

# *Implementors or Actors?*



Reviewing civil society's role in  
European Community development  
assistance in Kenya, Senegal,  
Bolivia and India





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## *European Community aid: democratising or marketing?*

This paper aims to provoke a debate on aid effectiveness between governments and civil society in Europe and aid recipient countries in the developing world. As the European Commission launches the Mid Term Review of its Country Strategy Paper (CSP) processes, this report offers a reality check on European Community (EC) efforts in Kenya, Senegal, Bolivia and India. We focus on the degree and quality of civil society participation in drawing up the CSPs, which determine how EC aid is allocated. We argue that tackling the democratic deficit in European aid will make Europe a more credible actor in development and foreign policy.

Current European foreign policy reforms risk subordinating development commitments to security and commercial agendas. The EU Security Doctrine suggests: *‘The challenge is to bring together the different instruments and capabilities: ... European assistance programmes, military and civilian capabilities from Member States and other instruments such as the European Development Fund. ... Diplomatic efforts, trade and environmental policies, should follow the same agenda. ... In a crisis there is no substitute for unity of command.’*<sup>1</sup> The trend is for aid policy to reflect the imperatives of European integration, not development needs. This paper argues that the politics in aid should be acknowledged and made more accountable. We contend that if Europe is serious about focusing its aid resources effectively on the task of poverty eradication, human rights and democratic development, then a participatory,

human rights-based approach should guide its development co-operation. Our research findings have two key political implications.

The first is that **civil society is a political actor**, but that too frequently EC aid programmes, EU Member States and developing country governments treat civil society organisations as little more than project implementors. The latest figures suggest that EC aid to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries prioritises transport (29%) and structural adjustment (25%), while in contrast social sectors – such as education and health – each receive under 10% of total funding.<sup>2</sup> If EC aid was genuinely accountable to people living in poverty, then spending priorities might look radically different. Participatory CSP processes could help tackle the democratic deficit that undermines effective development assistance.

The Mid Term Reviews offer an opportunity to learn lessons on good and bad practice. Strategy should be amended where necessary and civil society involved in the follow-up. For this to happen, the opportunity must not slip into an exercise in ticking boxes. The Commission President, relevant Commissioners and Foreign and Development Ministers in the EU Council and recipient country governments should all make this a political priority.

Our second key recommendation is that **Europe should become an ‘activist donor’**. Why and how? It is our conviction that Europe could and should play a progressive role in the international aid system to promote effective and accountable aid. This could have a multiplier effect. In Europe, the Commission should facilitate a process to promote best practice and harmonisation in EU Member State bilateral aid policy. In-country co-ordination should also be improved. Hence our proposal that the EC assume the role of an **activist donor**: promoting coherence, co-ordination and complementarity between Europe’s multilateral and bilateral aid programmes. This would complement broader efforts to clarify the EC’s value added in foreign policy.

Democratic transitions are inevitably complex. Neither map nor compass is provided. Civil society participation in aid decision-making is certainly

no panacea. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) cannot substitute for democratic governments. Indeed our research stands witness to this. We recognise that European donor agencies, developing country governments and civil society groups themselves are in a learning process. Clearly the relationships between development and foreign policy and EU efforts to promote civil society, good governance and democracy require further attention.

In the coming year, parallel reforms will include the increased devolution of EC aid management to in-country delegations, negotiations on the EC aid budget and an institutional restructuring in the new European Commission. Efforts to improve the effectiveness of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy could result in strategic co-ordination towards dysfunctional democracies and failed states. European policy could be shaped so that democratic, poverty-focused co-operation is clearly a top priority.

Recent experiences in Kenya, Senegal, Bolivia and India offer some valuable lessons. Recognising civil society as a relevant and legitimate political actor, not just as a pool of contract implementors, has the potential to revolutionise the effectiveness and accountability of European development co-operation.

- **Civil society organisations should be recognised as political actors**, with due consideration given to their diverse roles in policy formulation, aid programming, implementation, evaluation, public education, awareness-raising and watchdog activities. Civil society organisations also bear a responsibility to ensure their legitimacy and accountability to their members and beneficiaries.
- **Europe should assume the role of an ‘activist donor’** to promote EC and EU Member State official development assistance (ODA) focused on poverty eradication and the promotion of human rights and democracy. From the political level of Foreign Ministers and Commissioners to in-country EC delegations, the EU should prioritise the democratic accountability of its development aid. ●

# THEORY AND POLICY

*'Freedoms are not only the primary ends of development, they are also among its principal means. ... With adequate social opportunities, individuals can effectively shape their own destiny and help each other. They need not be seen primarily as passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programs. There is indeed a strong rationale for recognising the positive role of free and sustainable agency – and even of constructive impatience.'*

AMARTYA SEN, *Development as Freedom*, p11



# Civil society, participation and re-politicising development

‘Civil Society’ and ‘Participation’ are heavily contested terms in international development and political theory. Different users imbue the words with differing meanings to promote competing, even conflicting agendas. This section sketches the conceptual basis for analysis in this report.

During the 1990s donor agencies, including the EC, began to recognise that the harsh austerity measures imposed in developing countries through World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) actually worsened chronic poverty and often failed to generate sustainable economic development. Civil society movements in the North and South campaigned against ‘immoral and unjust’ donor policies and for a development politics based on human rights.

A new aid paradigm arose with major donor institutions adopting rhetoric on poverty reduction and ‘good governance’, in part associated with liberal democratic norms of political pluralism, accountability and transparency. Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen argued that increases in gross national product or export figures are meaningless without increases in rights and social development. Development became defined in terms of the rights, capacities and freedoms associated with realising human potential.

Civil society participation can offer one means to make aid accountable, targeted at need and realising rights rather than the ideological or supply-driven imperatives of donors. Local and grass-roots groups can have detailed knowledge about the conditions of vulnerable and marginalised sections of the population.<sup>3</sup> The World Bank has produced a ‘ladder of participation’ which describes the different potential levels of civil society engagement and participation. Traditionally donors are happy for participation to happen at project implementation level, at the bottom of the ladder. They are less comfortable or experienced with participation at the policy level. Civil society groups push for a stake in the policy decisions that can promote or undermine human development.

The belief that including civil society organisations (CSOs) has a positive contribution to make to national development policy-making rests on certain assumptions. The concept of civil society adopted in this report is rooted in a normative interpretation of civil society and a liberal pluralist view of politics.<sup>4</sup> Of course in the real world, organisations embody the defining qualities of ‘civil society’, such as autonomy and voluntariness, to varying degrees. Boundaries between state and civil society are blurred. CSOs may be dependent, membership involuntary, and internal workings neither participatory nor democratic.

The concept of ‘participation’ can also be a terminological Trojan Horse.<sup>5</sup> Technocratic or instrumentalised ‘participation rhetoric’ continues in all too many cases, without reform in core mandates, policies or spending allocation.

It is early days for implementing a participatory approach to development co-operation. Two fashions risk undermining progress on participation. Both reflect the donor’s exercise of political power, neither is entirely without merit. One is talk of aid as just another tool in the foreign policy toolbox. This view – the new Realism – favours hard conditionality and selectivity in relations with the South; aid reduced to an instrument. The other is the narrow reading of

*Technocratic or instrumentalised ‘participation rhetoric’ continues in all too many cases, without reform in core mandates, policies or spending allocation*

good governance, whereby the pendulum which swung towards NGOs and downsizing the state in the 1980s swings back entirely the other way, erasing civil society’s role. Of course the real challenge is not to de-politicise aid, but rather for participation to democratise aid politics.

# Country Strategy Papers and Non State Actors policy

The European Union provides more than half of global development assistance, over 28.7 billion euro in 2002,<sup>6</sup> of which 6.5 billion euro was pooled as EC aid and managed by the European Commission.<sup>7</sup> If properly focused, these sums could offer an immense contribution to democratic development and the needs of people living in chronic poverty.

In this section we review the development of the CSP policy to assess its strong points and identify any gaps and inconsistencies. This analysis then informs our evaluation of CSPs in Kenya, Senegal, Bolivia and India.

## Country Strategy Papers

Since the late 1990s, donor policy has coalesced around a recognition that aid programmes should (a) be coherent and (b) include a focus on poverty reduction and social development. The CSP processes reflect this policy shift. A fragmented and project-based aid culture was to be replaced by comprehensive country analysis and strategic approaches to aid programming. In policy papers and political rhetoric at least, local ownership and participation became acknowledged as key for aid effectiveness.

*Aid policy linked to democratic decision-making and analysis of country requirements should result in 'local ownership' – at least in theory*

Echoing the World Bank's move to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, the EU launched its CSP process in November 2000.<sup>8</sup> CSPs should be based on national development strategies drawn up by recipient governments.<sup>9</sup> Country Support Strategies and 'National Indicative Programmes' are to outline more detailed commitments and spending allocations. European Community aid should thus be based on an analysis of country requirements, rather than

a mechanistic continuation of previous aid programmes. Policy and programming should be linked to country analysis and based on 'local ownership' – in theory at least.<sup>10</sup>

CSP policy has also been shaped by a variety of regional approaches, generating incoherence and inconsistency. Relations with Kenya and Senegal are governed by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, signed in 2000, which establishes a comprehensive framework for trade, aid and political co-operation with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The Directorate General (DG) for Development in the European Commission has responsibility for Cotonou policy and programming. Aid is pooled in the European Development Fund (EDF), managed separately from aid to other regions in the European Community budget. Recipient country governments designate a National Authorising Officer (NAO) with responsibility for coordinating the CSP. In contrast with aid to other regions, the Cotonou Agreement opens up formal political spaces for Southern governments and civil society in its institutional architecture, such as through joint Parliamentary Assemblies. Arguably, this framework could move the donor-recipient relationship towards an innovative model of rights and obligation, rather than welfare and paternalism.

Bolivia and India do not benefit from the Cotonou framework. Their relations with the EU come under the Asia and Latin America (ALA) Financial Regulation and Regional and Country Strategy Papers. The 1992 Regulation is currently in the process of being reviewed and re-negotiated.<sup>11</sup> Relations with Asia and Latin America are managed by the Directorate General for External Relations (DG RELEX) with foreign policy

*The geographical split in the foreign and aid policy framework generates inconsistencies. These anomalies undermine a coherent EC development strategy*



objectives dominating as a consequence. Despite much preambular rhetoric on poverty and democracy, trade has dominated the EU-ALA relationship in practice.<sup>12</sup>

The Commission's own cross-departmental development policy watchdog (Inter-Service Quality Support Group) has produced two reports with damning findings on the early CSPs.<sup>13</sup> Problems arose due both to intractable challenges in some recipient countries and the varying capacity and commitment of EC delegations and country desks.<sup>14</sup> One report found that *'in 40% of the assessed documents, the poverty focus of EC aid was not well demonstrated or convincingly argued.'*<sup>15</sup> Whilst some CSPs included analysis of the national context, this analysis had failed to result in relevant EC funding.

The inconsistency in approach between the Cotonou and ALA frameworks has also terminally undermined a consistent EC strategy for country ownership of CSPs. It was left to a footnote in a CSP guidelines paper to clarify that for ALA countries under the EU's foreign policy framework *'the partner government's ... final agreement to the CSP is not obligatory.'*<sup>16</sup>

## Civil Society Participation

A coherent strategy on civil society participation has also been undermined by differences between the Cotonou and ALA frameworks. The EC's own evaluation in 2001 found that *'in 21% of the assessed documents, it was not demonstrated how the dialogue with NSAs [Non State Actors] had been organised or discussed ... or how NSAs would be involved in the implementation process.'*<sup>17</sup>

The Cotonou Agreement establishes innovative, legal commitments on engaging civil society in CSP policy formulation. Most importantly, this extends beyond implementing projects to include dialogue about co-operation policies and objectives.<sup>18</sup> Cotonou emphasises that aid beneficiaries should

### Civil Society and 'Non State Actors'

In the Cotonou jargon, civil society organisations are included under the concept of 'non state actors' or 'NSAs', a broad category covering every form of non-governmental association from indigenous social movements to international private sector lobbyists.

### Non State Actor participation in the Cotonou Agreement

- Consultation when developing Country and Regional Strategy Papers
- Consultation on National and Regional Indicative Programmes and sector strategies
- Involvement in programme and project implementation
- Participation in performance reviews

actually be consulted on what aid does and does not do. This sounds obvious but it is actually revolutionary. If realised, these commitments could go a long way to delivering on a human development agenda. In contrast countries in Latin America and Asia do not enjoy the same developmental framework. The Commission's own evaluation in 2001 found that consultations under the ALA programme were *'limited'*.<sup>19</sup>

Early operational guidelines were produced for ACP countries in March 2001 on engaging with 'Non State Actors' (NSAs) in consultations and aid implementation.<sup>20</sup> These guidelines stressed that civil society's involvement is a collective responsibility of all actors; the ACP government,

*This is potentially incendiary stuff; proactive EU delegations could assist the emergence of democratic debate in countries where there has been little or none*

local government, EC delegations and 'non state actors': *'Fundamentally it is up to NSAs to take the initiative.'*<sup>21</sup> Up to 15 % of total Cotonou aid is defined as an appropriate allocation for non-state actors in CSPs, although there is no minimum amount. EC delegations also have a 80,000 euro fund to facilitate in-country dialogue processes.<sup>22</sup>

The role of in-country EC delegations is described as that of critical observer and facilitator. Delegations are required to designate one official responsible for relations with non-state actors.<sup>23</sup> That official should negotiate with governments on methodologies for engaging with non-state actors.<sup>24</sup> This is potentially incendiary stuff. Proactive delegations could do much to assist the emergence of inclusive, indigenous civil society

processes and democratic debate in countries where there has been little or none. But equally EC delegations can do nothing – this depends on their discretion.

## Communication and Guidelines on Participation

Although CSPs were adopted as the major programming tool for all countries in 2000, it was not until 2003 that a policy applicable to non-state actors across all developing countries (including ALA countries) was formally agreed. The *Communication on the Participation of NSAs in EC Development Policy* contains no legally binding commitments.<sup>25</sup> It does however contain lots of general statements about how NSAs are ‘important actors’.

The *Guidelines on Principles and Good Practice for the Participation of Non State Actors in the development dialogues and consultations* followed in 2004.<sup>26</sup> These give further guidance to EC delegations on capacity building; mapping studies to analyse civil society;

*In DG External Relations and EuropeAid, officials often assume that the word ‘participation’ means funding NGO projects, and not much else*

and tips on consultations and dialogue.<sup>27</sup> Small and grass-roots organisations get a special mention.<sup>28</sup> Acknowledgement of their potential role in policy debate is innovative. The promotion of ‘social dialogue’ with trade unions also features.<sup>29</sup>

The responsibility for putting the Communication and Guidelines into practice appears to lie wholly with the delegations. The delegations are of course essential actors but they are not the only ones. Three issues are of concern. Firstly, the apparent disjoint between delegations, EuropeAid and desk officers in DG Development and DG External Relations. This often results in a lack of political direction and hence implementation. Secondly, a concern that NSA policy is not being applied across the whole Commission, especially DG External Relations. Thirdly, neither the Communication nor the Guidelines offer detail on how the EC will respond in situations where recipient governments are unwilling to engage with civil society. The link between NSA policy and the recent Commission Communication on *Governance and development* also requires further attention.<sup>30</sup>

If not legally binding, Commission officials hope that participation could become ‘administratively binding’ through its incorporation into the programme cycle. Yet whilst DG Development has included training on civil society participation in its preparation of the Mid Term Reviews of CSPs, DG External Relations has not. Current training by EuropeAid in the context of the ‘deconcentration’ process focuses mainly on financial management, not civil society. Increased training for delegations about the nature and objectives of civil society and NSA participation would be a start.

There persists a fundamental lack of clarity over how the Commission views civil society’s role in development co-operation: project implementors or political actors?<sup>31</sup> Especially in DG External Relations and EuropeAid, officials often assume that the word ‘participation’ means funding NGO projects, and not much else.

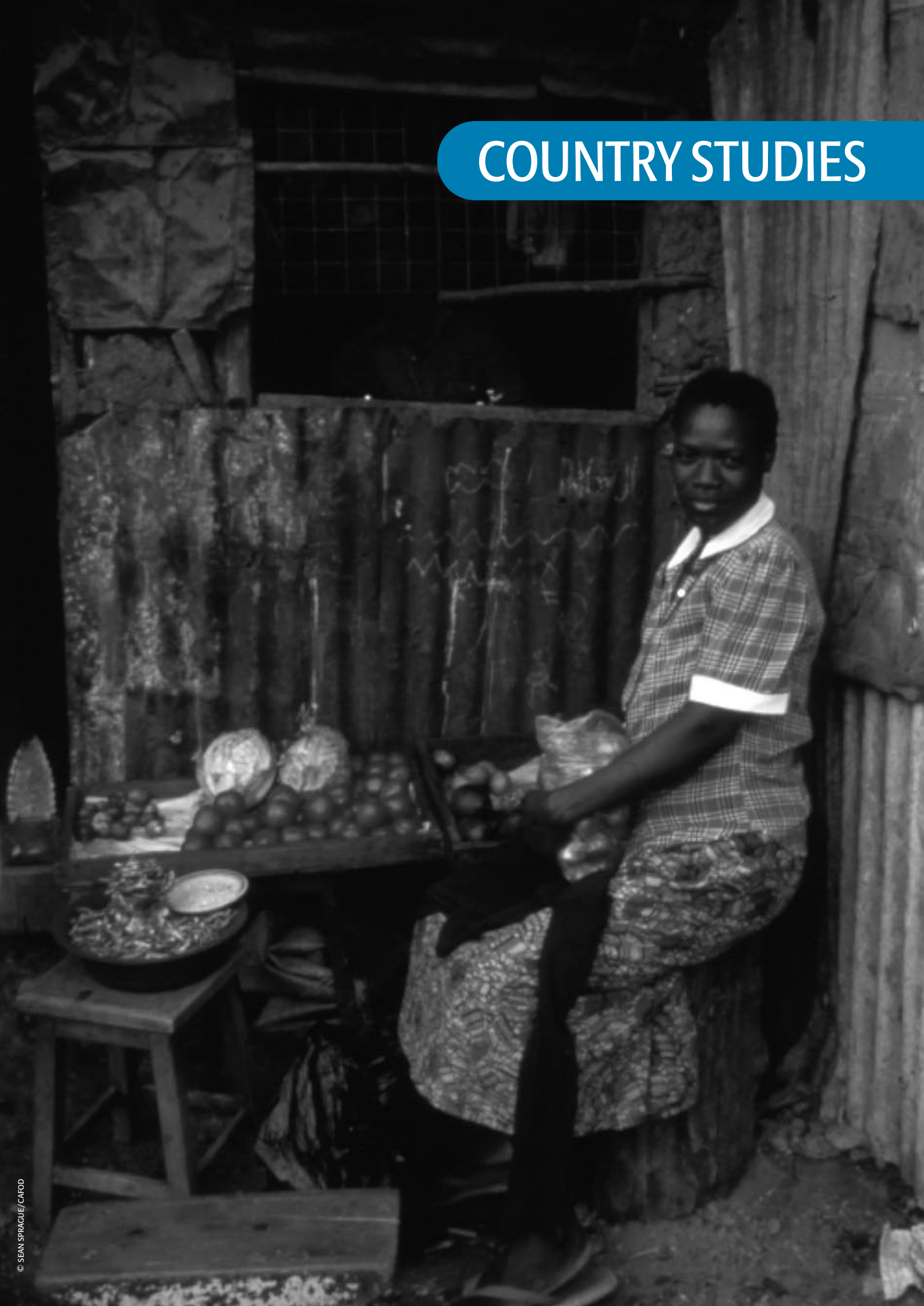
A broader problem is that DG External Relations appears especially resistant to adopting development policies in its relations with developing countries. This is partly due to an intra-institutional resistance between DG External Relations and DG Development, and partly due to DG External Relations’ priorities lying elsewhere.

Across all Directorates there exists a severe lack of permanent, specialist staff with expertise in civil society, human rights and democracy issues. For example, with a staff comprised of generalist *fonctionnaires* and short-term consultants, the Commission has not one expert with a clear lead or full-time responsibility for good governance issues.

## Conclusions on the EU policy framework

CSP processes and Europe’s broader co-operation with developing countries could offer a progressive model, if founded on the vision of partnership and democratic accountability formally envisaged by the Cotonou Agreement. The Communication and Guidelines also constitute a further step in the right direction, although their preparation has been depressingly slow. Legal commitments and a concerted political direction across all EC aid programmes will be required, to hold undemocratic or intransigent recipient country governments and apathetic EU delegations to account. ●

# COUNTRY STUDIES



## Background to EC co-operation with Kenya

One of Kenya's largest aid donors, the EC finances over 10% of the Kenyan Government's budget. European Community aid, under the 6th, 7th and 8th European development Funds amounts to 920 million euro. The EU is an important trade partner for Kenya (31% of imports, 35% of exports). Kenya is also a leading player in the EU-ACP trade negotiations in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement. The country is also the most important 'client' of the European Investment Bank in sub-Saharan Africa, with a portfolio of some 216 million euro. Transport and macro-economic support have dominated funding in Kenya during the Moi administration. It is unclear whether EC assistance to these sectors reflects the needs of people living in poverty given the lack of consultation in determining the aid strategy.

## Development and civil society in Kenya

Kenya is one of the Least Developed Countries. The proportion of Kenyans living below the national poverty line has risen from 48% in 1990 to 56% in 2001. Key social indicators have also worsened. In 1998, life expectancy fell to 57 years. This downward trend is expected to continue due to AIDS, since HIV prevalence reached 14% of all adults by early 1999. It is estimated that over 2 million Kenyans are currently living with HIV and, some 90,000 of those infected are children under the age of five. Under-five mortality rates worsened in the 1990s, with child mortality

*Engaging Kenyan civil society has been largely limited to implementation and funding issues. Policy dialogue has not happened*

increasing by some 40% during the period between the late 1980s and the mid 1990s. Much of this decline lies in deep-rooted structures of political and economic patronage, and consequent impoverishment of minorities, including pastoralists, hunter-gatherers and fishermen. Ever since independence in 1963, majority ethnic groups, such as the Kikuyu peoples, have dominated government. Yet, on 27 December 2002

President Kibaki along with the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) was elected with over 60% of the votes following a campaign that focused on the fight against corruption and the improvement of social conditions.

In the absence of secure funding and resulting dependence upon international agencies and donors, NGOs have been accused of becoming contractors rather than community catalysts. On the positive side there are many localised CSOs that reach the poor with highly valued services. Studies show for instance, that civil society has an operating expenditure of more than 2.5% of the GDP and channels over 18% of official aid. Studies also show that NGOs support over 50% of health care services and their support in some health sub-sectors is over 90%.

## Kenya Country Strategy Paper process

The Kenyan CSP was mostly drawn up in early 2002 with the final document approved in June 2003. Relations between the previous Moi government and civil society were not good, militating against a participatory process. After the December 2002 general election the new government and the Commission decided to review the existing CSP proposal. Yet our research and interviews with stakeholders – including delegation staff, Kenyan government representatives and a broad range of civil society organisations – has uncovered a reluctance to engage with Kenyan civil society on the CSP at a policy level. This is especially reflected in the total lack of policy dialogue or consultation with civil society groups in the drafting of the CSP.

The EC delegation itself admits that the EC Country Strategy Paper was largely based on the Kenyan World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process, conducted from 2000-2001 (during the Moi administration).<sup>32</sup> This is despite PRSP consultations being described by analysts and even Kenyan government officials as 'largely cosmetic'.<sup>33</sup> For example, Minority Rights Group International has found that whilst the PRSP involved consultation of pastoralist communities at district

level, their contributions are not reflected in the PRSP or CSP. The pastoralist way of life is not featured as part of a poverty alleviation strategy, nor acknowledged as a sustainable livelihood in Kenya's drylands. This is also reflected in the CSP's terminology and emphasis in terms of agriculture on a crop-based agricultural economy.<sup>34</sup> Issues of social exclusion and political marginalisation do not feature as priorities in the CSP.

Civil society organisations themselves attempted to engage with both the PRSP and CSP processes. In 2001, several Kenyan NGOs organised workshops to inform civil society groups about the Cotonou Agreement and the CSP processes.<sup>35</sup> A civil society task force of seven organisations was established, but a lack of clear priorities and objectives undermined progress.<sup>36</sup> In the absence of a proactive engagement by the EC delegation and Kenyan authorities, the task force's discussion was limited to aid implementation and NGO funding issues.

A study of non-state actors in Kenya was published in 2002.<sup>37</sup> It is unclear how its recommendations on including grass-roots civil society groups in policy dialogue were adopted by the EC delegation. The delegation did host one meeting in October 2002 after the CSP was drawn up. Twenty-three NSA representatives and local authorities were invited.<sup>38</sup> The meeting report indicates that the EC delegation blamed its limited engagement with civil society on the lack of a legal framework prior to formal ratification of the Cotonou Agreement. The report's conclusions acknowledged the need for an enhanced engagement with NSAs on the draft Country Support Strategy, which would contain more detail on sectoral spending allocations.

Interviews suggest that delegation staff appreciate the role of NSAs in policy on governance and human rights issues, but not economic policy.<sup>39</sup> Several Kenyan government officials were highly critical of NSAs, alleging that many are '*professional conference goers*'.<sup>40</sup> Our Kenyan researcher found that the original civil society task force suffered from a narrow agenda and confused objectives: '*some of the Task Force members were under the misapprehension that this would be a money making scheme ... after some time interest waned and the group collapsed*'.<sup>41</sup> However, the overall impression is of an EC delegation with limited capacity or will to proactively engage beyond an elite circle of urban-based NGOs.

Despite these critical findings, some more recent positive steps must be acknowledged. Following the change in the Kenyan government, civil society groups have increased their activity through a series of workshops in 2003. An April 2003 meeting proposed that specialist groups should draw up criteria for evaluating the Kenyan government's compliance with its obligations under the Cotonou Agreement. A July 2003 meeting established a platform organisation for the civil society organisations called the Kenya Civil Society Alliance (KCSA).<sup>42</sup> The Kenyan government is currently assessing how NSAs can be involved in drawing up the sectoral spending proposals. A European researcher has been hired to carry out a civil society mapping study. Delegation staff refer to the positive value of their informal relationships with NGOs and the EC's role as intermediary between civil society and government.

## Kenya conclusions

There was no engagement of civil society in policy dialogue on the CSP and so far little in the planning phase. EC staff emphasise that participation can happen at programme and project level and that, with the change of government, allocations to democratic governance initiatives and NSAs can be substantially increased. Certainly EC efforts to support incremental democratic reforms faced severe challenges in the dysfunctional Kenyan democracy under Moi. But BOND's research in Kenya points to the EC's continuing confusion over both civil society's role in development co-operation and the EC's value-added in relation to World Bank assistance. This highlights two broader issues in EC aid policy: firstly, could EC CSPs attempt a remedial analysis and appropriate assistance in the face of inadequate or inappropriate PRSPs? Secondly, during the Moi administration, could the EC have done more to assist democratic debate and civil society empowerment in a context where the government was hostile to such intervention? How can the EC pursue political engagement with the national government and increase assistance to civil society in such contexts? ●

*EC staff emphasise the benefits of informal relationships with non-state actors, and the value of acting as an intermediary between civil society and government*



## Senegal

### Background to EC co-operation in Senegal

The European Union, its Member States and the Community, is the most significant donor to Senegal, constituting 40% of total aid in 1999. The 9th European Development Fund allocated 282 million euro to the country on top of existing commitments from previous EDFs. The EU pays the Government 16 million euro for fisheries access to Senegalese waters.

### Development and civil society in Senegal

Senegal has featured as one of the UN list of Least Developed Countries since 2001, with a per capita GDP of \$459, a life expectancy rate at birth of 53 years and a literacy rate of 37.3%. It ranks 156 on a Human Development Index of 175 countries, and has a Gini index 'inequality rating' of 41.3. One of the roots of the country's problems has been the slow-down in agriculture, fishing and stock rearing which employs more than half the working population. Civil society in Senegal is characterised by the political marginalisation of community and agricultural associations in the regions, and a vast

majority of poor people without associational channels. Dakar-based NGOs engaged in advocacy dominate relations with donor agencies and the nascent national civil society networks are poorly resourced.

### Senegal Country Strategy Paper process

From early 2001, the Senegalese Government hired experts to facilitate an open consultation process with NSAs on the CSP co-ordinated in liaison with a 'Central Group', comprised of six Dakar-based NSAs. Early meetings established five issue-based 'Technical Working Groups', each featuring representatives from different NSA sectors. Following a workshop in February 2002, seven working groups were established to identify programming proposals on: Good Governance; Transport; Hygiene; Budgetary Support; Trade; Culture; and Non State Actors. Each group met approximately five times, concluding their discussions with three-day workshops. Sixty-six representatives from Non State Actor organisations participated in all. The participants included local, regional and international NGOs, private sector

groups, micro-credit, consumer and human rights organisations.

The working group on Good Governance attracted considerable support from civil society groups. It resulted in this issue being prioritised as a ‘focal sector’ for the CSP (35 million euro allocated to ‘Good Governance’, with 10 million allocated for NSA initiatives). This appears to reflect a genuine success story for the EC’s support of participatory decision-making. NSA input resulted in the concept of good governance being broadly defined to include both local and national governance, as well as social and economic actors. Implementation has been delayed, but an NSA political committee is liaising with the Government and EC delegation on financing plans for this sector. Some confusion remains over the role and remit of this NSA committee: whether its influence is limited to NSA funding issues *or* whether it assumes a broader and more political role as a watchdog monitoring the Government’s implementation of Cotonou obligations. The role of civil society in the reviews of CSPs and the 9th EDF has also not been resolved.

Some critical voices have suggested that participants in this process mostly represent an urban Dakar-based ‘NGO elite’ and insufficient effort was made to proactively engage smaller, grass-roots or regional organisations. Local government also had no representation. However, some of the responsibility for ‘participatory failure’ also falls to civil society organisations themselves. Several of the NGO participants failed to engage or even inform their beneficiaries and constituencies during the process. A trade union member stated that *‘truly speaking, [the process] was a participation of individuals and not institutions.’*<sup>43</sup> Critics suggest that certain NSAs sought to ‘monopolise the process’.<sup>44</sup> No effort was made by the Government or delegation to require that NSA participants account for their mandate and legitimacy as representatives of specific constituencies.

A high dropout rate of participants was blamed on the fragmented and drawn-out nature of the consultation. Several CSO participants also complained that meetings were too short and gaps between meetings too long. Government representatives accused some CSO participants of being badly prepared or only interested in obtaining funds. A general lack of information about the Cotonou Agreement and preparatory briefing before meetings undermined effective

CSO participation in some cases. Others suggested that more preparation should have been invested into clarifying terms of reference for the process and briefing participants accordingly. Several civil society groups that have an expertise in micro-level activities felt excluded from discussions on macro-level policy issues, and that more could be done to facilitate their input.

EC delegation staff are broadly pleased with the process. It constituted a first opportunity to meet with civil society, raise awareness about EC development co-operation and thereby gain recognition as a donor actor. However they have also expressed concern that the Senegalese Government’s follow-up has been unclear. As a consequence, new relationships and momentum risk being lost. Participants were also critical of the EC delegation and the Senegalese Government’s failure to inform a broader range of civil society and the general public about the Country Strategy Paper process: *‘the end of the programming stage leading to the CSP was a real opportunity for a first general dissemination, that the EC delegation and the Government did not seize. Everything seemed to indicate that the initiators did not want a widespread coverage as if they feared opening up the process to a wider group.’*<sup>45</sup>

*Good governance in the CSP is a real EC aid success story for participatory decision-making. But translating the commitment into Government action is proving slow*

### Senegal conclusions

Excepting the important concerns about the inclusiveness of CSP consultation and some uncertainty over its follow-up, the outlook for EC co-operation in Senegal is good. The CSP process in Senegal offers a positive example of participation in comparison to other countries studied. A relatively well-organised consultation process involved civil society groups with concrete outcomes in terms of input to the CSP. Yet our research in Senegal uncovered many of the same problems encountered elsewhere in terms of the responsibility to support a broad-based and inclusive process. The Senegal case study also highlights the balancing act that all EC delegations must perform: how to exercise a proactive role in promoting democratic decision-making without compromising the national authorities’ ‘ownership’ of the process. ●

## Background to EC co-operation in Bolivia

Bolivia is one of largest EC aid recipients in South America, averaging 40-50 million euro annually in recent years. The EU is also the second most important trading partner for Bolivia (after Brazil), representing 15.3% of its cumulated exports and imports. By 1998, the main areas for EC assistance were: water and sanitation; education and health; alternative development (in areas of coca production and areas of work force expulsion) and food security. Indicative Multi-annual Guidelines were produced for the period 1998-2001, outlining priority EC programme areas. The Regional Strategy Paper 2002-2006 for Andean Community countries (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia) foresees work in four main areas: combating poverty, strengthening governance, the fight against drugs and regional integration.

## Development and civil society in Bolivia

Bolivia has the lowest per capita income in Latin America at US\$2,300 (2003) and 62.7% of the population live below the national poverty line (Latin American average: 36%). Poverty is greatest amongst indigenous peoples, although in absolute numbers it is greatest in urban areas (52%).<sup>46</sup> Bolivia's income distribution is one of the most unequal in Latin America; the Gini coefficient rose from 46.2 in 1990 to 58.9 in 1997. Donors in Bolivia must contend with a civil society scarred and formed by a history of extreme inequality,

### *Should EC aid endorse and lock-in undemocratic economic policies imposed by the World Bank? Or could we offer an alternative model?*

exclusion and confrontation, especially during the series of military dictatorships which ruled from the 1960s to 1980s. Bolivia also has a strong tradition of trade unions, particularly in the mining sector, although these have been weakened by mass redundancies after privatisation. Development efforts also need to engage with diverse local and traditional structures, such as the 'Ayllu' associations of indigenous peoples, which together with *campesino* organisations and

neighbourhood committees have become an important presence. The country is rich in civil society organisations and participatory practice.

## Bolivia Country Strategy Paper process

The Bolivian Country Strategy Paper was drafted following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the EC and the Bolivian Government in 2001 for the period 2002-2006. Adopted on 17 May 2002, it brought the whole range of EC co-operation and development activities in Bolivia under a single and comprehensive framework. It prioritises water and sanitation, alternative development and prevention of work force expulsion, food security and rural development, economic co-operation and regional integration (transport infrastructure). The CSP was drawn up taking into account existing EC programming guidelines, the recently signed MOU, the Bolivian PRSP and the Bolivian Dialogue Law of 2001 as well as pre-existing EC programme priorities. It was *not*, however, based on any consultation or policy dialogue with civil society or other non-governmental stakeholders.

Why no participation? The main guide for the CSP's preparation was the DG RELEX programming manual of September 2001. That paper refers to civil society, but makes no promises on engagement in policy dialogue. Both the EC delegation in Bolivia and country desk office in Brussels state that national consultation processes

had already taken place in the preparation of the PRSP, which set the framework for EC co-operation.<sup>47</sup> The main EC involvement in the PRSP was the Head of Delegation chairing a donor roundtable on trade aspects of the PRSP.

Both the MOU and the CSP confine participation to the level of programme and project implementation.<sup>48</sup>

This lack of participation is arguably reflected in EC spending plans. Huge allocations are made to the Santa Cruz-Puerto Suarez highway, despite evaluations questioning the EC's preference for funding mammoth road projects. One critic argues that allocations to 'alternative agricultural development' are driven by donor/supply-side





imperatives: namely EU global anti-drugs policy.<sup>49</sup> In contrast, implementation of the cross-cutting themes, such as gender, human rights and good governance, is proving problematic. The EC delegation has proposed that EU Member States lead on these areas. So far only the UK has volunteered on gender issues. On a positive note, decentralisation and institutional reform are included in the five CSP focal sectors. Furthermore, the EC country desk office also acknowledges that planning for the next CSP should involve consultation with civil society.<sup>50</sup>

The ‘deconcentration’ of staff and responsibilities to the Bolivian EC delegation began in 2002 and the office has grown in number to 33. One official has remarked that they have ‘responsibility without the power’; whilst responsibilities have grown, decision-making still happens in Brussels.

### EC support to decentralised governance in the Chapare region

BOND has conducted extensive research into political dialogue and consultation mechanisms developed in Bolivia over the past decade, available in our Bolivia Country Study.<sup>51</sup> This section analyses an EC-financed programme aimed at supporting participatory, decentralised governance in the Chapare region.

PRAEDAC, *Programa de Apoyo a la Estrategia de Desarrollo Alternativo en el Chapare*, is one of the main EC development programmes in Bolivia. It seeks to contribute to the development of the Chapare region (a coca producing area), within the framework of national policies on ‘alternative development’ and decentralised governance in the municipalities. PRAEDAC attempts an integrated development approach to ‘alternative development’. In short, this supports communities dependent on illicit coca farming to engage in alternative, diverse forms of agriculture. Social and productive infrastructure projects are identified as part of five-year Municipal Development Plans and projects prioritised annually in the Municipalities. Examples of projects include small-scale agro-industrial projects, eco-tourism, natural resource management and land titling.

Key findings on participation by people and organisations in the area have included:

- **Joint Consultative Committee**, bringing together members of national Government,

mayors, representatives of local producers associations (NSAs) and members of the EC delegation.

- **Participation in drawing up the project proposal:** external facilitators consulted widely with different actors, including NSAs/CSOs.
- **Participation in project implementation:** different civil society actors were involved including Producers Associations, community groups, Agrarian Unions, *Organizaciones Territoriales de Base* (OTBs: local, often grass-roots organisations), and the *Comités de Vigilancia* (social oversight committees at municipal level, elected by representatives of the OTBs).
- **Participation in municipality decision-making:** rather than setting up their own structures, participation of people and their organisations is encouraged on a regular basis in the setting up of the five-year municipal plans, and in the definition of the main projects which should be approved during the year.
- **Evaluation:** On a negative note, programme evaluation involved some interviews with beneficiaries, but not wider meetings with civil society organisations.

### Bolivia conclusions

It is unsurprising that the CSP in Bolivia involved no civil society participation. Without legal obligation and little political direction, delegations under the DG External Relations umbrella have few incentives to promote participation. Recent efforts in the EC delegation appear to be moving in the right direction. BOND’s research in Bolivia highlights the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches to participation and consultation. Whilst acknowledging that there can be no blueprint, the Bolivian experience suggests that increased engagement with traditional or emerging indigenous structures and processes, rather than exclusively new parallel structures or established institutions unaccountable to the poor, may help open up the process. Given the rich nature of local civil society organisations, it is important to build on what already exists. The issue of co-ordination is particularly important in a country where the PRSP-related ‘Dialogue’ process takes place every three years. ●

## Background to EC co-operation in India

India was one of the first Asian developing countries to establish diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community in 1962, during the British accession negotiations. At that time India wanted to safeguard its duty-free access to the UK market under Commonwealth preferences. Trade interests dominate the EC-India relationship to this day. The EU is India's largest trading partner and its second largest source of foreign direct investment. EU-India Summits have been held annually since 2000. These set out action plans with, again, an emphasis on trade and economic co-operation over development issues. India's diplomatic mission to the EU focuses on trade, with development co-operation having virtually disappeared from its agenda. India's relationship with the EU is better understood in the context of the country's broader foreign policy. New Delhi has tended to downgrade the EU as such, preferring to deal with the major EU Member States bilaterally.

## Development and civil society in India

India is the world's fourth largest economy, with a growth rate that since 1980 ranks amongst the highest in the world. With a population of 1 billion, India supports 20% of the world population. India has a rapidly expanding domestic market and an increasing number of 'world class' industries. Yet the continuing prevalence of chronic poverty keeps India in the 'low income country' category. Wealth has largely failed to trickle down. Still 44% of the population lives on less than 1 US\$ a day. The sheer dimensions of India's challenges pose specific problems for development assistance. Despite being the world's largest democracy, political fragmentation along caste and regional interests has become a significant driver in the Indian political process. Deeply rooted cultural traditions influence divisions along class, religious and gender lines. Social development is marked by a divergence between elites, the dynamics of a nascent civil society and a largely peasant electorate. For those trapped at the bottom, the main options for associational life are identity-based and community-orientated. The rise of the

populist, xenophobic politics of Hindu nationalism has been one beneficiary. Thus India is characterised by strong and diverse civil society movements and organisations, but only a nascent and disempowered civil society in the broader sense.

## India Country Strategy Paper process

The previous Co-operation Agreement between the EC and the Republic of India dates back to 1994. A wide-ranging 'third generation' agreement, it referred to poverty reduction as a policy priority, with respect for human rights and democratic principles as the basis for co-operation. The final declaration of the Fourth EU-India Summit, held on 29 November 2003, stated: *'India and the EU are bound together by values of democracy and pluralism. We are willing to work together to promote pluralistic democracy in the world by laying special emphasis on democratic principles and practice. We encourage greater exchanges between the Indian Parliament and the European Parliament. We will also promote co-operation between political parties, trade unions, universities and civil societies.'* Indeed, India is the largest Asian recipient of EC funding for NGOs. And yet the current 2002-2007 CSP involved no consultation of civil society. In fact, the CSP was largely drafted in

## *The EC's reluctance to promote participation mirrors the Indian Government's own top-down approach to development strategy and programme design*

2002 in Brussels with minimal involvement of even the EC delegation. The rhetoric on democratising the EU-India relationship was not borne out by the CSP.

In conducting the research, our Indian researcher faced resistance from the EC delegation, who questioned the need for analysis of participation in CSP policy. The EC's reluctance mirrors the Indian Government's own top-down approach to development strategy and programme design. For example, in terms of trade policy the Indian Government refused until recently to consult even



with Indian business and industrial interests, let alone groups representing the poor.

The India CSP does state that *'engaging civil society is an increasingly important pillar in the architecture of the EU India relationship'*. Examples of such engagement are cited: regular business leader summits, the EU-India round table and co-operation on joint research projects by Indian and European scientists. The emphasis is heavily on exchanges between professional NGOs, think tanks and private sector organisations – not associations representing the poor or marginalised.

The CSP acknowledges that the overriding challenge facing India is to lift between 200-300 million of its citizens out of poverty: *'All of India's co-operation partners, including the EC subscribe to this objective.'* It also refers to the EC's experience in a range of innovative approaches to poverty alleviation, including *'measures of participatory planning and beneficiary involvement'*.<sup>52</sup> Pushpendra, an Indian NGO activist, has called the CSP paper *'a classic example of the rhetoric and duality in the European Union's approach towards developing countries'*.<sup>53</sup> He suggests that the EU has neglected a vast literature on the structural causes of poverty in India (for example, the denial of basic economic and social rights) in favour of a Eurocentric neo-liberal approach. The EU's neo-liberal diagnosis produces its own prescription. Its emphasis is on the large fiscal deficits of Delhi and various state governments. As a consequence, the EU focuses on the Indian state and 'good performing' federal states that offer a conducive environment for EC policy prescriptions; instead of concentrating on the marginalised groups themselves, such as bonded labourers or Dalit peoples.

The EC clearly hopes to have more influence at a policy level in India. The Indian Central Government has proven relatively resistant to donor conditionality. One example is the EC's 200 million euro contribution to the Central Government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan educational programme. This has been delayed by the Indian Government stalling on conditionality relating to financial control. The CSP notes that, with decentralisation, there is a general shift in dynamics within India from the centre towards individual State Governments. It states: *'The key question for all external donors, the EC included, remains how to achieve a significant impact on poverty*

*given India's vastness and administrative and political complexity ... it is now the States that control 90% of development resources that determine how policies are implemented on the ground. Experience from these project units and programmes should feed back into policy decision making and serve as replicable models for larger scale interventions by the Government of India.'*<sup>54</sup>

In keeping with this, the EC plans to invest its resources in a 'Partnership for Progress' with Indian States *'committed to reducing poverty by pursuing a social and economic reform agenda'*. The EC has identified two States, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, where a 'Partnership for Progress' strategy will be pursued to promote strategic development assistance and engagement in policy.<sup>55</sup> The BOND India Study provides a mapping study of civil society involvement in policy dialogue in the State of Rajasthan. It is hoped that this information will prove useful in EC efforts to support democratic governance.<sup>56</sup>

## India conclusions

There was a time when India's star shone brightly over Brussels and the country received up to 90% of EC aid to ALA countries. India's star waned, because of its combative trade policy and the rise of East Asian countries as strategic priorities for the EU. This is reflected in recent EU-India Summits that have been disappointing on both sides. Without sustained interest and broader political engagement, Europe will not prioritise contentious issues of democratic governance in India at the strategic, political level. However, our research also

*Concerns persist that the EC's analysis and action is insufficiently focused on the needs of people living in poverty or in social and political exclusion*

highlights the challenges for the EC as a relatively minor donor in advocating participatory development co-operation. The shift to assistance at the federal state level appears innovative, but concerns persist that the EC's analysis and action is insufficiently focused on the needs of people living in poverty or in social and political exclusion. A 1996 EC Communication on an EU-India enhanced partnership, which contained a focus on civil society dialogue, is currently being reviewed.<sup>57</sup> It is hoped that more concrete proposals on participation and good governance with a view to the next CSP will be incorporated. ●

# RECOMMENDATIONS



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## *Europe: from 'actor' to 'activist' on participation, rights and democracy*

Our research suggests that EC aid still suffers from a democratic deficit. Whilst EC policy focuses on the needs of people living in poverty, EC practice is too often beholden to World Bank prescriptions, historic EC funding priorities and decisions taken in Brussels. Yet democratised EC aid policy and practice could also co-ordinate and harmonise EU Member State aid, which would bring potentially huge dividends. Twin pressures can make this happen: the on-going EC aid reforms and demands that Europe realise its value added in foreign policy. There is a strong argument for making Europe an **'activist donor'** for participatory development.

Our case studies demonstrate an increased effort to consult with civil society groups on policy under the Cotonou framework with African, Caribbean and Pacific states. This is in stark contrast to

co-operation in the Asian and Latin American (ALA) countries. However, differences between Kenya and Senegal indicate that variations in understanding and commitment also exist within DG Development and the ACP delegations. Furthermore, in several instances, CSOs themselves appear to have paid insufficient attention to their own accountability and the participation of their constituencies.

The absence of civil society consultation and the lack of dialogue with national governments in Bolivia and India is worrying. The lack of any legal obligation in the ALA framework is clearly an important factor. However this reflects a broader incoherence and inconsistency between EU foreign policy and EC development co-operation with the split in responsibility for developing countries

between DG Development and DG External Relations. Other studies suggest that this applies not only to relations with the ALA regions, but also to the CARDS, TACIS and MEDA programmes.<sup>58</sup> The lack of accountable, participatory decision-making is clearly reflected in EC aid flows, with an emphasis on large infrastructure projects and macro-economic support of uncertain benefit to people living in poverty.

Many of the problems reflect issues arising in similar studies on the PRSP consultation processes: issues of timing (rushed processes to fit with donor deadlines); how to ensure representation of all sectors of civil society, especially the marginalised and vulnerable; how to ensure meaningful participation processes, rather than tokenistic consultation; how to prepare civil society groups so that they can participate meaningfully; confusion about the nature of participation (consultation or shared decision-making) and remit (which issues are addressed and which remain 'off-bounds'). More fundamentally, the Bolivia and Kenya studies beg the question; can CSPs attempt remedial action if PRSPs are inadequate? Is Europe serious about assisting democratic development? If the answer to these questions is yes, then Europe should prioritise participation and become an activist donor to promote aid accountability.

Political engagement, backed by adequate resourcing, will determine efforts to 'democratise' EC aid. There are two challenges. Firstly, at the practical level the EC as a whole should adopt best practice on promoting democratic development strategies in all aid programmes.<sup>59</sup> Across the Commission, building a specialist knowledge base instead of relying on junior or generalist Commission staff and consultants would help enormously. This will require a huge leap in institutional culture and capacity. Secondly, at political level the EU should elaborate and enhance its strategy towards dysfunctional democracies and failed states. For example, the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights is currently allocated two and a half times less EC funding than anti-migration measures in third countries.<sup>60</sup> By doing this, Europe sends the wrong political signals. Civil society empowerment should be allocated additional financing drawn from unspent EDF and EC budget allocations. Thematic funding instruments could channel these de-committed funds into programmes to reinforce the ability of civil society actors to hold their Governments and

the EU to account. Non-state actor and good governance policy should be made coherent, and linked as priorities for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, so that the EC has a joined-up strategy on promoting democratisation.

We are cautiously optimistic. The second generation of Country Strategy Papers processes (2007) should be better placed to involve civil society in the decisions that affect the livelihoods and communities of people living in poverty.

## Policy recommendations

### **Prioritise participation in the Mid Term Reviews**

The EC and recipient country governments should adopt and implement a strategy on the MTR process which includes civil society in evaluation and the follow-up.

### **Clarity about civil society's role**

Civil society organisations should be recognised as political actors, not just project implementors. Current EC policy and practice also places an over-emphasis on alliance building and consensus in participation. The EC should acknowledge that civil society is heterogeneous, and permit and promote its diversity in consultation processes.

### **Consistency across all developing countries**

Participation of civil society in policy formulation should be made legally binding and consistent across all regional groupings. Relations with developing countries should be determined on grounds of need and targeted according to the OECD DAC developing country categories and best practice relating to official development assistance. Mechanisms to promote local ownership in the Cotonou Agreement should be extended to all developing countries. Consistency should be integrated into the up-coming restructuring of the European Commission and negotiations on the Union's multi-annual financial framework (the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013).

### **Mainstreaming participation across the priority EC funding sectors**

The Commission should co-ordinate evaluations and research into the mainstreaming of civil society participation into the six proclaimed 'core areas' of EC development assistance (trade; regional integration; macro-economic policies; food safety and sustainable development; institutional capacity-building and good

governance). At present, insufficient participation of beneficiaries also occurs at programme level.

### **Prioritise social and political inclusion**

The EC should prioritise the proactive inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups in policy dialogue. The processes for involving various groups differ. This requires the allocation of appropriate expertise, resourcing, capacity and time.

### **CSPs and an 'activist' stance towards Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers**

EC CSPs should not bow to inappropriate prescriptions under the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers promoted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Complementarity should not equal acquiescence. If Europe is serious about promoting democracy, rights and good governance, it should start with the international donor system.

## **Institutional recommendations**

### **Strong voice and responsibility for development at EU political level**

A single Development Commissioner should have responsibility for EC official development assistance to all developing countries and regions, with the whole programme cycle united under that same authority. In the European Commission, political direction is required from the College of Commissioners and Director General level within the relevant Directorates General. DG Development policies and tools should be further developed and adopted horizontally across the Commission. Commission human resources policy should be reformed to secure permanent, specialist staff to tackle civil society and democracy issues; based in DG Development and attached to the cross-departmental IQSG.

EU Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers should also review progress in the EU Council. Efforts can be enhanced and publicly disseminated through the Mid Term Reviews and preparation of the next generation of CSPs. These should reward progress and highlight challenges in a more transparent, less technocratic fashion.

### **Clear and accountable responsibility at EC delegation level**

All delegations are now required to appoint one official with specific responsibility for relations with local civil society. Our research indicates that

this role is viewed as a training position for junior officials or consultants on short-term contracts. The position has often also focused largely on NGO funding issues. BOND recommends the appointment of an independent researcher with expert knowledge of local civil society; with responsibility for an annual report to the relevant staff in DG Development and the IQSG. This report should also be made publicly available online. Lessons could be learned and disseminated, responsibility combined with accountability.

## **Practical recommendations**

### **Adequate resourcing and long-term engagement in capacity building**

Current definitions of capacity-building in the Communication and Guidelines should be expanded to recognise the necessity of long-term commitment to partnerships with civil society in developing countries. Increased funds should be made available to delegations for building the capacity of civil society groups to participate meaningfully in policy dialogue. There is also a need for extensive training of Commission and delegation staff on implementation of NSA policy.

### **Non State Actor/Civil Society Accountability**

CSOs also bear a responsibility in terms of accountability to their members and beneficiaries. CSOs need to be proactive in organising themselves to participate meaningfully in policy discussions. EC delegations should research, advocate, resource and monitor the development of appropriate and sustainable mechanisms at all levels (local to national), using existing structures including traditional structures when appropriate.

### **Promoting harmonisation, avoiding duplication**

The EC should promote coherence, co-ordination and complementarity between EC and EU Member State programmes. Parallel structures and multiple consultation processes should be avoided. Replicating its role as 'facilitator' in EU Member State commitments under the UN Financing for Development process, the Commission should publish a Communication proposing the harmonisation and co-ordination of EU Member State policy on their bilateral country assistance strategies and participation. This co-ordination role should also be allocated appropriate capacity at delegation level. ●



# Notes

- 1** 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', 12 December 2003 (EU Security Doctrine), p.14
- 2** Derived from Sectoral Breakdown of the 9th European Development Fund for ACP countries (following DAC nomenclatures), European Commission, 02/09/03
- 3** For an excellent summary of the experience to date, and of the issues arising, see Norton & McGee.
- 4** The normative view sees civil society in idealised terms as a terrain in which groups may stake their claim in public life. The pluralist view assumes that democratic societies move towards a pluralist state order, where different interest groups contest, deliberate and compromise in a quasi-political market place.
- 5** 'Power, knowledge and political spaces in the framing of poverty policy' Karen Brock, Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa, (2001) *IDS Working Paper No. 143*
- 6** This figure includes Member States' bilateral programmes
- 7** EC 2003
- 8** EC (1999/2000) states 'In Nov 2000, the Council asked the Commission to draft CSPs and Regional Strategy Papers without delay for the purposes of programming community aid to all developing countries receiving assistance from the EDF (ie the ACP countries) and under ALA (& other) programmes.'
- 9** 'CSPs are an instrument for guiding, managing and reviewing EC assistance programmes, based on EU/EC objectives, the Partner country government policy agenda, an analysis of the partner country's situation, and the activities of other major partners. The CSP should point to where Community assistance should be directed and how it integrates with what other donors are doing. CSPs will thus contribute to the better planning of co-operation activities, improved donor co-ordination and complementarity, and the overall coherence of external assistance policy with other EU policies' (Policy background for CSP papers from iQSG 2002a).
- 10** 'A CSP should be drafted on the basis of discussions with the partner country ensuring sufficient ownership to facilitate successful implementation. In this context, policy dialogues would be encouraged and should lead, if possible, to mutual understanding and consensus. Any divergences between the country's own analysis and perception and that of the commission and assoc donors, should be noted. The analysis & assessments will be discussed with the partner country but not negotiated. ... The process of developing the national development strategy is important, as strategies which are not owned by the country are generally less effective in the long term...' *ibid*
- 11** For text of this regulation, see [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/lif/reg/en\\_register\\_11702030.html](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/lif/reg/en_register_11702030.html)
- 12** See BOND publication *Tackling poverty in Asia: An analysis of EU trade, aid and political relations with Asia* available from [www.bond.org.uk](http://www.bond.org.uk)
- 13** The Interservice Quality Support Group (iQSG) has the following objectives: ensure that programming documents (CSPs and RSPs) and National Indicative Programmes (NIPs); respect minimum quality standards; inform the group of DG RELEX of the course of programming exercises; develop proposals for programming guidelines; promote harmonised programming, identify best practice, disseminate results.
- 14** iQSG (2002a ) and (2002b)
- 15** iQSG (2002a)
- 16** 14 CSP Guidelines, DG DEV 2001b. p.97
- 17** *ibid* p.24
- 18** Articles 4-7 of the Cotonou Agreement
- 19** iQSG (2002b) p.10
- 20** DG DEV (2001a)
- 21** *ibid* p.4
- 22** Guidelines, (DG DEV 2001a) paragraph 10.2.e. bullet point 3
- 23** 'in practical terms this could be ... a local agent with good knowledge of the non state sector to assist in this process.' *ibid* 10.2.i.e
- 24** The Cotonou Agreement defines eligibility broadly as 'the extent to which they address the needs of the population, their specific competencies and whether they are organised and managed democratically and transparently.' In November 2002 the EC produced a paper 'Eligibility Criteria for Non State Actors' for access to funding under the EDF, at the request of ACP countries who wanted more guidance. (DG DEV 2002). This suggests that a National Steering Committee should be created to take the final decision on the eligibility criteria in accordance with these guidelines.
- 25** EC (2002a)
- 26** DG DEV (2003) 'Guidelines on Principles and Best Practices for the Participation of Non State Actors in the development dialogues and consultations'
- 27** *ibid* p.7 states: 'It is up to the relevant local authorities and the HoD to decide on the dialogue mechanisms and the means to be used to ensure a proper consultation, according to the local situation, level of NSAs organisation and previous experience in dialoguing. Decisions on this issue will take into account that ensuring a follow up to the consultation is essential.'
- 28** *ibid* p.16 states: 'Special attention will also be given to small and grass roots organisations which have the capacity to reach and represent vulnerable and isolated groups of the population. The contribution of grass-roots organisations in policy debate and strategy implementation is important to reduce poverty and attain development goals closer to the population and the places where needs emerge. Facilitating dialogue on a decentralised basis between local authorities and grass-roots organisations is equally important where direct consultation of NSAs at the level of central government is not feasible.'
- 29** *ibid* p.11

- 30** Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee 'Governance and Development'. COM (2003) 615 final.
- 31** 'There is a basic distinction between NSAs carrying out projects that aim explicitly to implement the CSPs and/or fit in with sectoral and geographic priorities set out by the Commission ... and NSAs own initiatives/proposals that the Commission may decide to support ... These two different types of relationship between NSAs and the EC will continue and a balance has to be achieved between both types of support. In the second case in particular, NSAs operate on the basis of their autonomy and right of initiative in the framework of procedures that apply for each instrument. When they act as implementing partners, NSAs commit themselves to deliver in accordance with the contract they have signed' *ibid* p.17
- 32** One representative of the delegation stated: 'So far the draft K-CSS has been prepared on the basis of those priorities in the Kenyan PRSP, and on the basis of the EC's specific sectoral expertise.' ECD Kenya 2002
- 33** The Kenya Country Study (KS) cites an official in the Ministry of Planning and Development who states that the PRSP process was government driven. At most times, NSAs received documentation late, and as a result they could not effectively participate. Civil servants ended up dominating the process. Noor 2003, p.47
- 34** See 'Assessing the EC Kenya Country Strategy Paper: A Minority Rights Perspective', MRG and Centre for Minority Rights Development Kenya Briefing (Draft) 2003
- 35** February 2001 event to raise awareness about the Cotonou process for the whole region organised by the Forest Action Network under the aegis of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. August 2001 event about civil society participation in country CSPs and conflict issues organised by APFO, Eco News Africa, and Saferworld UK.
- 36** Kenya study, Noor 2002, p.25
- 37** This study was commissioned by the EC Delegation and DfID and produced by ECDPM together with local experts. ECDPM, Institutional Analysis of NSAs in Kenya.
- 38** Nine of these participants were from the NGO sector, mainly from human rights NGOs, Nairobi based campaigning NGOs and coalition/umbrella group organisations.
- 39** The Kenya Study cites an interview with an EC delegation official rejecting the NSA's role in: 'policy formulation in terms of economic development.'
- 40** Kenyan Government official, cited in KS, Noor 2003, p.48
- 41** Kenya Study, Noor 2002, p.25
- 42** Suggested criteria for participation in the process have not been finalised, but suggestions from the CSO workshops include: NSAs aims and objectives should be related to the welfare of the Kenyan people and should 'have a national outlook, unless limited to a broad geographic location and activity' (although another suggestion states there should also be grass-roots activity); the organisations should have a constitution, a registered membership, and democratically elected officials; NSAs should have a specific expertise in a particular area.
- 43** *ibid*, pp.21 & 23
- 44** Senegal Country Study pp. 21 & 23
- 45** *ibid* p.22
- 46** Dr Stephen Dearden, Manchester University, 'Bolivia: A Case Study of the European Union's Country Strategy Process', 2003
- 47** The CSP outlines how the EC programme supports the PRSP, which itself was drawn up after a process of consultation. See Annex 7 of CSP
- 48** With regard to participation, the preamble to the MOU states that 'the preparation and implementation of co-operation actions will be carried out with the full participation of the target groups of the final beneficiaries.' The Bolivian Study documents the participation that does exist at project and programme level within the EC development assistance programme in Bolivia. pp.21-23
- 49** Dr Stephen Dearden, Manchester University, 'Bolivia: A Case Study of the European Union's Country Strategy Process', 2003
- 50** These so-called second generation CSPs will cover the period 2007-11.
- 51** See Bolivia Country Study p.30
- 52** CSP p.16
- 53** Pushpendra: 'EU-India CSP a Disappointment' *EurAsia Bulletin* March 2003, p.3
- 54** EU India CSP p.25
- 55** Europa website states: 'Under its 2002-6 Country Strategy, the EC foresees to allocate 160 million euro for two State Partnership Programmes with the states of Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. The State Partnerships will address state reform agendas and specific interventions in the social sectors under an overarching agenda of good governance comprising stakeholder participation, fiscal prudence and administrative decentralisation'.
- 56** The study suggests that it would be possible to 'consider clusters of Zilla Parishads in targeted districts of the Bihar states so that resources could be made available through coalitions of civil society, PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions) and municipalities. It may be worthwhile to consider nurturing, providing resources to and thereby strengthening new governance coalitions at the district level by identifying lead NGOs working in collaboration with PRIs, municipalities and other local CBOs.'
- 57** EC Communication on an EU-India Enhanced Partnership (COM (96) 275)
- 58** For example, see CEE Bankwatch Network for analysis of aid funds in Europe's 'near-abroad' at: [www.bankwatch.org](http://www.bankwatch.org)
- 59** See McGee R, and Norton, A. (2000) 'Participation in Poverty Reduction Strategies: A Synthesis of Experience with Participatory Approaches to Policy Design, Implementation and Monitoring', *IDS Working Paper No. 109*
- 60** Dr Richard Youngs, 'Liberalism and Security', forthcoming paper for the Foreign Policy Institute, 2004

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# *Implementors or Actors?*

## Reviewing civil society's role in European Community development assistance in Kenya, Senegal, Bolivia and India

The European Union is committed to focusing its relations with developing countries on poverty reduction, human rights and democracy promotion. This report offers a reality check on European Community (EC) efforts in Kenya, Senegal, Bolivia and India. The analysis focuses on the degree and quality of civil society participation in drawing up the Country Strategy Papers, which determine how EC aid is allocated. Tackling the democratic deficit in EC aid could make Europe a more credible actor in development and foreign policy.

- Does the EU implement its policy on promoting participatory development processes?
- What role do civil society organisations play in EC aid decision-making?
- How should European Community aid relate to other donors like the World Bank?
- What is Europe's added value in development co-operation? Where should its priorities lie?

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