

By and large, EU support to social protection was relevant (47). Likewise, relevance was particularly high for education, and significant for health (31, 48).

Table 15. Key factors in EU's relevance in EU support to social development

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
• Strong alignment with national policy frameworks or government priorities and sound analysis of the partner countries' contexts (23, 37, 47) and needs that differed between regions (47) • Education sector focus on poverty reduction (31, 48) • Priority given to improved quantitative access to basic health services in the poorest areas (31, 48) • Support responding to the need to develop social protection systems essentially from the ground up (47)	• Support to secondary education was not sufficiently linked to technical and vocational education and training, which itself was not sufficiently linked to the labour market (31, 48)

Effectiveness

The EU has contributed significantly to increased **access to basic social services** for excluded and marginalised populations (20, 23, 25, 27, 47). In particular, it contributed to better access to education and health for women and girls. It has supported ACP governments in shaping and financing education and health policies, amongst others by providing budget support, thus contributing to improved strategies and increased social infrastructure and services focusing on the poor (31). EU support also contributed to the development of broad social protection policies and to strengthening health and social protection systems, e.g. through budget support (47).

In e.g. Zambia, Burkina Faso and Angola, the EU contributed to the expansion, reconstruction and equipping of health facilities as well as better health policies, including better human resource mobilisation (31). Though the EU contributed to improved access to education (expansion of educational infrastructure, provision of equipment and teaching training (48), the additional resources were still insufficient, as increased enrolment has stretched them even further (31).

Box 7. Examples of results achieved through EU support in the field of social development in Sub-Saharan Africa

- In several African countries, examples are Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Zambia, budget support contributed to strengthening the priority given to social spending (education, health, water and sanitation). By supporting public expenditure, it contributed to a significant expansion in the coverage of key social services (21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27). Budget support thus had a significant effect on the improvement of social welfare – yet its effects on improving the quality of local service delivery have remained limited (20, 25).
- In DRC, EU support contributed significantly to development and implementation of a pertinent national health policy and the provision of accessible and good quality healthcare and medicine (39).

⁵² The evidence for this section is based on the information provided in one evaluation report directly related to social protection (47), two reviews of strategic evaluations (31, 48) as well as 17 geographic/budget support evaluations that addressed these issues (7, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 36, 37, 39, 42, 52). Ten reports covered periods from 2000-2013 while eight only covered the early years of the period 2013-2018 (until 2015).

Along the same lines, budget support in Burundi helped to strengthen the country's health services and permitted a policy of free treatment in some sectors of healthcare, as well as to a major increase in access to the entire educational system (24).

- In some cases, sector budget support to water and sanitation, health and education sectors has contributed to the development of sector-wide approaches and the strengthening of strategies and their implementation (20, 22, 28).
- The contribution to the progress in access to drinking water and improved water service delivery has been significant in several countries (23, 25, 28, 34, 37).

Efficiency

According to the Evaluation of EU support to social protection in external action (2007-2013), EU support to social protection was overall reasonably efficient (47). The choice of channels and modalities has helped to minimise transaction costs on the EU side, and implementation modalities (e.g. budget support) were used in a reasonably effective and efficient way (47). When delays in implementation were experienced, these were as likely to be attributable to low capacity and poor absorption capacity on the part of the government as to the EU. Moreover, in some instances, delays occurred after abrupt changes in the partner country context, including at political level. In most cases, delays and other implementation issues had only a limited impact on the overall performance of the supported actions (47). Yet, the achievement of the desired impact was often challenged as result of important inefficiencies in the partner countries' institutional environment (47).

Impact & sustainability

EU support has helped to enhance equitable access to basic social services (education, health, water and sanitation) and to improve living standards in ACP countries, particularly for the poor. Yet, the **quality of institutional change** and of education and health services, and the **sustainability of the achievements** remained low (31, 25, 48). Sectoral evaluations (especially of the health sector) tend to be critical of the capacity of basic services to meet the present and future needs in ACP countries (48). In Ethiopia and Malawi, the benefits of EU-supported cash transfer programmes for enhancing income security and ensuring access to basic human needs were found to be too low to actually lift households out of poverty (47). The evaluation of EU support to social protection pointed out that it was difficult to provide a credible estimation of the EU's contribution, and data coverage on measuring impact was low (47). It also highlighted that the regularity and predictability of benefits was more important for increasing populations' resilience than the level of benefits (47).

The EU's actions have contributed to improvements in social protection schemes but in most cases sustainability (in the sense of full transition from donor to national finance) remained weak in spite of significant national contributions (47). Sustainability of reforms was found to be very much a country-specific issue – some of the EU-supported programmes in the field of social protection (e.g. Malawi) were either totally or largely donor-dependent; some showed signs of moderate sustainability; some depended largely on political will but could at best be called marginally sustainable, in part because of the project approach used (47). In Chad, the DRC and Uganda, the sustainability of results, especially in the health sector, was found to be weak (31, 34).

Table 16. Enabling and inhibiting factors for the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of EU support to social development

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
National context • Efforts made by the government (e.g. in expanding health coverage, increasing the availability of health personnel) (22) • Strong sectoral focus of national policies, including increased investment, reduction of fees and related increase in social service delivery (31) Intervention-related enablers • Catalytic role played by budget support, sectoral expenditure (22, 24, 31) • Financial support complemented by policy advice and capacity development, thus accompanying the efforts by country leadership (31, 48) • Fruitful working relations with the World Bank, regional development banks, and UN agencies (47)	National context • High population growth, economic crises and conflicts (22, 31, 48) • Institutional and structural problems, including: (i) weakness of rural infrastructure and isolation of regions; (ii) weak implementation capacity of some stakeholders (e.g. local governments, NGOs); inadequate human resources (22, 23, 28, 31, 42, 47) as well as insufficient funding, including from the partner governments (23, 31, 39, 47) Intervention-related limitations • Small share of social protection in total aid budget (47) • Weak country-level policy dialogue (47) • Minimal capacity-building and social achievements were not sufficiently consolidated through institutional development (31, 48) • Quality of the execution of sectoral actions was problematic (22)

Box 8. Key takeaways from the evaluations on social development

- The EU contributed to improved equitable access to basic social services (education, health, water and sanitation) and to improved living standards.
- Budget support played an important catalytic role in enhancing access to basic social services, as it allowed for increased sectoral expenditure, that was accompanied by policy dialogue and other policy support.
- Yet the quality of institutional change and of services (e.g. health, education), and the sustainability of the achievements remained low.
- Funding and sectoral investment, complemented by capacity-building and institutional development were important factors that affected the impact or the sustainability of EU interventions.

2.1.2. Gender as a cross-cutting theme

Gender equality has long featured in EU development policy. The first Gender Action Plan (2010-15) aimed to put this commitment into practice. Yet, its success was limited, highlighting the gap between the EU's level of commitment to gender equality and its internal institutional capacities to implement it. The second Gender Action Plan (GAP 2) for the period 2016-2020 aims at improving implementation at country and HQ level. Its implementation is monitored and EU institutions and member states report on this on an annual basis⁵³.

⁵³ The 2018 annual implementation report of GAP 2 found that the EU strategically used all the tools at its disposal at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. It furthermore stated that the overall use of gender analysis to inform project design and formulation and the use of sex-disaggregated data has improved. Political and policy dialogues that considered gender equality were held in most countries and the engagement with national gender equality mechanisms, women's civil society organisations and academic institutions, informing policy, political dialogue and action formulation, has also improved. However, it also pointed out that challenges for gender mainstreaming remain in particularly difficult areas such as trade, infrastructure related investments, private sector investments, security-related initiatives and climate change-related actions.

Relevance

Although gender is an important cross-cutting issue in EU development policy, only one dedicated evaluation on the EU Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment was conducted (7), partly covering activities carried out during the period under review. Another 24 other evaluations provided only patchy observations on gender in EU development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa.

As emphasised in the Review of Strategic Evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development (48), there was a "mismatch between the EU's strong policy commitments [on gender equality] and the organisational capacity to deliver on them". There was also a mismatch between the inclusion of gender in the design of the project and its implementation. Although many programming documents included gender issues in their project design (9, 12, 22, 23, 54), there was no evidence of gender being systematically addressed in the implementation of the projects and activities (47). Gender seemed to be included as a "formality" (9) (i.e. box-ticking) and there was strong evidence that gender issues were not mainstreamed (23, 33, 48, 51, 53, 54). The Evaluation of EU Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Partner Countries stated that there was some indication that gender was more frequently addressed than it used to be in the past (7). These indications of progress notwithstanding, the EU failed to approach the topic in a sufficiently frequent, systematic and effective way and in the majority of cases decisions on what to support were not based on a systematic situation analysis. The main obstacle is the lack of expertise and capacity of EUD staff to "effectively and convincingly undertake policy and political dialogue that integrates gender" (7).

A few reports provided positive assessments of the inclusion of gender in EU development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa. Gender equality and the rights of women and children were for example stated to be a clear priority of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) (54). Gender was also considered in the design of most DEVCO and ECHO projects (16) and gender mainstreaming was particularly well considered in the West Africa Private Sector Competitiveness Support Programme (12). Furthermore, gender was considered as a cross-cutting issue in most country strategy papers and national resilience strategies (16) and in the programmes of the IcSP (33) but was not a central issue in regional peace, security and stability programmes (35).

Some evaluations explicitly assessed the relevance of the EU's interventions for gender equality as poor (42, 48), thus underlining the 'box-ticking' tendency observed elsewhere (9). Others stressed that greater importance should have been given to gender (10, 54).

Box 9. A positive example of gender mainstreaming in Zambia

Consistent attention was given to gender across the different programmes and activities, including through: e.g. attention to women traders in the agriculture sector, a focus on gender in governance, and the integration of gender issues in the policy dialogue (32). Factors contributing to gender mainstreaming in Zambia were:

- Strong policy and good guidelines by the Commission
- A strong focus by selected EU member states on gender
- Gender champions at different levels in the EU Delegation and the Zambian Government
- The existence of an internal Quality Support Group in the EU Delegation which met regularly and facilitated dialogue on gender across different sectors
- Technical support to gender through a dedicated focal person who also provided M&E support.

Effectiveness

While gender equality has often been declared as a priority in EU policies, it has only been sporadically effectively implemented through specific measures (48). Although several programmes included gender in their project design (9, 12, 22, 23, 33, 48, 54), the reports provided little information on the results achieved.

The difficulty in tracking the impact of support to gender equality stems from **limited gender analysis** and the absence of relevant gender indicators that could be used in the Commission's results-oriented monitoring systems (10, 11, 12, 47, 48). Reports on the activities (for example trainings or workshops) did either not provide gender-aggregated information or, when they did, mentioned that they targeted women, but without presenting results (9, 10, 12). The EIB, for example, did not include gender issues in its contractual reporting requirements, meaning that the EIB does not require borrowers to report on gender (14). Due to the absence of gender-sensitive indicators, it is difficult to assess whether any progress has been made.

The only evaluation that specifically addresses gender as a central objective (7) was rather critical. It reported that the Gender Action Plan was "not fit for purpose" when it came to translating the EU's global commitment on gender equality and women's empowerment into action because it lacked the organisational capacity (insufficient human resources, technical guidelines and resources) to deliver expected outcomes.

Nonetheless, some evaluations indicated that some important results were achieved on gender equality, particularly in the education, health and agriculture sectors. One report pointed out that better results were achieved when gender issues were specifically addressed at the **sectoral level** in Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia and Malawi (48). The following results can be highlighted from the limited information available:

Table 17. Examples of results achieved on gender equality at the sectoral level

	Examples of results
Education	EU support has contributed to better access for women and girls to education and to reducing the gender gap in education (7, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28). Best results were achieved by the EU's budget support contributions to the education sector . In Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Mozambique, the expansion of primary and secondary school infrastructure increased school enrolment of girls (21, 27, 23, 25). By contributing to the funding of school feeding, budget support in Burundi enhanced the enrolment of girls in primary and secondary schools (24).
Social Protection⁵⁴	Social assistance support is gender sensitive in and of itself, because beneficiaries are disproportionately women. Consequently, women have disproportionately benefited from the EU's focus on marginalised and vulnerable populations in its support (32, 47). EU-backed cash transfer programmes for mothers and children helped to relieve gender inequality in some countries (47). The provision of childcare facilities at public work sites and the involvement of women in local works decisions have improved in Ethiopia. At the same time, the Productive Safety Net Programme III in Ethiopia provided direct support grants to pregnant and lactating mothers with insufficient means (47).
Health	EU support gave women and girls better access to health services and helped to reduce the gender gap in health (7, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28) though achievement of gender equality in the health sector was weak in Uganda (23). Better medical assistance and facilitated access to healthcare were beneficial for pregnant and lactating women (4, 45, 48) and EU efforts were successful in improving maternal health (although gaps remain between rural and urban areas) (21, 31). On the other hand, apart from maternal health programmes, there were no specific actions (prevention, training) that would translate gender policies in the health area in Burkina Faso (22).

⁵⁴ Social protection in EU external support, is conventionally divided into two spheres, social insurance, usually based contributions associated with formal employment, and social assistance, non-contributory schemes available to all. Social assistance ensures that every person will have a basic minimum income and will have access to basic health care and basic social services (47).

Rural Development	In the field of rural development and natural resources management, interventions were gender-sensitive and contributed to positive developments (e.g. women's representation in local institutions and in sector management positions, their involvement in the control of resources or their insertion in the sectors, targeting the improvement of women's livelihoods, awareness raising etc.) (22, 28, 34, 35). On a more critical note, gender issues in the water and sanitation sector were approached in a superficial way in Burkina Faso and Uganda (22, 23) while gender mainstreaming and policies in the water sector in Uganda did not promote concrete improvements of the role and activities of women (23).
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However, it is important to bear in mind that **these results were achieved by default rather than by design**. One report for example stated that “though no particular strategy has been applied, the percentage of women managers in the attended enterprises (46%) is much higher than the national average (16%)” (9). The evaluation on EU Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Partner Countries (2010-2015) further noted that **gender equality was not addressed systematically** in EU instruments and modalities to support gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes (7). A reason put forward was the lack of clear strategic and programming guidelines or technical support documentation to explain how EU Delegations could leverage complementary use of instruments to best achieve such outcomes (7). According to the same source, the improvements that were achieved were primarily attributable to committed individuals, rather than to the EU itself (7). The observed increase in the number of gender coordination groups at country level, with EUDs and MS taking on lead roles, is usually not due to the EU's efforts but rather the result of country context and proactive leadership of stakeholders at country level, who sought to enhance coordination on activities through “coordinated programming, joint vulnerability assessments, and common policy and political dialogue messages” (7).

Only three reports elaborated on how gender issues were discussed in this political dialogue (7, 11, 48). The Review of Strategic Evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development for example stated that dialogue on gender with line ministries during the formulation of the Country Strategy Paper did take place. Likewise, there were also consultations with national gender bodies, including civil society organisations (48).

Efficiency

Since gender rarely constitutes a primary objective, there is little evidence on the efficiency of EU development aid for achieving gender-related objectives (35).

Box 10. Key takeaways from the evaluations on gender equality

- While the EU carries out an annual reporting exercise on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, there are not many evaluations focusing on gender.
- Important results were achieved with regards to gender equality in the education, social protection, health and agriculture sectors. Although gender issues were included in many programming documents, there was no evidence of gender being systematically mainstreamed in the implementation of the projects and activities, resulting in the impression that results were achieved by default rather than intentionally.
- Information on achieved results was limited due to absence of relevant gender indicators that could be used in the Commission's results-oriented monitoring systems.

2.2. Working methods

Relevant working methods of EU development cooperation that are analysed below include: donor coordination, budget support, and political dialogue. These working methods are assessed in numerous evaluation reports, either as standalone issues or as part of the evaluation criteria.

2.2.1. Donor cooperation

With respect to donor cooperation, the report looks into the added value and complementarity of EU interventions vis-à-vis those of other actors, including the EU member states.

a. Added value of EU interventions

The notion of EU or community added value refers to the extent to which the EU's development intervention in a partner country adds benefits to what would have resulted from member states' interventions only. EU added value is a common evaluation criterion of EU development aid and has been addressed in most of the evaluation reports under review.

The Review of strategic evaluations to assess the European Consensus on Development (48), as well as the mid-term review of the EU's external financing instruments (33) suggest that EU added value stems from the following key features of the EU and of its development policy:

1. The EU's nature as a supranational entity.
2. The EU's soft political profile and relative neutrality which does not reflect national interests, and the political influence and leverage derived from it. The political mandate conferred by the Treaty of Lisbon also distinguishes it from, and has been a clear comparative advantage over, the international financial institutions.
3. The EU's significant volume of funds and the critical mass of aid it can provide (34, 38). In turn, this financial weight gives the EU significant policy influence and enables it to take on a leadership role.
4. The EU's global presence and the geographical spread of its external financing instruments, including the presence in fragile contexts where there are fewer development partners.
5. The scope and complementarity of the EU's external financing instruments and various aid modalities (such as budget support, grants, indirect management, blending facilities and rapid decision-making for crisis response);
6. The ability of the EU to lead on joint actions (i.e. joint programming and joint implementation), especially with member states, as well as its potential for bringing together and coordinating some of the strongest international donors

A number of geographical reports support the above elements of EU added value. For instance, the evaluation on Togo (38) confirms that the EU has both **political and financial leverage** that others do not have. This has enabled the EU to conduct a political dialogue and position itself in discussions at the national level, and to support national reconciliation politically and financially, including support to national elections. In Côte d'Ivoire, the EU was able to draw on its long experience and unique presence during the first years of the politico-military conflict to strengthen its coordination role and political weight in many sectors.

The EU added value is also linked to the **variety of its external financing instruments**. In particular, the fact that these can be used in various contexts and at various levels (i.e. national, regional, continental), the predictability of funds, the emphasis placed on regional cooperation (33, 52, 53, 54). Each instrument has its specificity in terms of scope, objectives and intervention modalities (see 3.2. below).

Evaluation reports suggest that EU added value has been particularly strong in areas where the Commission has acquired specific capacity and expertise, such as **budget support**⁵⁵, that distinguishes it from other donors. While one report stated that budget support lacked added value in Sub-Saharan Africa (29), most evaluations stressed the strong **comparative advantage** of budget support compared to alternative delivery

⁵⁵ Through its budget support and participation in public expenditure and financial accountability mechanisms, the EU has developed a specific capacity to support public finance management (PFM) reforms and evaluate public expenditure.

modalities and pointed out that the results achieved through budget support could not have been achieved with the same degree of efficiency and effectiveness with other instruments.

Box 11. Examples of EU added value through budget support

- The evaluation of budget support to South Africa for example states that sector budget support has allowed a comprehensive experimentation of important policies and approaches that otherwise would have suffered delays, fragmentation and resistances (28). The evaluation further states that the specific focus of sector budget support on themes and policy challenges allowed it to enhance its added value, despite its relatively small financial weight (28) and specifies that the strong comparative advantage of sector budget support toward alternative delivery modalities are due to the ownership and reinforcing government internal processes, the flexibility and diversification in the use of resources and the appropriateness to address complex policy experimentation in institutional sensitive environments (28).
- The evaluation of budget support in Mozambique on the other hand stresses the added value of general budget support, stating that general budget support processes can reinforce and add value to sectoral policy initiatives in agriculture, education and health (26). In Cameroon, the EU has effectively supported such reforms, and its added value is characterised by a historic and continuous commitment, high volumes of engagement, and a leadership role (40).

Geographical evaluation reports also point to some **shortcomings** that have hampered EU added value. These relate in particular to a **widespread portfolio** of activities and the **lack of coherence** within and among sectors covered by EU programmes. The EU is indeed active in a large number of sectors and at different levels (regional, national), with a large number of different funding instruments. In Kenya (41), the evaluation pointed to the fact that activities were poorly coordinated, while in West Africa (43), the report noted low levels of complementarity, coherence and synergies between different cooperation sectors “due to the fragmented support and insufficient coordination and dialogue within the EU”.

Table 18. EU added value in selected thematic priority areas

	Preventing conflict and instability	Private sector development	Rural and agricultural development	Social development
Funding characteristics	Volume of EU-funding for ASPA through the African Peace Facility (2)	EU's financial weight (10, 11, 15, 31, 35, 48)	Relative size of EU-support gave it significant policy influence and allowed it to take on a leadership role in support of the resilience agenda (16, 19)	Financial weight, especially in budget support and participation in global funds (48)
	No other donor willing and able to replace the EU as key APSA donor (2)	According to some evaluations the operations would not have taken place without the EU funding (14, 15, 19)		
	Reliability, predictability and long-term character of EU-funding and long-term in-country presence (1, 3, 36). As a result, the EU has a special relation	The provision of long-term financing in local currency (11, 13, 14, 31)		Regularity and predictability of the benefits of the EU-supported cash transfer programmes (47). Continued, long-term policy

	with regional organisations that see the EU as one of their most strategic and reliable partners (31, 48)			dialogue at country level brought substantial value in social protection (47)
Neutrality	EU's more neutral political profile, not linked to specific national interests and its credibility in promoting democracy and peace (31, 48)	EU's neutrality and the fact that it is not tied to specific national economic or political interests of bilateral donors (11, 13, 14, 31)	Political neutrality and in-country presence (19)	EU seen as neutral partner facilitating dialogue among national institutions involved in social protection reform (47)
	EU's multilateral nature and the European values it promotes which enhance its acceptability to beneficiary governments, key stakeholders and implementing organisations (33, 55)			EU's unique social model and rights-based approach and its commitment to sustainable social safety nets and social inclusion (47)
Characteristics of support and instruments	Provision of capacity building support, amongst others to the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Commissions (1)		Clear strategy and involvement in policy and strategy development (41, 19)	
	EU's ability to provide support where others are unable to deliver (1)		Flexibility in seeking collaboration with other donors (19)	
	With its instruments the EU can implement a comprehensive approach (defence, development and diplomacy), which gives it an advantage over many other actors (1)		Variety of support provided, ensuring higher effectiveness (41)	
Track record	The link the EU provides between partner countries and much of the resources of the combined member states, allowing beneficiaries to access a vast pool of experience, 'know how' and information (55)	EU's own trade-related achievements (10) and its capacity to transfer EU good practices and innovative approaches (11, 15, 31, 48)	Sector expertise and knowledge (19, 41)	Multifaceted experience in service delivery and employment strategies (48)

b. Complementarity of EU interventions

Coherence and complementarity with EU member states

The evaluation on **joint programming** (6) did not find evidence that, by itself, the joint programming (JP) process had reduced aid fragmentation in the countries where it took place. JP so far led to little or no changes of aid fragmentation indicators and has generally remained quite poorly documented (aid fragmentation was not always a major objective and measuring success of JP in reducing aid fragmentation is difficult to assess at this point). The relevance of JP as a mechanism for addressing aid effectiveness challenges was neither well documented nor really discussed; the focus is usually on how to make the JP work better, not necessarily to address other dimensions of aid and development effectiveness.

Yet, joint programming triggered improved **harmonisation, coordination and aid complementarity** and favoured convergence among the EU and MS regarding strategies and policies. This was stronger at sector than at national level because sector issues were often more concrete and therefore easier to understand and agree upon. Moreover, joint programming was often limited to those sectors where several EU and member states were active and had common interests. Joint programming helped to increase harmonisation of EU and member states' aid, working towards common objectives and adopting common strategic approaches. This was in particular due to the closer interaction and better understanding of each other's development cooperation, and due to an investment in developing a common vision. These findings were particularly strong in Senegal. JP has also led to an improved division of labour and increased the appetite for undertaking joint implementation, though a question remains whether it is actually put into practice.

At the same time, the report identifies a number of **obstacles that hamper the potential** of JP processes:

- Increasing bilateralisation of aid, presented as perhaps the single largest challenge for JP coherence. Increasingly, individual EU MS have to programme their resources according to their own political priorities and strategic interests such as long-standing trade and investment relations, political alliances, security collaboration. This makes it more complicated to engage them in JP efforts across countries.
- Emergence of new donor agendas, such as migration or security, which require long-term strategic thinking but are seen differently in different member states;
- EU central initiatives such as the new Partnership Framework on Migration with five countries where all EU resources should have migration as core concern, also requiring that the JP process accommodates this overriding objective. In Ethiopia, with the migration compact designed by the EU in 2016, the JP suddenly became more challenging, as focus shifted to an overarching concern defined more at HQ level than at country level.
- Joint programming is a very time-consuming process which leads to donor fatigue, while changes in personnel on the ground further complicate the smooth running of JP processes.

The evaluations on budget support showed considerable challenges within the donor community to use the modality effectively to enhance complementarity. Moreover, good cooperation among EU and other donors becomes more challenging in the event of worsening macro-economic conditions (20). In such cases, the existence of a common framework for engagement did not always prevent donors from drawing different conclusions and disbursement decisions on the same evidence base (23), resulting in practices that do not differ from where such a framework was missing (21).

Delegated cooperation is primarily an operational tool that can help achieve stronger complementarity and coherence between EU and MS cooperation through better division of labour and greater use of the comparative advantage of individual donors. Yet, the evaluation of delegated cooperation (44) notes that its impact on aid efficiency and effectiveness has been limited. Moreover, delegated cooperation was tailored and operationalised in such a way that only parts of the aid effectiveness agenda were supported.

Box 12. Key findings of the evaluation of delegated cooperation

The evaluation of the EU aid delivery mechanism of delegated cooperation (44) indicates that delegated cooperation (DC) has been particularly used to strengthen relations between EU institutions and some member states' implementing agencies. DC has had positive effects on complementarity and added value when good use was made of the comparative advantages. By promoting co-financing arrangements, the design of larger programmes and single management systems, DC helped to reduce transaction costs and realise efficiency gains. Yet, the evaluation report doesn't determine whether these savings during the implementation phase offset the additional costs made during the preparation of the DC agreements.

The evaluation report furthermore identifies the following issues: (i) the Commission has not developed a comprehensive DC policy framework and DC was not high on the agenda in the discussions with the EU MS; (ii) the Commission paid insufficient attention to political economy considerations related to the interests of the various stakeholders in the guidance and implementation of delegated cooperation; (iii) though DC should not be a one-way street, there is limited reciprocity between the EU and the member states; (iv) linkages between DC and new instruments and initiatives and between the EU internal Guidance Notes on DC and the aid effectiveness principles were insufficiently articulated; (v) the relatively low value of delegated cooperation funding compared to the total EU and member states' ODA commitments (less than 1%); and (vi) there is no evidence that DC stimulated ownership and leadership of partner countries and it therefore did not produce positive effects in this respect. Despite the general commitment of member states to coordinate their aid interventions and the initiatives launched for that purpose, reality on the ground is often more complex. Progress in coordination is hampered by strategic interests, political factors and institutional and procedural features of European donors.

Coherence and complementarity with partner countries

Joint programming has remained very much an EU and member states exercise, thus limiting the potential **ownership of the JP process** by the partner country. The Strategic Evaluation of EU Joint Programming Process of Development Cooperation (2011-2015) suggests that the role of partner countries varied from non-involvement to a more proactive role in rare cases (6). Partner countries have generally not taken the lead to bring forward their development priorities and did not make substantial contributions. Sometimes this was because the JP was not sufficiently advanced (e.g. in Zambia and Mozambique), other times it was due to a deliberate step back from the partner country: in Ethiopia, the government applied a "hands-off policy", while in Kenya the government made a formal commitment to JP but continued discussions with individual EU MS. In Senegal, the involvement was limited in the first phase, but stronger afterwards (6). There are also rather exceptional cases of a strong role played by the government, such as in Rwanda where the government was not directly involved in the JP process as such, but defined key parameters for the JP process and for its overall aid coordination architecture in its national development and poverty reduction strategy (6).

The evaluations on the geographic EFIs (DCI, ENI and 11th EDF) suggest that the predominantly **EU HQ-driven agendas** in the programming of EU aid have played against country ownership and coherence between partner country and EU priorities (32). This was despite the extensive consultation of stakeholders during programming and project implementation, and, in particular in the EDF, the co-signature of the multi-annual programming documents and annual actions.

Joint programming has so far had little effect on the **synchronisation of the EU and MS** programming cycles with each other and with the programme cycle of the partner country. The process of adoption of Joint Strategies to replace bilateral programming documents remains so far limited. In Kenya and Rwanda, there was partial synchronisation (when EUD or some MS programming cycles were the same as those of the national strategy). In Mozambique and Zambia, reluctance to synchronise was linked to the fact that annual rather than multi-year programming cycles were centrally determined at headquarters, and that MS did not want to lose flexibility in deciding aid allocations, in particular in view of rapidly changing political

priorities. In Mali on the other hand, Germany synchronised and adopted the EU Joint Programming Strategy as the main overarching programming document for its cooperation.

Table 19. Evidence on complementarity from thematic evaluations

	Preventing conflict and instability	Private sector development	Rural and agricultural development	Social development
Enabling factors				
EU member states and other donors	The African Peace Facility and IcSP complemented actions of other donors, particularly the EU MS, in terms of financial inputs, speed of delivery, stakeholders' engagement, expertise, impacts on stability and peace, and political influence (1, 54). Under the APF, there were various formal and informal mechanisms to exchange at different political and technical levels (1). In interventions in ACP countries (e.g. Mauritania) for integrated border management and the fight against organised crime, joint financing or a clear task division with EU MS played a prominent role. That certain MS were directly concerned by migration issues at their borders could explain this state of affairs (55). EUCAP Sahel missions provided information and advice in support of the wider activities of the EU and the EU MS. They also set up good mechanisms for coordination and cooperation with	EU PSD operations were formulated often with the support of other development partners. In the area of trade related assistance, coordination mechanisms between the EU and EU MS were strengthened, e.g. through coordination groups that facilitated information sharing and helped to develop a common awareness of the partner's needs.	The EU advocated for a division of labour amongst transport sector donors (especially the EU MS) and a mapping of activities of other sector donors was very common (19). As regards climate change, complementarity was sought for instance through the actions of the Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP) which was not only funded by the EU, but also received significant financing from other donors. This reduced transaction costs and enhanced the delivery and capacity of the funded programmes (17).	Attention was paid to alignment and donor coordination, particularly when preparing and implementing sector-wide support programmes (47). Part of the EU support was furthermore channeled through international organisations such as UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank and regional development banks (47). Complementarity was sought with donors with experience that the EU did not have, i.e. with the World Bank on social insurance and social safety nets for poor and with EU MS with broad experience in rights-based social protection (e.g. the Nordic countries) (47).

	Preventing conflict and instability	Private sector development	Rural and agricultural development	Social development
	other donors and stakeholders. ⁵⁶			
Funding modalities	That the EC channeled half of its financial support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding through international organisations was conducive to a coordinated approach (31).		The EU relied on international projects and programmes to avoid the danger of proliferation of support efforts that were not coordinated (17, 31).	Coordination between EU and EU MS was facilitated by the funding modalities put in place (general budget support, sector budget support and participation to global funds in health) as well as successful delegated cooperation to EU MS (31). ⁵⁷
Partner country level		EU PSD operations were aligned to national plans and poverty strategies, as well as more specifically to national PSD or sectoral strategies. Still, in some cases the Commission insisted on PSD even though the country's national development strategy did not prioritise it (11).	The EU approach to building resilience to food crises was broadly coordinated with both development partners and governmental authorities at the strategic level (16).	
Inhibiting factors				
EU member states and other donors	Differences in priorities and diverging positions among EU MS and the limited leverage of the Commission – apart from its financial weight – to ensure a coordinated approach with the EU MS (48). Little evidence of joint programming of international support to APSA, though	The capacity of the EU to build synergies with other institutions and ensure coordination among EU players did not really come out from the evaluation reports (11). The design of PSD was not really geared toward possible synergies	Regarding the EU approach to building resilience to food crises, operational coordination on programming differed considerably at country level. Moreover, there was limited evidence of alignment around a common resilience agenda at the level of the EU and	Despite scattered examples of cooperation, at field level, the EU's relations with ILO country offices and ILO strategies was found to be weak (47).

⁵⁶ E.g. in Mali, this included formal donor mapping, which gave full details of proposed (but not yet financed), planned, ongoing and completed projects in the security sector in Mali (3).

⁵⁷ In Lesotho, the EU benefited from agreements with other donors (GiZ, UN, World Bank) for the implementation of its financial and technical cooperation in the water sector and in the field of social protection (37). In Ethiopia, the EU supported donor harmonisation and the establishment of several coordination mechanisms as well as effective partnerships with a well-articulated system of joint donor budget support, coordination and dialogue (47). In Malawi, the EU decided to channel most of its support through a delegation agreement with Germany (KfW) and used lessons learnt from a large UK-funded intervention in the area of resilience to improve the design of its support (47).

	Preventing conflict and instability	Private sector development	Rural and agricultural development	Social development
	there were some basket-funding arrangements to which international partners contributed (1). The 'open door policy' in support of the APSA resulted in too many donors around the table, high coordination costs and an overburdened AUC administration. Despite good examples of coordinated approaches in (post-) conflict situations (e.g. Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Rwanda), EU institutions and the EU MS did not have a shared strategy with clear objectives, leadership and joint instruments to ensure a whole-of-EU approach (48). Despite the broadly accepted division of labour between the partners supporting the APSA, coordination was sub-optimal and entailed the risk of duplication. In the case of the APF, it was noted that the EUD-AU shared a lot of information to encourage coordination, but the reciprocity of other donors was less than expected (1). The lack of information on what the donor community was doing, where and at what scale of funding was an obstacle to	with other donors or other EU instruments and operations. The EU did not fully capitalize on the knowledge-sharing potential that existed within the different EU Delegations and the different DGs involved in the construction and enlargement of the internal market. Potential synergies between the EU and member states' TRA interventions were often insufficiently explored, and where they did occur – were, in most cases, only limited (10).	member states in focal countries (16). The EU's capacity to better integrate the action of international actors needed to be strengthened, and the large number of climate funding mechanisms posed a challenge to coordination, and could reduce overall effectiveness (17, 31, 50). Complementarity was not always ensured in a strategic and systematic manner, and opportunities for synergies have not always been fully capitalised on (17). In the transport sector, the division of labour led to geographic isolation of donor efforts with little attempt to generate complementarity and/or additionality from the products of such individual efforts (19).	

	Preventing conflict and instability	Private sector development	Rural and agricultural development	Social development
	coordination and complementarity (1, 5). There is little evidence that the Bêkou trust fund facilitated donor coordination efforts. There were no defined procedures to ensure systematic coordination of trust fund projects with those of other donors working in the same field (4).			
Partner country	Strong AU/REC/national government coordination (which would give each partner its place and could ensure that there are no overlaps in support) was absent (1, 34). The Bêkou trust fund for the Central African Republic did act in coordination with the CAR authorities (4).			

Box 13. Key takeaways from the evaluations on added value and complementarity

- The EU's added value arose mostly from its nature as a supranational entity, its relative neutrality, its financial weight, the predictability of its support, its global presence, and the scope of its instruments. Combined, the characteristics gave the EU significant policy influence and allowed it in many cases to take a leadership role. This added value was in some cases hampered by a widespread portfolio of activities and the lack of coherence within and among sectors covered by EU programmes.
- EU added value has been particularly strong in areas where the Commission has acquired specific capacity and expertise, such as budget support, that distinguishes it from other donors.
- Joint programming did not, by itself, reduce aid fragmentation in the countries where it took place. Yet, it triggered improved harmonisation, coordination and aid complementarity and favoured convergence among the EU and MS regarding strategies and policies, especially at sector level. Obstacles which hamper the potential of JP include increasing bilateralisation of aid, particular MS strategic interests, emergence of new donor agendas, such as migration or security, and the fact that joint programming is a very time-consuming process. Joint programming has also remained very much an EU and member states exercise, thus limiting the potential ownership of the process by the partner country.
- The impact of delegated cooperation on aid efficiency and effectiveness has also been limited. While it had positive effects on complementarity, added value and in reducing transaction costs,

there were insufficient linkages between DC and new instruments, and the lack of a comprehensive DC policy framework has limited its strategic relevance. Finally, insufficient attention was paid to political economy considerations, such as strategic interests, political factors and institutional and procedural features of European donors.

2.2.2. Budget support

As a brief introduction to this section, it is important to point out that the evaluations looked into general and sector budget support, which entail differences in policy emphasis and dialogue approaches, yet both revolve around the same direct budgetary transfers to government. As the findings and conclusions of the evaluations tend to 'lump' findings on sector and general budget support, a few exceptions notwithstanding, the same applies to the analysis of the evaluations presented here. Where possible, the analysis highlights specific findings in relation to general and sector budget support in Sub-Saharan Africa⁵⁸.

Relevance

A number of joint evaluations on budget support in Sub-Saharan Africa (20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28) confirmed the relevance of this cooperation modality. Yet, several noted that relevance was **context-dependent** and pointed to the lack of **context-sensitive programming** (23, 24, 29, 37, 50) of budget support which could be negatively affected by political changes in the respective country (22, 23, 29).⁵⁹ Some evaluations (26, 21) point out that the relevance of budget support decreases over time, usually due to a changing national political context.⁶⁰ The budget support evaluations show that relevance is ensured by a mix of characteristics (24, 25, 38):

- The alignment of budget support with individual country contexts, needs and priorities;
- The flexible design of budget support;
- The predictability and reliability of the (annual) funding, particularly in comparison with other aid modalities;
- The fact that budget support can be disbursed relatively fast;
- Government's ownership of budget support.

Effectiveness

Across the countries examined, **increased availability of funding for priority sectors** has been the most important contribution of the EU's budget support. This allowed for greater spending and had a growth boosting effect in the recipient countries and the **support to reforms** through policy dialogue and technical assistance/ capacity development (20, 21, 22, 25, 26). Budget support stabilised **public expenditure**, allowed for better sectoral **policy dialogue** (16) and increased aid effectiveness (10).

While budget support was utilised in slightly different ways in each case – a product of the alignment of budget support with country contexts and its flexible design – in each country it helped to fund growth in targeted sectors. In Sierra Leone and Burundi, budget support fostered the growth process which helped to stabilise the political situation and the consolidation of society after a prolonged period of crisis and violence (21, 24). In contrast, the initially promising results of budget support implementation in Burkina Faso were hampered by poor national governance and eventually led to a reduction of funds from 2011 onwards (22).

⁵⁸ The evidence for this section is taken from nine reports which covered the period 2000 to 2013 (10, 17, 23, 26, 27, 28, 27, 38, 47) and eight reports (16, 20, 21, 22, 25, 29, 32, 53) which covered the period 2013-2018 (until mid-2017).

⁵⁹ For instance, budget support to Uganda was crucial for protecting pro-poor allocations but its relevance was drastically decreased when the Ugandan government shifted its focus towards the productive sector and defence and reduced funding for the National Poverty Action Fund (23).

⁶⁰ In Sierra Leone, for example, the reduced volume of development aid due to the financial crisis had a negative impact on the ability of budget support to respond to the structural challenges in the country.

The benefiting sectors varied from country to country but the sectors benefiting most were: education (22, 24, 25), good governance (23, 26, 27, 28), health (20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26), public finance management (22, 23, 24, 25), justice and legislative sectors (25, 28)⁶¹, and rural development (22, 23, 28).

The following paragraphs provide more information on the benefits of budget support at sector level.

Education

Budget support has supported government **education** policies in Mozambique, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Tanzania. It has contributed to the expansion of the education sector, including higher enrolment rates of school-age children (21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27). However, in all countries, increased enrolment in education has been accompanied by concerns over education quality and efficiency following this expansion. In Mozambique, like in Zambia (25), budget support was crucial for the expansion of the education sector across all provinces. As a result, 40% more children enrolled in primary school between 2004 and 2012 while secondary school enrolment saw a 65% increase in the same period. The largest gains of primary enrolment were observed for children from poorer backgrounds. However, budget support had limited effects in enhancing quality in education and learning achievements and failed to address girls' drop-out rates and their limited attainment (26). Also, the expansion of the education sector in Tanzania could not have been financed in the absence of general, and to a lesser extent sector, budget support. As a consequence, access to primary and, more especially secondary education has dramatically increased (27). In Burundi, general budget support allowed the government to implement its sectoral policy (24), pay teacher salaries and mobilise funds for the construction of school infrastructure.

Good governance

Steady progress was achieved in governance, public financial management reforms, the fight against corruption, and transparency and accountability in Mozambique, Uganda, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia (23, 25, 26, 27, 28). In Tanzania, development partners increasingly used the budget support dialogue to discuss corruption concerns with the government. This created an avenue for communication through which the government now provides information on progress in anti-corruption efforts, which had not been provided in the past (27). In Uganda, budget support contributed to strengthening key governance and accountability institutions (23). Improvements to the legislative and institutional framework for the control of corruption were identified in Mozambique and Tanzania (25).

Health

The results of budget support in the health sector are mixed ranging from very positive to limited results (20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26). In Burundi, efforts made in the health sector thanks to budget support resulted in a major increase in access to healthcare infrastructure (24) while access of the poor to primary health facilities improved in South Africa (25). In Uganda, important initiatives, such as the abolition of user fees and health improvements, were implemented. However, there is a strong urban-rural gap in the distribution of these improvements (23). In Ghana, the health sector has seen general improvement coupled with the expansion in health service coverage, the increase in the use of health services and a decrease in inequalities achieved through a combination of policy dialogue and accompanying measures. However, initial progress had stalled since 2012 with several public finance management bottlenecks restricting a consistent framework for strengthening the healthcare system. The EU missed opportunities to use budget support to address the sector's increasing institutional fragmentation and deteriorating financial situation (20). In Mozambique, the impact of budget support was limited due to the government's decision to decrease the share of government funding (and of budget support) for the health sector (26).

⁶¹ In South Africa, various sector budget support programmes facilitated the piloting of policy innovations in the justice sector and provincial legislative assemblies. In several cases, these innovations have been scaled up, mainstreamed into policy and incorporated into national programmes (25). One of such innovations was the launch of a new mechanism with the Foundation for Human Rights that aimed at deepening and broadening engagement with civil society actors (28).

Public Finance Management

Some positive results were achieved in the partner countries' Public Finance Management (22, 23, 24, 25). In Uganda, budget support served as a catalyst for strengthening government systems and the additional tools offered by budget support (technical assistance, capacity building etc.) promoted development and implementation of reforms (23). Improvements in the quality of public finance management were also recorded in Mali, Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania (25).

Rural development

In Uganda, Burkina Faso and South Africa, budget support had significant impacts in the reform of the **water and sanitation** sector (22, 23, 28). Through funds, policy dialogue, and capacity building, sector budget support in Uganda supported the government's move to decentralise the implementation of the water and sanitation sector. This has improved access and functionality of rural and small towns' water supply and as well as the equity of this service (23). While in South Africa, budget support improved the access to water and sanitation facilities in the poorest areas (28), in Burkina Faso, while it contributed to improved access to water extraction points, it resulted in only minor improvements in access to water in rural areas (22). In Ghana, on the other hand, budget support contributed to strengthening the sector's policy and legal framework and to the expansion of public actions in various areas such as the management of protected areas and enforcement actions in forestry and mining sub-sectors (20).

The question whether better results could have been achieved through a different balance between general and sector budget support is posed in the evaluations of budget support in Uganda (23) and Sierra Leone (21). The report on Uganda states that general budget support in some cases diverted attention from sector specific issues with dialogue focusing on conflicting views and coordination and leaving little room for joint problem solving or targeted assistance to overcome specific constraints. Findings from the education sector for example point to the deterioration of intensity and quality of dialogue and more generally of the weakening of aid coordination frameworks as a result of the move from sector to general budget support. However, the mechanisms established in the water sector (joint programme, strong dialogue) were such that even in the absence of general budget support overall policy dialogue would remain strong (23). The report on Sierra Leone suggests that **budget support arrangements in the health sector may have had greater influence on sector outcomes than general budget support arrangements** due to the effectiveness of the policy dialogue and technical assistance. At the same time, the report points out that the fundamental problem in Sierra Leone was not an inappropriate choice of aid modality (i.e. general budget support rather than sector budget support) but a "strategy gap", regarding the policies, implementation mechanisms and financing frameworks for the scaling up of service delivery (21).

Efficiency

Efficiency of budget support operations was closely linked to the extent to which it facilitated complementarity and donor cooperation. Some reports provide specific examples of aspects that could have increased efficiency:

- Learning more from the EU's experience gained by EU member states or other EU programmes implemented in different regions of the world would have improved efficiency in South Africa (28)
- Improving the conditions for mobilising resources in Burundi (24)
- Different design and management approach in Tanzania (27)
- More efficient public administration in Lesotho (37)
- Changes to existing budget support formats which include clear and logical **linkages between actions and prior defined results** in Malawi and Rwanda (50)
- Strengthening **donor-government policy dialogue** in an open and honest manner to establish relationships of mutual trust (25).
- Promotion of **environment and climate change indicators** in budget support operations (17).

Impact and sustainability

Although most evaluations present evidence of budget support contributing to poverty reduction and better social welfare, picture of sustainability and impact is mixed. In lower- and middle-income countries, budget support allowed governments to improve **public finance management**, to deliver services and regulate economic activity, for the benefit of their citizens (25). In Burkina Faso and Togo, budget support contributed to the development and stabilisation of the **macroeconomic framework and economic growth** (22, 25, 38). In Ghana on the other hand, the progress made was seen as the legacy of previous achievements rather than uniquely attributable to the budget support provided (20). Some evaluations state that while budget support often succeeded in strengthening the development of **sector-wide approaches**, its influence on the general issues of public expenditure management was limited (22, 24). In Tanzania, impact would have been greater had the budget support engagement been accompanied with a technical policy dialogue in the agriculture sector (27), as shown in the case of South Africa where such a dialogue encouraged cooperation across departments and allowed the government to access new sources of expertise (28).

The impact of budget support on **domestic revenue mobilisation** in SSA remains unclear as the indicators were insufficient to form the basis for an assessment. A report of the European Court of Auditors (29) observed that there is no clear indication on the extent to which the Commission's budget support approach had any significant impact on the level of domestic revenue collection in Sub-Saharan Africa. The report noted an ineffective implementation of domestic revenue mobilisation specific conditions and assessment requirements in partner countries (29).

The various evaluation reports on budget support do not provide substantial information on sustainability and do not address environmental sustainability. When they do, they are concerned with the sustainability of impact, especially because of the countries' poor records in revenue mobilisation (with the exception of South Africa). Sustainability of results are linked to the following elements: policy continuity or uncertainty, financial (funding), economic (country or sector level), political, and social factors as well as government ownership, commitment, and governance (23, 53), the poor quality of public procurement processes, significant problems in budget credibility and the volatility of the prices of raw materials for export (21). Whereas there are grounds for confidence that the high growth levels in Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia can be sustained (25), the initially promising developments in Burundi did not lead to a sustainable impact due to the absence of a coherent long-term strategy and appropriate funding (24). Similarly, in Uganda, the probability that outcomes achieved in the health, education and water sectors are sustainable is considered to be limited due to low revenue mobilisation and thus lack of required funds (23). Its poor record in improving domestic revenue mobilisation is seen as key factor impeding sustainability in Sierra Leone (21).

Box 14. Key takeaways from the evaluations on budget support

- Budget support played an important catalytic role in the access to basic social services, by enabling increased sectoral expenditure, accompanying policy dialogue and other policy support.
- The increased availability of funding for priority sectors through budget support led to a growth boosting effect in partner countries and the support to reforms through policy dialogue and technical assistance/ capacity development.
- Particularly in lower- and middle-income countries, budget support allowed governments to improve public finance management, to deliver services and regulate economic activities.
- Funding and sectoral investment, complemented by capacity-building and institutional development were important factors enabling or inhibiting the impact or the sustainability of EU interventions.
- However, the quality of institutional change and of services (e.g. health, education), and the sustainability of the achievements remained low.

2.2.3. Political dialogue

A broad-based political dialogue with government officials is a key component of the EU's development cooperation with Sub-Saharan African states. For this reason, it is a recurrent point of focus in external evaluations of the EU's engagement as reviewed for this study. Making such an assessment however comes with conceptual as well as methodological challenges. Table 20 presents three different understandings of policy and political dialogue as applied by the EU and its partners. EU policy documents refer to a general understanding of political dialogue relating to a dialogue on fundamental values (democracy, human rights) and policy dialogue relating to technical and substantive aspects of policy. Both political dialogue and policy dialogue are part of the relationship between the EU and SSA countries. The following table further describes the difference, and distinguishes two subtypes of the technical and substantive policy dialogue: one taking place in the context of budget support operations, typically jointly with other donors, and the dialogue that takes place in relation to other aid modalities.

Table 20. Policy and political dialogue defined

Dialogue in the framework of the CPA	Dialogue in the context of budget support	Broader understanding of policy dialogue
Under Article 8 of the CPA, the EU, its member states and the concerned Sub-Saharan states commit to engaging in a regular political dialogue in relation to the overall objectives and fundamental elements defined in the agreement. This political dialogue should in principle take place on an annual basis. If the dialogue would observe a worsening situation in terms of the fundamental objectives, the partners could discuss taking appropriate measures under Article 96.	When providing budget support, a distinction is often made between policy and political dialogue. Under policy dialogue, reference is made to an exchange at the technical level, mainly focusing on 'how to' questions and progress made towards agreed targets and indicators. Political dialogue, in turn, refers to a more high-level exchange (involving political actors rather than civil servants) to discuss more contentious issues relating to human rights etc. Like under the CPA, these dialogues are typically conducted jointly by donors.	Policy dialogue refers to the dialogue the EU has with partner countries regarding institutional and financial support for sector-based policies. In contrast to the former two types of policy dialogue, this dialogue can take place under various types of cooperation modalities and is done bilaterally between governments and their external partners. The dialogue may also involve some degree of conditionality, related to the assessment of conditions for disbursement in the form of subsequent project phases.

The evaluation evidence collected in the reports mostly relates to the second understanding presented in the table above, as well as more occasionally to the first type. The third type of policy dialogue remains under-evaluated. Beyond the conceptual challenges involved in evaluating policy dialogue, there are also methodological challenges in the sense that – contrary to a project intervention – **expected results are not defined ex-ante** (29). While the extent to which process commitments were realised in practice can be assessed, it is challenging to both measure as well as appraise the actual results of such dialogue.

Budget support policy dialogue. As the modality's name indicates, budget support is primarily perceived to revolve around financial transfers, as opposed to a tool for policy learning (20). This type of policy dialogue contributed to improvements in the quality of health services in several countries (24, 31) and, e.g. in Burkina Faso, to the safeguarding of social allowances in the education and health sectors (22). Evaluations also

recorded positive results in terms of **strengthening transparency, access for information and accountability** (21, 26). In Uganda for example, the use of budget support meant that governance issues remained on top of the agenda, and that non-government stakeholders could relate to the government on these matters – which the use of development projects would not allow for (23). In relation to the cooperation with **regional economic communities**, the focus of policy dialogue was predominantly on the disbursement of funds, as opposed to substantive issues relating to regional integration. Dedicated efforts were made to ensure the participation of civil society organisations in the policy dialogue, yet with limited results due to the weak existing links between those organisations and the regional bodies concerned (35). Finally, in the cooperation between the African Union and the EU, policy dialogue was considered strong in the context of the implementation of the Africa Peace Facility and was characterised by good and regular exchange at the working level (1).

Table 21. Enabling and inhibiting factors of political/policy dialogue

Enabling Factors	Inhibiting Factors
• Policy dialogue in the context of budget support is most successful in a context where there is a strong level of trust between the government and its external partners (20, 29). • A successful dialogue thus requires good relations between the government and its donors overall, and among the donors themselves.	• Lack of a shared definition and understanding of dialogue may contribute negatively to the quality of the policy dialogue, as observed in the case of South Africa as well as in the field of regional cooperation (28, 35). • A deteriorating political dialogue with the government (e.g. on elections or sensitive legislative actions) affected the quality of policy dialogue (20, 23, 26, 27). • Lack of guidance on key EU policy priorities, which prevented EU delegations from establishing a good working relation with the relevant ministries (17). • Lack of trust turns policy dialogue into a technocratic and box-ticking exercise (26, 27, 29). • Use of policy dialogue as a means to monitor and promote the implementation of EU interventions (17, 1). • Irregular and insufficient meeting frequency (17, 29). • Considerable transaction costs for the recipient government and its international partners (21, 27).

With regards to **political dialogue**, the Commission's evaluation of the CPA assesses that human rights have represented a large share of the political dialogue over the last decade, yet it was generally reactive as opposed to proactive in nature, with limited and sometimes volatile effects (31). It moreover notes that the CPA requires civil society's participation in policy dialogue, yet observes that available external evaluations do not provide sufficient information to assess its involvement. Finally, the Commission finds that a structural and organisational separation between political and policy dialogue within EU delegations, limited capacities and partner governments' reluctance contributed to weak links between the political dialogue and the broader cooperation programme (31).

3. Horizontal considerations

3.1. Policy Coherence for development

EU and member states' actions on policy coherence for development (PCD) are based on the commitment contained in article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. The EU seeks to ensure a coherent approach, whereby decision-making processes in other EU policy areas seek to take the possible effects in developing countries into account.

The PCD evaluation report (46) notes that the **EU PCD approach had a limited influence on existing or planned policies/initiatives**. EU non-development policies affecting developing countries do not generally take account of development objectives as a direct result of PCD mechanisms. In general, the Commission's policy proposals that are likely to affect developing countries do not sufficiently take account of development objectives in the Impact Assessments and Inter-Service Consultation process. Exceptions exist in some policy areas, such as trade and migration, that have a track record of including PCD within their formulation process due to their external dimension and the EU's international commitments. Other policy areas that are aligned with the EU's PCD approach at the strategic level include agriculture, fisheries, and climate change.

The EU PCD approach has yet to be further clarified at the operational level and there is no common understanding of the approach nor clarity among institutional stakeholders regarding the PCD commitment towards developing countries. Though article 12 of the CPA sets up a consultation mechanism to promote the coherence of EU policies that might affect the interests of the ACP countries, there is no consultation mechanism with all developing countries that allows the Commission services to structure a policy dialogue with them at the early stages of policy formulation. The evaluation on EU cooperation with West Africa (43) observed some cases of incompatible objectives of the EU's foreign policy and development policy.

The below paragraphs provide findings on PCD in relevant themes.

Preventing conflict and instability

The evaluations pointed to the (potential) impact of EU support to peace and security on wider EU policies. Examples are:

- In the case of APF support, there was a risk that the participation of troop contributing countries (e.g. Burundi or Ethiopia) in peace operations outweighed their repeated failure to meet obligations on democracy and respect for human rights (1).
- IcSP's actions and programmes related to e.g. counter-terrorism, countering violent extremism (CVE), migration, organised crime, and cyber security carried risks of negative knock-on effects on human rights, rule of law, international law and good governance. However, these risks decreased when '*do no harm*' approaches were built in. Moreover, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments of the European Commission and DEVCO were reportedly aware of such potential risks and made efforts to mitigate them. The IcSP evaluators also recognised that such interventions could firmly promote EU cross-cutting priorities, and could be implemented in partnership with law enforcement, judicial and in some cases military actors (e.g. response to Ebola outbreak in West Africa; CVE activities associated with progress in security sector reforms) (54).

The evaluations also pointed out how other policy areas influenced EU peace and security interventions, especially when talking about resilience and migration. Examples are:

- In countries like Angola and Kenya, support for the recovery of agriculture and access to basic social services contributed to enhanced security and peace (31).
- The EU's interest in terrorism and migration increasingly influences its peace and security interventions in Africa, an area in which the EU has the ambition to become a strong player. For instance:
 - The EUCAP Sahel Missions contributed to the design of EUTF projects, gathered information on migratory flows and mapped EU activities connected with migration. The mandate of EUCAP Sahel Niger was expanded in 2015 to assist Niger in exercising control and fighting, as well as gathering information about irregular migration (3).
 - In Mauritania, EU support to integrated border management and the fight against organised crime mostly focused on contributing to slow down migration flows to Europe (55). At the same

time, the evidence available generally confirms increased coherence of EU support in these fields with other EU external cooperation policies (e.g. migration, regional integration, trade and security) (55).

Rural and agricultural development

EU interventions did not always take other policy areas into account, but when they did, coherence was deemed good:

- Conflict and political drivers, and more generally the root causes of food crises were seldom taken into account in EU analyses of food insecurity to inform its resilience actions. This left strategies weakly adapted to addressing the causes of conflict-driven protracted emergencies, and the linkages between building resilience to food crises and managed migration were not sufficiently developed (16).
- Environment received a lot of attention in the agricultural commodities projects (e.g. in Cameroon, Ghana and Madagascar), and in the transport sector (48). The coherence of EU support to environment and climate change with policies in the field of agriculture, energy and water was generally seen by EUDs as being good (17).
- Generally, EU transport sector policies were coherent with wider EU development policies and member states' sector policies. EU transport sector support moreover had a positive impact on trade and employment generation (19).

The evaluations also pointed out how other policy areas influenced EU support to rural and agricultural development, especially when talking about migration. Examples are:

- Migration priorities seem to have had an impact on EU interventions in the field of food security and resilience-building. For instance, the building of resilience to food crises was recently put together with the demand for better-managed migration under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, the assumption being that food crises and migration share the same root causes and solutions. However, studies highlight that migration is an important coping strategy that contributes positively to building resilience to food crises and that there are risks associated with immobility and an absence of opportunities to migrate. Addressing migration pressures by cutting off these opportunities may thus do more harm than good (16).
- EU initiatives like the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and the Sugar Protocol have complicated the implementation of the EU support to the transport sector (19).
- Some of the areas of EU intervention in Cameroon, such as roads and rural development, were exposed very indirectly to the effects of EU policies; those that were more directly related (promotion of the private sector, climate change) have effectively integrated the frameworks and directions of the EU policies (40).
- The evaluation of EU cooperation with Cameroon pointed out that a potential obstacle to PCD is the fact that EUDs have limited control over key interventions in the "trade and regional integration" sector and little involvement in the EPA negotiations (40). The same source also stated that the benefits of the common agricultural policy of European banana producers had eroded the comparative advantages of Cameroonian producers (40).

Social development

The EU's support to social protection was coherent with policies in areas like employment, gender equality, migration, etc. (47). In several countries, it moreover included an important social inclusion, human rights and employability component (47). In other cases, however, social protection had to compete with other priorities of cooperation, and aspects related to a specific sector such as health were not always coordinated with the sector approach as a whole (47). Evaluations furthermore found that:

- In ACP countries, EU support to social protection was closely linked to cash and in-kind transfer programmes in the area of food security and, to a lesser extent, to other areas such as HIV/AIDS (47).

- Social protection got more prominent in bilateral and regional programmes, often in the context of the “Food and Nutrition Security, Sustainable Agriculture” (FNSSA) cooperation area in e.g. Ghana, Lesotho, Nigeria, Ethiopia, or with the African Union through the Pan-African Programme (47).
- In the West Africa Sahel region, ECHO was strongly involved in the EU Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) programme that aims at reducing people’s vulnerability to shocks and increasing their resilience. The strengthening of social protection systems is a key objective in the programme’s first pillar (47).
- In Ethiopia, there were efforts to link social protection to humanitarian assistance (especially in the context of the resilience agenda and the emerging emphasis on migration and its root causes), yet challenges remained in exploiting this nexus (e.g. because of differing objectives, contrasting time frames, and distinct institutional cultures) (47).

Private sector development

- Private sector development has indirectly benefited from support to good governance, economic stabilisation and growth, while more direct support – aimed at the creation of an enabling environment, improving quality standards, and facilitating access to finance – has been relevant. (48)
- Policy dialogue was an important instrument for promoting coherence. It has made an important contribution in terms of paving the way for establishing and increasing coherence with key development and trade-related policies
- EU support to PSD did not explicitly consider elements such as health, education and vocational training (9).

Box 15. Key takeaways from the evaluations on policy coherence for development

- The EU PCD approach had a limited influence on policies. The Commission’s Impact Assessments and Inter-Service Consultation process do not sufficiently take account of development objectives in EU policy proposals. EU non-development policies affecting developing countries do not generally take account of development objectives as a direct result of PCD mechanisms.
- Political will from the top leadership of the European Commission from the onset of the policy formulation process is more decisive than the instruments put in place to promote the EU PCD approach.
- Though the EU’s policy coherence for development commitment is enshrined in the EU Treaties, there is no common understanding of the approach and there is a lack of clarity among institutional stakeholders on the extent of this commitment towards developing countries.
- On preventing conflict and instability, the evaluations point to the impact of EU support to peace and security on wider EU policies as well as an impact of other policy areas on EU peace and security interventions, especially when talking about resilience and migration.
- In social protection, EU support has been coherent with policies in areas like employment, gender equality, and migration. In several countries, it also included social inclusion, human rights and employability components. However, in some cases, social protection aspects related to a specific sector such as health were not always coordinated with the sector approach as a whole.
- In rural and agricultural development, EU interventions did not always take other policy areas into account. For instance, the linkages between building resilience to food crises and managed migration were not sufficiently developed. Yet, migration priorities seem to have had an impact on EU interventions. Environment received a lot of attention in the agricultural commodities projects and in the transport sector. However, the evidence of PCD in the transport sector is mixed.

3.2. Coherence between instruments⁶²

The evaluations found relatively little overlap between the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) and other external financing instruments (EFIs) as they often fund different priorities or actions. In principle, the diversity of financing instruments allows for the design and implementation of programmes to be tailored to the needs and constraints of the different contexts (48). For instance:

- The IcSP and EIDHR can complement areas where the EDF falls short due to its relatively long programming horizon and the requirement to agree on the use of funds with the recipient government (32). They are designed to complement the EDF and DCI by allowing a degree of flexibility and increasing the EU's ability to react quickly to emerging needs (33, 53, 54). Moreover, they can be mobilised only when other EFIs cannot intervene, which increases their complementarity (53, 54).
- IcSP actions complemented the peace and security programming of other EFIs and EUTFs, but the extent to which this happened was variable (54). Actions and programmes under the IcSP were used to achieve the objectives of other EFIs, to fill gaps, as a forerunner for interventions by other (larger) instruments, and as a funding instrument of last resort (5, 33, 54). The lack of flexibility and lengthy procedures of most EFIs however hampered effective synergies with the IcSP (54).
- The EIDHR can intervene even when the government lacks the political will because its actions do not require partner government approval (53, 32). This, combined with the EIDHR's focus on supporting CSOs and human rights defenders in challenging environments, makes the EIDHR highly complementary to other EFIs.⁶³
- The DCI can complement the EDF by enabling the EU to work on EU thematic priorities or at the pan-African level (52).

Box 16. Examples of successful use of multiple funding instruments

- In Togo, close cooperation between the different EU services led to coordinated actions, especially in political dialogue and projects in democratic governance. Funding from the EDF was supplemented by EU thematic programmes (Food Security, CSO-LA and Gender) and instruments (EIDHR and the Instrument for Stability). Availability of the different instruments enabled the EU to respond to a variety of situations and to intervene both in the short-term and in the longer term, which is crucial in a situation of fragility. (38)
- In Ethiopia, the EU capitalised on both its political dialogue on migration and the multiplicity of available instruments to maximise support to the sector over 2010-2016. The EU supported migration because of the role of Ethiopia as the main host for migrants and refugees in the Horn of Africa. Among other, it provided support to security through the APF and to migration through the Pan-African Programme (DCI programme), two important bilateral migration projects as well as other EDF funded projects. (32)

At a thematic level, there were positive examples of coordination and complementarity in many areas. Thematic programmes were seen to fill gaps that could not be covered by geographical instruments in the areas of environment and climate change and social protection (17, 47).

⁶² The main external financing instruments (EFIs) reviewed in this section are the 11th EDF, the DCI, the IcSP, and the EIDHR (evaluation reports 32, 33, 52, 53, 54). Whereas none of these instruments focuses solely on Africa, they all support interventions on the continent. In addition, the EU Trust Fund for Africa and EIB interventions are also reviewed in this chapter (reports 4, 5, 14, 15). Finally, this section draws on several thematic and geographical evaluation reports (e.g. reports 16, 17, 35, 40, 48).

⁶³ For instance, the Human Rights Crisis Facility provides confidential assistance to CSOs in countries (including in Sub-Saharan Africa) where public financial support would be impossible or put organisations and individuals at risk (53).

Table 22. Evidence of coherence between instruments from thematic evaluations

Preventing conflict and instability	Rural and agricultural development	Social development	Private sector development
Strong policy drive for close coordination among all EU instruments responding to conflict and crisis through the Comprehensive or Integrated Approach. There was also progress in the coordination of programming of the APF with Regional Indicative Programmes (1, 2). Positive examples of complementarity can also be found in the Central African Republic, where the EU provided assistance through the Bêkou trust fund, traditional development aid, three military Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations, civilian crisis response and humanitarian aid (4). On the other hand, in West Africa, complementarity between peace and security instruments was not as strong as expected (43). In the field of peace and security, neither the Commission nor the EEAS had analysed the comparative advantages of all the instruments at their disposal (2).	There were creative approaches and good practices in building synergies between different EU financing instruments, and in linking country programmable and thematic instruments that provided timely, flexible and predictable funding to contribute to building resilience to food crises (16). Good practices concern: (i) the linking of EU development and humanitarian action; and (ii) collaboration between Commission services in Ethiopia and Mali (16). A thematic programme in the field of environment and climate change was able to deal with issues that could not be adequately covered by geographic instruments (17).	Despite complementarity between the instruments used by the EU to support social protection and the efforts to link social protection interventions to other interventions (e.g. humanitarian assistance, food security), the level of synergy achieved has remained limited (47). Still, thematic programmes could fill gaps when there was no room for social protection under geographical bilateral instruments – although their use to support social protection has been limited (47). Positive examples of complementarity between social protection interventions and ECHO activities were found e.g. in Ethiopia (47).	In private sector development and EIB interventions, the evaluation findings were mixed on coordination with other key stakeholders, such as the European Commission (EC). The coordination mechanism between the EIB and EC worked well in several cases, but coordination was limited where it would have been useful (15). In Togo, for instance, there was a lack of comprehensive cooperation between the EIB and other instruments but in Côte d'Ivoire there has been successful coordination (36, 38).

In terms of coherence of EU instruments, the evaluations report the following main findings.

At the level of design and programming, **there are mechanisms to ensure complementarity and coordination** between different units and instruments (1, 5, 40, 32, 52). The Quality Support Groups (QSG) process is important in this regard as it ensures interaction between units and enhances complementarity between instruments – although the levels of participation by the different units vary (1, 32, 40). Country fiches (produced by the EEAS and DEVCO) that provide an overall view of developments in each country and of the EU's work, including the instruments used, were introduced under the 11th EDF to improve complementarity and minimise overlap (32).

Risks of thematic overlaps and duplication between instruments were identified, especially between the EDF and the DCI, and particularly in budget lines managed by Brussels (32, 52). There was also some ambiguity as to which given instrument should be used in a particular situation, e.g. in the field of democracy, civil society support and human rights (53, 17). The lack of coordination that was observed at times resulted in unexploited synergies in project implementation and there are examples of similar issues being addressed in the same country by different instruments (5, 35, 48). There were also difficulties to transition from using one instrument to another. This was due to differences between services and units in mandates, objectives and procedures (i.e. between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO) and a lack of synchronisation of timelines (16, 32).

Some evaluations suggest that one of the factors contributing to overlaps and duplication is the centralised and largely compartmentalised decision-making and programming in Brussels while the day-to-day management is in the EU Delegations (32, 48, 40, 52). In some cases, this set-up led to insufficient consultation of the EU Delegation in project selection and in projects that were not in line with the Delegation's area of concentration and expertise (32). The lack of EU Delegation capacity and human resources affected the extent to which overlaps and complementarities could be addressed (32, 40). That these Delegations did not have a full overview of EU-funded programmes and projects resulted in inefficiencies and high transaction costs. This was a key limitation for the EU to translate its investment in regional cooperation and in Africa more generally into policy influence and transformative impact (35).

Lack of specific guidance for aid programming was a factor hindering complementarity and effective synergies between different instruments. While the 11th EDF and DCI regulations called for coherence, complementarities and synergies, the Programming Instructions did not give specific guidance on how to achieve this (32, 52). Also, in the case of the EUTF for Africa, despite the emphasis on ensuring complementarity with other instruments, the evaluation found no instructions on how to achieve this (5).

The following table summarises the main factors contributing or hindering complementarity between instruments.

Table 23. Enabling and inhibiting factors affecting complementarity and synergies between instruments

Enabling factors	Inhibiting factors
<i>Instrument design and procedures</i> • Differentiation between the instruments: clear mandates, and focus areas, both regional and thematic (52, 53, 32) • Mechanisms and procedures exist to ensure complementarity and coordination between different units and instruments (5, 40, 32, 52) • A shared thematic/topical focus between thematic and geographic instruments (17) <i>Coordination and collaboration</i> • Close cooperation between EU services (16, 38) <i>Political commitment and ownership</i> • Political commitment to invest resources (in e.g. resilience) (16)	<i>Instrument design and procedures</i> • Lack of collective strategy guiding the action of the various internal EU services and instruments (e.g. for peace and security) (48) • Differences in procedures, programming cycles, organisational priorities and mandates leading to challenging transitions between different instruments (16, 32) • Lack of flexibility and lengthy procedures (54) • Lack of specific guidance at programming level and on which instrument should be used (5, 17, 32, 52, 53) • Fragmentation of EU financing (e.g. in the resilience-building area) (16) <i>Coordination and collaboration</i> • Different decision and management centres (32) coupled with centralised and compartmentalised decision making (32, 48, 40, 52) • Lack of resources, involvement or capacities at EU Delegation level (32, 17) • Communication and coordination issues between Brussels and EU Delegations and in programming and project implementation (1, 32, 48, 40, 52)

Box 17. Key takeaways from the evaluations on coherence between EU instruments

• The evaluations found relatively little overlap between the 11th EDF and other EFIs, as they often funded different priorities or actions. • At thematic level, there were positive examples of coordination and complementarity in e.g. the areas of rural and agricultural development and peace and security. Thematic programmes were seen to fill gaps that could not be covered by geographical instruments in the areas of environment and climate change and social protection. • There are procedures, such as Quality Support Groups, to ensure complementarity and coherence at the level of design and programming. Still, the evaluations identified that specific programming guidance on how to achieve complementarity between instruments was absent. • Some evaluations found risks of thematic overlaps between different instruments. One contributing factor to these overlaps was the insufficient coordination between Brussels and EU Delegations. The comparative advantages of all instruments the EU had at its disposal were not always clear.

3.3. The quality and use of monitoring and evaluation

The EU makes considerable investments in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for both accountability and learning purposes. Key aspects of the EU approach are (1) the Results-Oriented-Monitoring (ROM) System, (2) strategic evaluations commissioned by a dedicated evaluation unit in DEVCO, (3) as well as decentralised evaluations that are commissioned by the EU Delegations. During the period under review, the extent to which the first two aspects were fit for their stated purpose was subject of two dedicated reviews of the European Court of Auditors (49, 50). M&E is also addressed in many of the other evaluations analysed here.

According to the European Court of Auditors (ECA), while the EU makes **considerable investments** in monitoring the performance of its programmes, it does not systematically ensure that this monitoring is used in the **effective implementation** of these programmes. The same applies to the evaluations, for which the ECA finds that proper mechanisms to monitor follow-up and dissemination are not in place (49). When it comes to making information on results available to the European Parliament, member states and the wider public, another study by the ECA observes that the Commission has taken important steps towards launching an international cooperation and development **results framework**. It moreover finds that risks to a result-oriented approach, including ensuring consistent terminology, up-to-date data and increased complexity due to the integration of cross-cutting areas, were all acknowledged by the Commission (50).

The following table presents additional findings on M&E in relation to specific themes and areas.

Table 24. Evidence on M&E systems from thematic evaluations

Preventing conflict and instability	Private sector development	Rural and agricultural development	Social development
M&E for the African Peace Facility was not optimal and often limited to the level of outputs (54). There is scope to move to a system that analyses effectiveness and discusses ways to improve performance (1).	It is “difficult to obtain a clear and complete picture of the results obtained by PSD interventions and even more of impact levels for the different dimensions of PSD support” (11). Other interventions either lacked thorough M&E (11) or did not monitor beyond output level (9).	M&E of EU support to rural and agricultural development can be enhanced (16). The almost complete absence of ex-post evaluation of transport infrastructure projects made it difficult to quantify (or in some cases even identify) the contribution of the EU's transport sector support to positive trends of economic and social parameters of many African countries (19). Evaluation efforts limited to the output level and the evaluation of socio-economic change or poverty alleviation did not take place (19).	The quality of M&E varied but sound M&E systems existed for support to social protection though these were at times constrained by limited data availability
M&E in crisis or conflict affected contexts was challenging (54).		When, from the beginning, interventions in environmentally-sensitive sectors incorporated specific outcomes and indicators that were clearly directed towards improvement of the environmental situation, actual implementation was more likely to correspond with the intentions (17).	Weakness of national statistical systems, and in terms of a results focus and related measurable indicators (47)
Insufficient quality of logframes and indicators (54).	Unclear EU project reporting that did not specify which of the specific activities undertaken contributed to achieving the expected results contributed to this (11).	Uneven quality of reporting by implementing partners (18) plus insufficient on-site visits by programme managers and insufficient ROM reviews (18). Food security indicators fell short of monitoring progress in building resilience (16) and baselines and M&E reports were absent (16)	
Not all implementing partners used the EUTF common monitoring platform but instead used a variety of information and M&E systems. An overview of the results of the EUTF as a whole was not available (5).		Resilience measurement tools were not geared towards measuring the contribution of specific programmes and projects to building resilience (16).	
Evidence on the actual implementation of the findings and decisions of the APSA monitoring system (APSA 2017-2020 Roadmap, Action Plans and log frames and the monitoring of APF actions) and whether AU and EU officials provided adequate follow-up is mixed (1).			Ethiopia and Malawi offer good examples of analysis beyond level of inputs and outputs, and of lessons learnt considered in adjusting programmes (47). On the other hand, in Lesotho, the EU failed to take into consideration evaluations and lessons from past experience in the process of choosing target sectors and in programme design and implementation (37).

4. Conclusions: Results of EU development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa

This chapter presented a structured review of 55 independent evaluations to determine the extent to which the EU's cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa was effective during the period under review. This evaluation evidence mainly concerns the interventions of the European Commission; the evidence on the operations of the European Investment Bank – representing a quarter of EU institutions' ODA – is much more limited in comparison.

The analysed evaluation reports generally offer a detailed picture of the EU institutions' cooperation with SSA-states and regional bodies in a range of important thematic areas and of the way in which these institutions have shaped development cooperation with this part of the world.

The evaluations present rich and detailed evidence concerning the relevance of the choices made and approaches taken, as well as the results accomplished. By comparison, across the board, they are less robust as to the sustainability of these results as well as to what extent these helped to advance key development outcomes and advanced the overall objectives of EU development policy. The evidence base is also comparatively thin on gender equality as a cross-cutting area, particularly in light of the high importance attached to it in recent years, as well as in relation to joint programming and policy dialogue. This is not unique to the EU as a donor, but represents a shared evaluation challenge faced by all DAC members to different degrees. Further to this overall picture, the following specific findings can be highlighted:

- **Peace and security:** EU development aid has had a positive impact and contributed to more stability in African crisis regions. Capacities for conflict prevention and management have been enhanced. EU support enabled the African Peace and Security Architecture to be operational and indispensable.
- It is challenging to provide detailed evidence at the level of outcomes and on impact because more fundamental long-term effects typically take more time to achieve. While the factors and effects of the conflicts were successfully mitigated, support has generally not been geared to tackling the root causes of conflict. Inhibiting factors to the impact and sustainability of the EU's support included the weak financial, operational and institutional capacity of the partners, as well as the limited political commitment and ownership of local stakeholders. Linked to this, financial sustainability was also a major issue.
- **Private sector development:** A crucial aspect of EU support to private sector development is the improved access to long-term finance by small and medium enterprises. The EU has improved partners' trade policy environments, international trade standard setting, capacity of public institutions, and trade development but the sustainability of these results is mixed. The EU's ability to increase employment through Trade Related Assistance however was limited.
- **Rural development:** EU interventions in the energy, transport, resilience and environment sectors brought overall tangible and positive results that improved the day-to-day living conditions of populations and have contributed to the reduction of poverty. Long-term impacts were however mixed, as transformative change and reversing worsening trends in some cases (e.g. in the environment and climate change sector) require more time and an upscaling of support.
- Prioritisation of the issues of climate change, food security and road maintenance by national authorities was crucial to achieve impact and for the results to be sustainable. The extent to which EU interventions involved innovative tools and financing instruments, took into account local capacity issues and paid sufficient attention to the institutionalization of the support provided were also critical for effectiveness, impact and sustainability.
- **Social development:** The EU contributed to improved equitable access to basic social services (education, health, water and sanitation) and to improved living standards. EU support also had

positive results for women and girls, as it contributed to better access to education and health for women and girls.

- **Budget support** played an important catalytic role in the access to basic social services, by enabling increased sectoral expenditure, accompanying policy dialogue and other policy support. Yet the quality of institutional change and of services (e.g. health, education), and the sustainability of the achievements remained low. Funding and sectoral investment, complemented by capacity-building and institutional development were important factors enabling or inhibiting the impact or the sustainability of EU interventions. **Policy dialogue** is a key aspect of budget support operations, yet its effectiveness requires consistent and frequent engagement, while also being susceptible to changes in the overall relationship between the government and its external partners.
- **Gender:** Although many programming documents included gender issues in their project design, and some achieved results, there was no evidence of gender being systematically addressed in the implementation of the projects and activities, resulting in the impression that results were achieved by default.
- Important results were achieved with regards to gender equality in the education, social protection, health and agriculture sectors. Although programmes include gender in their project design, information on achieved results is limited due to absence of relevant gender indicators, which could form the basis of results-oriented monitoring systems.
- **Donor cooperation:** EU added value has been particularly strong in areas where the Commission has acquired specific capacity and expertise, such as budget support, that distinguishes it from other donors. The joint programming process did not, by itself, reduce overall aid fragmentation in the countries where it took place. Yet, joint programming triggered improved harmonisation, coordination and aid complementarity and favoured convergence among the EU and MS regarding strategies and policies at country level. Joint programming has also remained very much an EU and member states exercise, thus limiting the potential ownership of the process by the partner country.
- The impact of delegated cooperation (DC) has also been limited, mainly due to insufficient linkages between DC and new instruments such as joint programming and the lack of a comprehensive DC policy framework. Finally, insufficient attention was paid to political economy considerations, such as strategic interests, political factors and institutional and procedural features of European donors.
- **Policy Coherence for development:** Although the EU's PCD commitment is enshrined in the EU Treaties, there is no common understanding of the approach and there is a lack of clarity among institutional stakeholders on the extent of this commitment towards developing countries. Policy coherence is covered by various evaluations that were reviewed, but generally in a cursory manner without offering detailed evidence.
- **Coherence between instruments:** The evaluations found little overlap between the different EU-instruments, as they often funded different priorities or actions. At thematic level, there were positive examples of coordination and complementarity for instance in the areas of rural and agricultural development and peace and security. Thematic programmes were seen to fill gaps that could not be covered by geographical instruments in the areas of environment and climate change and social protection.
- Procedures were put in place to ensure complementarity and coherence on the level of design and programming, but the evaluations also identified absence of specific guidance at the programming level on how complementarity between instruments should be achieved. Some evaluations found risks of thematic overlaps between different instruments. One contributing factor to these overlaps is due to insufficient coordination between Brussels and EU Delegations. The comparative advantages of all instruments the EU had at its disposal were not always clear.

Following this summary of the available evaluation evidence on the EU's development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa, a few concluding reflections are put forward as regards observed evaluation gaps that could be addressed in the future.

With the exception of a dedicated, yet mainly process-oriented, evaluation of joint programming and a limited number of joint evaluations conducted together with a number of EU member states, the evaluations reviewed did not present detailed evidence on the EU's added value vis-à-vis the bilateral development cooperation of EU member states active in the same countries or regions. While there is merit in critically evaluating the EU's engagement as a development actor in its own right, the degree to which the EU's activities and involvement complement that of the member states is less scrutinised. The relatively low number of joint evaluations conducted also indicates member states' low interest, but given the unchanged legal status of EU development policy (a parallel competence), there is a strong case for a dedicated evaluation thereof.

In addition to this collective evaluation challenge, this study observed that some of the key priorities of EU development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa have not, or not sufficiently, been subject to independent scrutiny. Four principal evaluation gaps with regard to the EU's development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa were identified that could inform future evaluation inquiry:

- First of all, it has been over ten years since the EU commissioned an external independent evaluation of the management of development cooperation through civil society organisations (CSOs) as 'delivery channels'. A dedicated and detailed evaluation of the EU's support to CSOs as an end in itself, otherwise a key feature of the EU's policies, has not yet been undertaken.
- Second, as a result of the establishment of the EUTF and the EIP in recent years, the role for member states' implementing agencies and development finance institutions in implementing EU development cooperation interventions has increased. Further discussion is needed as to how the EU and the member states may best evaluate these forms of cooperation that have gained prominence in recent years.
- Third, the EIB should consider further investment in independent evaluation of its operations in Africa in view of its stronger profile today, as appropriate in direct cooperation with the European Commission's evaluation services.
- Finally, a dedicated review on the effectiveness of EU cooperation in terms of democracy promotion has not been undertaken. This is to some respect covered by the evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), yet it does not cover the interventions relating to human rights that were financed through other external financing instruments.

Annexes

Annex 1: Summary of the Terms of Reference⁶⁴

In December 2013, the EU's multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for 2014-2020 was approved. Out of a total of EUR 908.4 billion, close to EUR 59 billion (6%) was set aside for the EU's external actions, including development aid and humanitarian assistance. Outside the MFF, there is also the European Development Fund (EDF) for development cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, plus overseas countries and territories.⁶⁵ The EDF, linked to the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, is funded from direct contributions from EU Member States; for the period 2014-2020 it has a total budget of EUR 30.5 billion. It is estimated that the Dutch contribution to EU external action in the period 2014-2020 is between EUR 3.6 and 4.5 billion.

Different departments of the European Commission are involved in running these budgets for external action⁶⁶ in consultation with the EU's diplomatic arm, the European External Action Service. There is range of European instruments to do so. These instruments vary considerably in terms of their legal base, geographical and thematic focus, target groups, etc.⁶⁷ In addition, various trust funds were established in recent years.⁶⁸ Also the European Investment Bank has a role in EU aid implementation as it invests in a wide range of projects in, amongst others, sub-Saharan Africa.

The minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation has committed to inform Parliament more systematically on EU aid effectiveness. The review supports this commitment and aims to answer three main questions:

- How have EU overall development policies and the EU's overall policies vis-à-vis Sub-Saharan Africa in particular evolved in the period 2013-2018 and what explains the developments that have taken place?
- How has EU development spending in Sub-Saharan Africa developed in the period 2013- 2018 and what explains these developments?⁶⁹
- What is known of the results accomplished by EU development aid in Sub-Saharan Africa and what explains these accomplishments?

To address the first question, the review will capture the most significant elements of *inter alia* the EU Global Strategy (June 2016), the European Consensus on Development (June 2017), A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action (June 2017) and the Trade for All strategy (October 2015). The second question will be answered on the basis of the Commission's annual and financial reports. The third question

⁶⁴ A complete version of the terms of reference can be found on IOB's website: <https://www.iob-evaluatie.nl/publicaties/terms-of-reference/2019/11/01/literatuuronderzoek-europese-ontwikkelingssamenwerking-met-sub-sahara-afrika>

⁶⁵ The Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the ministry of Foreign Affairs (IOB) finalised a policy evaluation of the EDF in 2013.

⁶⁶ These include the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) and the EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (ECHO).

⁶⁷ Instruments include: the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the Partnership Instrument (PI), the European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR), the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC) and the Instrument for Greenland (IfG).

⁶⁸ These include the EU Emergency Trust fund for Africa, the Africa Investment Platform and the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (EU-AITF), which is an instrument of the wider EU-Africa Infrastructure Partnership, Bêkou (Central African Republic), MADAD (Syria-related), FRIT (related to Syrian refugees in Turkey), and Colombia.

⁶⁹ This question concerns both financial flows per se and the different funding modalities as well as the channels that the Commission has used to implement its development aid.

will be answered primarily on the basis of existing evaluation material of the European Commission. The review of these evaluations follows the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and will address the following more specific questions:

- **Relevance**⁷⁰: (i) What do evaluations tell about the relevance of EU development aid interventions, in particular for the poor (women & men)? (ii) How do they interpret the notion of the added value of EU development aid vis-à-vis bilateral aid of the EU-member states and what are the findings and conclusions with respect to this added value?
- **Effectiveness**⁷¹ – (i) What do evaluations tell about the ability of EU development aid to achieve results (main outputs) and realise the expected development outcomes and impact (including attention for gender equality)? (ii) What do they tell about the results of the EU's political dialogue with partner countries?⁷²
- **Impact and sustainability**⁷³: What do evaluations tell about the impact of EU development aid and the sustainability of outputs and benefits
- **Coherence**: What do evaluations tell about the influence of EU policies in other areas (i.e. trade, agriculture, security, human rights and migration) on the results and outcomes of development aid? (ii) What do they tell of the results of initiatives to ensure coherence and complementarity of EU development aid with aid provided by EU-member states, other donors (including NGOs), the private sector and national government funding? (iii) Have coherence and complementarity between different EU-instruments (including EU trust funds, EIB interventions) been ensured?
- **Efficiency**⁷⁴: (i) What do evaluations tell about the efficiency of EU development aid? (ii) What is known about the use of monitoring and evaluation to improve development effectiveness?

The review will finally compare the findings with respect to the above questions with the outcomes reported in IOB's policy evaluation on the European Development Fund of 2013.

Geographically, the review focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa as defined by the UN. With this focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, the review will be limited to publications concerning the following instruments: EDF, DCI, EIDHR, IcSP, and the above-mentioned EU trust funds targeting Africa. The review will also cover the work of the EIB in the region. The review focuses on development aid and the different types of interventions that the EU finances (programmes, projects, budget support) but does not deal with EU humanitarian assistance. Thematically, the review will zoom in, where possible, on themes or topics that maintain a central position in the most recent policy note of the Dutch government on development aid ('Investing in global prospects'). These are: (i) preventing conflict and instability - including EU support for the African Peace and Security Architecture; (ii) private sector development (include trade-related assistance and infrastructure development); (iii) rural and agricultural development (including issues related to climate); (iv) social development (including education, water and sanitation, health and SRHR); (v) donor cooperation – *Working better together*; (vi) gender as a key cross-cutting theme; (vii) budget support; and (viii) political dialogue.

⁷⁰ Relevance refers to 'The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies' (OECD, 2002, Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, page 32).

⁷¹ Effectiveness refers to 'The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance' (OECD, 2002, page 20).

⁷² This includes e.g. the political dialogue referred to under Article 8 and Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement.

⁷³ Impacts refer to 'Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended' (OECD, 2002: 24) and sustainability to '(the) continuation probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time' (OECD, 2002: 36).

⁷⁴ Efficiency concerns '(a) measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results' (OECD, 2002: 21).

To answer the above review questions, a systematic desk review will be done of EU policy documents, EU evaluation reports (*strategic evaluations*) and, to a lesser extent, other documents (reports of the European Court of Auditors, grey literature, academic research) that were published in the period 2013– mid-2019. For the analysis of the evaluations, the methodology that was introduced under the umbrella of OECD/DAC for undertaking Development Effectiveness Reviews will be used.⁷⁵ Basis for the methodology will be the following set of documents:

IOB will sub-contract review implementation to an external party with good knowledge of EU development policies in general and EU-Africa relations in particular; and good knowledge of and familiarity with EU monitoring and evaluation systems. The report will be reviewed by Bas Limonard and Paul de Nooijer (IOB) and Hester Stoker of DIE-EX.

⁷⁵ See e.g. <https://www.oecd.org/derec/netherlands/UNWOMEN-Review-Final-Report-April-2015.pdf>. This approach was also used in IOB's EDF-policy evaluation. Two exceptions are relevant here: (i) the review will not be limited to a selection of evaluation reports as is proposed by the methodology; (ii) the review will not conduct its own quality assessment of the Commission's evaluations given the quality control process that exists at Commission level.

Annex 2: Evaluation reports reviewed for this study (n=55)

Themes	Title of report
Preventing conflict and instability	1. Evaluation of the implementation of the African Peace Facility as an instrument supporting African efforts to manage conflicts on the continent 2. European Court of Auditors, 2018, Special report No 20/2018: The African Peace and Security Architecture: need to focus EU support 3. European Court of Auditors, 2018, Special report n° 15/2018: Strengthening the capacity of the internal security forces in Niger and Mali: only limited and slow progress 4. European Court of Auditors, 2017, Special report no 11/2017: The Bêkou EU trust fund for the Central African Republic: a hopeful beginning despite some shortcomings 5. European Court of Auditors, 2018, Special report no 32/2018: European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Flexible but lacking focus
Donor cooperation	6. Strategic Evaluation of EU Joint Programming Process of Development Cooperation (2011-2015)
Gender	7. Strategic evaluation of EU Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Partner Countries (2010-2015)
Private sector development	8. Strategic evaluation of EU support to Research and Innovation for development in partner countries (2007-2013) 9. Review of evaluations of EU Private Sector Development Support to Third Countries 10. Strategic evaluation of the EU trade-related assistance in third countries (2004-2010) 11. Strategic evaluation of the EU support to private sector development in third countries (2004-2010) 12. Mid-Term Evaluation of the West Africa Private Sector Competitiveness Support Programme 13. European Court of Auditors, 2015, The ACP investment facility: does it provide added value? 14. European Investment Bank, 2018, Evaluation of EIB Intermediated Lending through the Investment Facility in ACP 15. European Investment Bank, 2014, Ex-post evaluation of EIB Technical Assistance Outside the EU, 2003-2013
Food security, climate change	16. Strategic Evaluation of the EU approach to resilience to withstand food crises in African Drylands (Sahel and Horn of Africa) 2007-2015 17. Strategic evaluation of the EU support to environment and climate change in third countries (2007-2013) 18. European Court of Auditors, 2015, Special Report No 15/2015: ACP–EU Energy Facility support for renewable energy in East Africa
Transport	19. Strategic evaluation of EU support to the transport sector in Africa (2005 - 2013)
Budget support	20. Joint Strategic Evaluation of Budget Support to Ghana (2005-2015) 21. Joint strategic evaluation of budget support to Sierra Leone (2002-2015) 22. Joint strategic evaluation of budget support to Burkina Faso (2009-2014) 23. Joint strategic evaluation of budget support to Uganda (2004-2013) 24. Joint Evaluation of Budget Support to Burundi (2005-2013) 25. Synthesis of Budget Support Evaluations (2010-2014) 26. Joint strategic evaluation of Budget Support for Mozambique (2005-2012) 27. Joint strategic evaluation of budget support for Tanzania (2005-2012) 28. Strategic evaluation of the EU Budget Support for South Africa (2000-2011) 29. European Court of Auditors, 2016, Special report no 35/2016: The use of budget support to improve domestic revenue mobilisation in sub-Saharan Africa
General and EDF	30. Effective Development Cooperation: Has the European Union delivered? 31. Evaluation of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (2000-2015) 32. Evaluation report on external financing instruments – 11th European Development Fund 33. Mid-term review report of the External Financing Instruments

Sub-Saharan Africa	34. Strategic evaluation of the European Union's Cooperation with the Republic of Chad (2008-2014) 35. Strategic Evaluation of EU cooperation with the Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean regions 2008-2015 36. External strategic evaluation of the European Union's cooperation with the Republic of Ivory Coast (2007-2015) 37. Strategic evaluation of the European Union's cooperation with Lesotho (2008-2013) 38. Strategic evaluation of the EU cooperation with the Republic of Togo (2007-2013) 39. Strategic evaluation of the EU cooperation with the Democratic Republic of Congo (2008-2013) 40. Strategic evaluation of the EU cooperation with Cameroon (2007-2012) 41. Strategic evaluation of the EU cooperation with Kenya (2006-2012) 42. Joint strategic evaluation of the EU cooperation with Burundi (2005-2011)
Other evaluations	43. External Evaluation of the European Union's Cooperation with the West Africa Region (2008-2016) 44. Evaluation of the EU aid delivery mechanism of delegated cooperation (2007-2014) 45. Evaluation of Blending, Final Report Volume I – Main Report, December 2016 46. External Evaluation of the European Union's Policy Coherence for Development (2009-2016) 47. Evaluation of EU support to social protection in external action (2007-2013) 48. Review of strategic evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development 49. European Court of Auditors, 2014, EuropeAid's evaluation and results oriented monitoring systems 50. European Court of Auditors, 2015, Special Report No 21/2015: Review of the risks related to a results-oriented approach for EU development and cooperation action 51. European Court of Auditors, 2018, Special report no 35/2018: Transparency of EU funds implemented by NGOs: more effort needed Effective Development Cooperation: Has the European Union delivered? 52. External Evaluation of the Development Cooperation Instrument (2014-mid 2017) 53. External evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (2014-mid 2017) 54. External evaluation of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2014-mid 2017) 55. Thematic global evaluation of the European Union's support to Integrated Border Management and fight against Organised Crime (2013)

Annex 3: Selected findings and conclusions of the 2013 IOB study of the European Development Fund

In 2013, the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out a policy evaluation on EU development cooperation focusing on the EDF (IOB 2013). Its overall purpose was to account for Netherlands funding and other inputs provided for EU development cooperation in the period 2000-2010 and - based on the findings of this policy evaluation – to gain lessons for future policy development and implementation.

Below are selected key findings and conclusions of the aforementioned study of relevance to the present study⁷⁶.

Selected findings of relevance to the present study

1. The EDF has a relatively strong poverty-focus, compared to other EU external financing instruments. Poverty criteria played a key role in allocating resources at the country level.
2. Ownership has been a key principle driving EU aid, in particular in the ACP-EU partnership through the co-management system. Yet pressure from the EP and member states have led to an increase in facilities and trust funds that bypass the national programming process.
3. A considerable part of EU aid to Sub-Saharan Africa has been provided in the form of general and sector budget support.
4. The Commission does not report sufficiently on (net) outcomes, for example in relation to UN development goals. Budget support evaluations do not sufficiently report on political effects, e.g. human rights and rule of law. Evaluations further observe that sustainability is a challenge throughout EU development cooperation to Sub-Saharan Africa, and that ambitions on cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender and environment) are often not translated into practice.
5. There remains a lack of clarity on the meaning of key concepts of EU added value and complementarity. There is no commonly shared view of areas where the Commission enjoys a comparative advantage. The commitment to concentrate EC aid into specific areas has not been realised.
6. The EU's assumed comparative advantage in development cooperation with regional economic communities is not supported by evaluation evidence.
7. Devolution of the EU's aid management sought to move decision-making closer to Delegations in the field. Yet approval of country strategies and budget support remains centralised. The co-management system with national authorising officers in ACP states remains a cause for concern.
8. EU Court of Auditors assesses that financial management, risk management, financial planning and reporting has improved over time. One issue concerns the significant reserves that remain in the EDF.
9. The EU's Result-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) system is of doubtful usefulness for aggregate reporting, and the Joint Evaluation Unit's means are limited given the size of the EU's development cooperation budget.
10. Availability of public information at ACP country level (decentralised evaluations, annual reports, reviews, etc.) is still rather limited.

Selected conclusions of relevance to the present study

1. Convergence between EU aid principles and key principles of Netherlands aid

⁷⁶ The 2013 evaluation was different in scope as it only covered the EDF and it also evaluated the Netherlands' influence on the EDF, which lies beyond the scope of this study.

2. Limited progress and frequent changes to discussion on coordination and complementarity of EU aid
3. EDF has a clear poverty focus, yet little is known about its results in this respect
4. EU aid management has improved, yet concerns remain cumbersome procedures and quality of M&E systems
5. Limited effectiveness of Cotonou-based approaches to policy and political dialogue

Annex 4: Study methodology

The different chapters of this study provide some details on its methodological choices and approach, which this annex supplements with additional descriptive information. It is presented for each chapter, as appropriate.

Supplement to chapter 2 (funding patterns)

a. Databases and websites with information on EU development aid and results reporting

In 2005, the European Parliament, European Council and European Commission adopted a joint political statement entitled the '**European Consensus on Development**'. The joint statement consisted of a first part presenting the overall vision, followed by a second part specifying how the European Community's development policy would contribute to achieving this vision. The second last paragraph of the statement instructed the Commission to systematically report on the entirety of the Commission's development cooperation operations by means of a results-oriented annual report: *"The Commission should develop a set of measurable objectives and targets for implementing this Policy and assess progress against this on a regular basis, in the Annual Report for implementation of the European Community Development Policy"* (EU 2006: 18).⁷⁷

In March 2015, the Commission launched the **EU International Cooperation and Development Results Framework** through the publication of the Staff working document [EU International Cooperation and Development Results Framework](#). It presented a comprehensive methodology for measuring the results of its external action and marked a significant step in improving the way the EU will manage and report results in this area. This is one of the first systems within the Commission services that systematically measures and reports results and publishes both aggregated and non-aggregated results data.

The annual report typically consists of a synthesis report designed to reach a broad audience, complemented by a longer document with statistical and complementary qualitative assessments, the latter carrying the status of a Staff Working Document. In addition to the annual reports, there are a number of other reporting processes, which add up to an elaborate 'reporting universe' on the European Union's development cooperation activities:

1. **Accountability reports (2011 - 2015):** in 2011, the 'EU Accountability Report on Financing for Development' succeeded EU reporting on ODA by the EU and its member states that was initiated in 2003. The Accountability reports were more detailed, in particular on the member states' engagement, and were phased out in 2015 as the Commission considered new approaches to reporting in line with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.
2. **EU results reporting:** in 2016 and 2017, the EU published a separate results report that presented statistics in relation to the EU International Cooperation Development Results Framework. This framework and the associated reporting was revised and integrated into the annual reports.⁷⁸
3. In addition, various **third parties** - consisting of NGOs and international organisations - engage in scrutiny of the EU's development aid. These notably include the reporting by the EU NGO federation CONCORD (the 'Aid Watch' reports) and the OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) **peer reviews** on the EU as most recently published in 2018.

⁷⁷ N.B. the Consensus was adopted in 2005 and published in the Official Journal of the European Union in early 2006: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ%3AC%3A2006%3A046%3A0001%3A0019%3AEN%3APDF>

⁷⁸ See: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/10102/2018/EN/SWD-2018-444-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>

4. **EU Aid Explorer:** finally, the European Union is taking part in publishing ODA statistics using open data standards as developed by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). Hence, in addition to the OECD's Creditor Reporting System (CRS), statistics on the EU's ODA activities can also be viewed on a variety of open platforms, including the EU's own initiative the EU Aid Explorer.⁷⁹

In addition to reporting on inputs (i.e. amounts of ODA committed or disbursed), several of the above reporting processes are also used to track the EU's contributions to advancing the global development agenda. In this regard, the above reporting universe faced the challenge of relating to several interconnected result frameworks:

- First of all, during part of the period under review, the EU's development cooperation aimed to further the eight **Millennium Development Goals** that guided the international community's engagement during the period 2000-2015.
- The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 **Sustainable Development Goals** in September 2015 triggered a rethink of the EU's reporting approaches which prompted a revision of the results framework adopted earlier in 2015 and resulted in the phasing out of the aforementioned Accountability Report.
- In 2017, following negotiations between the Council, Commission and Parliament on the basis of a Commission proposal, the New European Consensus on Development was adopted and replaced its 2005 predecessor. This document introduced the categorisation of the 17 SDGs and the associated indicators into the so-called **5Ps: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership**. The EU's results framework was revised in 2018 in line with the New Consensus.⁸⁰

The above set of frameworks meant that, during the period under review in this study, the EU's reporting on development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa had to relate to the MDGs, SDGs, the 5Ps, as well as to other thematic priorities as determined in the EU's strategies.⁸¹ Whereas the 5Ps feature in the Commission's annual reporting, the essence of the reporting relates to the SDGs. One reason for the inconsistency is that there are ongoing discussions in the OECD DAC about adapting the OECD Creditor Reporting System, which would allow the application of SDG markers⁸², whereas the EU would have to make its own aggregations in relation to the 5Ps. The latter is not straightforward since there are a number of overlaps between the SDGs that relate to the various Ps.

b. Two observations on data consistency

First of all, the various reporting approaches do not always apply the same definition of sectors, or refrain from presenting definitions of such sectors. Moreover, they tend to use aggregate labels that include various sectors, to the point that the resulting totals presented are of limited descriptive value (e.g. 'multi-sector aid'). Other sources, such as the EU Aid Explorer, clarify that their sector definitions are based on the OECD Creditor Reporting System's purpose codes.⁸³ Yet these codes are defined in a rather concise manner, making a desk officer's decision to report an intervention as 'infrastructure', 'ICT' or 'energy' at least partially a subjective one.

⁷⁹ See <https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/>

⁸⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/10102/2018/EN/SWD-2018-444-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>

⁸¹ One example concerns the EU's separate reporting on aid for trade, with the 2019 edition available here: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/eu-aid-for-trade-progress-report-2019_en.pdf

⁸² The proposal of introducing such markers is available here: [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/STAT\(2018\)41/REV1/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/STAT(2018)41/REV1/en/pdf)

⁸³ These are available here: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/purposecodessectorclassification.htm>

Secondly, the involvement of several EU institutions and initiatives in development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa result in separate reporting processes on the individual initiatives. Specifically, in addition to the Commission's engagement that is covered in the annual reports, there is separate reporting on the European Investment Bank, which represents roughly a quarter of total EU development cooperation today.⁸⁴ The same applies to the various EU-managed trust funds, chief among them being the Union's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa created in 2015.⁸⁵ The OECD online statistics and the EU aid explorer tend to use different understandings and concepts of channels and modalities compared to the EU's own reporting processes.

Given the above observations, the choice was made to primarily rely on the EU Aid Explorer website and the OECD CRS, supplemented by the annual reporting in case additional information was available there.

Supplement to chapter 3 (evaluation evidence)

To analyse the evaluations, a **common analytical grid** was developed that allowed the study team to examine the various reports in a systematic and consistent manner, and capture the main findings in relation to evaluation criteria and the aforementioned eight Dutch priorities. It is emphasised that the present review does not present an analysis of the quality of the evaluations analysed, since the EU institutions that commissioned or produced these reports (as appropriate) have their own systems to assure this.

Once these individual grids were prepared and checked, the key findings were aggregated in an online spreadsheet that allowed the study team to cross-analyse the findings in relation to the eight priorities. While providing for a structured approach that the large number of evaluation reports necessitated, one limitation of the analysis is that different (combinations of) research methods were applied in the evaluation reports and that the evidence as collected thus differed in levels of robustness. Another limitation concerned the differing time periods that the various evaluations looked into, some going back before the 2013-2018 period under review here. Since this could not be differentiated or otherwise compensated for in the approach to analysis used, the analysis presented should be seen as a structured yet inter-subjective assessment of the EU's development cooperation results in Sub-Saharan Africa.

⁸⁴ See OECD's 2018 DAC Peer Review of the European Union.

⁸⁵ Headlines of the EU Emergency Trust Fund are reported in DEVCO's annual report, with further details on the expenditure presented in the reporting by the EUTF project staff (see: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/index_en).

Annex 5: Data grid used for the analysis of the 55 evaluations

Descriptive information	
Title of study/evaluation	
Focus (geographic, thematic, process)	
Legal instruments covered	
URL to online report	

Main findings in relation to evaluation criteria	
Relevance: (i) What do evaluations tell about the relevance of EU development aid interventions, in particular for the poor (women & men)? (ii) How do the evaluations interpret the notion of the added value of EU development aid vis-à-vis bilateral aid of the EU-member states and what are the findings and conclusions with respect to this added value?	
Result with page number between [brackets] (add further rows if needed)	Link to Dutch thematic priorities

Effectiveness – (i) What do evaluations tell about the ability of EU development aid to achieve results (main outputs) and realise the expected development outcomes and impact (including attention for gender equality)? (ii) What do they tell about the results of the EU's political dialogue with partner countries?	
Result with page number between [brackets] (add further rows if needed)	Link to Dutch thematic priorities

Impact and sustainability: What do evaluations tell about the impact of EU development aid and the sustainability of outputs and benefits (including environmental sustainability)?

Result with page number between [brackets] (add further rows if needed)	Link to Dutch thematic priorities

Policy coherence for development: What do evaluations tell about the influence of EU policies in other areas (i.e. trade, agriculture, security, human rights and migration) on the results and outcomes of development aid?	
Result with page number between [brackets] (add further rows if needed)	Link to Dutch thematic priorities

Complementarity: (i) What do evaluations tell of the results of initiatives to ensure coherence and complementarity of EU development aid with aid provided by EU-member states, other donors (including NGOs), the private sector and national government funding? (ii) Have coherence and complementarity between different EU-instruments (including EU trust funds, EIB interventions) been ensured?	
Result with page number between [brackets] (add further rows if needed)	Link to Dutch thematic priorities

Efficiency: (i) What do evaluations tell about the efficiency of EU development aid? (ii) What is known about the use of monitoring and evaluation to improve development effectiveness?	
Result with page number between [brackets] (add further rows if needed)	Link to Dutch thematic priorities

Does the report present any reflections that is of interest to research question 1, in particular reflections on the (un)intended consequences of policy changes?

(Overall assessment:) Does the report's findings inform any overall assessment in relation to changes since the outcomes of the 2013 IOB evaluation? (see annex 2)

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