



PROSPECTS FOR AFRICA – EUROPE'S POLICIES

The VENRO Project on the
Africa-EU Partnership

Putting Rural Development First! The Africa-EU Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure

2010



Recommendations of the Meeting of African and European Civil
Society Organisations in Bonn, November 2009

VENRO
ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN
DEVELOPMENT NGOs

European NGO confederation
for relief and development
CONCORD
Confédération européenne des ONG
d'urgence et de développement

Table of contents

Foreword	3
The Africa-EU Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure: Recommendations for a people- and poverty-oriented approach	3
Decent work and rural development	5
Infrastructure for smallholders and small and medium producers in rural areas	6
Access to finance and investment in human resources in rural development	7
Participants of the Workshop	8
VENRO-Members	9



Foreword

Two years after the approval of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) in Lisbon, progress in the Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure is still lagging behind.

Therefore, civil society representatives from Africa and Europe ask to address these shortcomings of the Action Plan 2008–2010 and identify improvements for the next

Action Plan. The following recommendations to promote local and regional markets in support of rural development and regional integration were formulated at the workshop “The Africa-EU Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure: Putting Rural Development First”, held in Bonn on the 26th November 2009. The workshop was organised by VENRO with the support of CONCORD.

The Africa-EU Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure: Recommendations for a people- and poverty-oriented approach

Enhanced trade, especially within and between African countries, strengthened regional integration and the promotion of infrastructure are essential to development. Therefore, this Partnership has an important role to fulfil within the JAES. In view of the focus outlined in the Action Plan 2008–2010, the predominance of export-oriented growth and a top-down approach in infrastructure development seems to be guiding the priority areas and actions. Rural de-

velopment only plays a marginal role yet it has a huge potential for poverty reduction. The food crisis in 2008 made the importance of a paradigm change vis-à-vis rural development evident. More than 80 percent of Africa’s poor people live in rural areas. With its people-centred approach, the Africa-EU Strategy can hardly avoid attributing a key role to agriculture.



Decent work and rural development

Trade and infrastructure are considered as the motor of development and wealth creation helping to overcome poverty. The prevalent source of income in rural area is in the agricultural sector. Work and employment in this sector are mostly informal. People work as self-employed, unpaid family members or wage-earners. Labour is mostly casual, daily and seasonal and in some countries provided by migrants, with high incidents of child and slave labour. The prevalence of informality in the sector also means that agricultural workers have little or no access to social protection, be it health, sick leave or unemployment benefits. In order to achieve Millennium Development Goal 1, its target 2 “achieve full and productive employment and decent work” is most urgent in rural areas and pushes rural development into the forefront of the agenda.

The Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure aims at enhancing trade and, increasing production mainly for export orientation. Intervention measures under this Partnership will impact on the food supply chain and income distribution along it. However, the Partnership does not pay attention to the first sequence of the food supply chain in the rural area that is the farm gate price and working conditions. Thus it becomes necessary to promote decent work in rural areas as an essential principle in the implementation of this partnership. In order for workers in the agricultural sector to have the possibility of working their way out of poverty, the four pillars of the International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) Decent Work Agenda must be implemented.

Recommendations on the way forward on the Africa-EU Partnership

1. The Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure is a top-down and externally-driven process. In order to change it into a people-driven and bottom-up process in the current and future measures and activities should clearly involve small-scale farmers at the grassroots levels, including their priority needs in the development and decision-making processes. The roles of the small-scale farmers should also be clearly identified.
2. The activities of the Action Plan should be guided by a rights-based approach.
3. The Partnership seems to address large enterprises. Transnational corporations seem to be the key actors. This suggests a market approach that favours investment climate over an inclusive market approach – with the latter being essential to promote coherence between trade and development policy in this Partnership. To make sure that the market works for the poor, a more differentiated approach to the private sector is needed. This approach distinguishes between transnational companies and well organised business, on the one hand, and small and medium enterprises and micro-enterprises on the other. This will ensure that the interests and needs of, for example, women and the youth enterprises and small-scale farmers are promoted.
4. The Partnership is guided by an export-oriented model aiming at promoting trade liberalisation. As the JAES is a forum of political dialogue, it is well placed to question the merits of the dominant models of development and discuss pluralist and alternative models of development.
5. The Partnership seems to be a bureaucracy-driven process lacking involvement of African member states and Regional Economic Communities – a prerequisite for any meaningful promotion of regional integration. Civil society representatives are calling on African leaders to elaborate a common (agricultural) strategy that forms the basis for regional integration and prioritises support to local and regional market building.
6. The Partnership puts a strong emphasis on regional integration yet this is contradicted by JAES explicitly excluding discussions on the negotiations of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), although the EPAs have far-reaching implications on the regional integration process in Africa. Therefore, JAES should take EPAs into account. Civil Society as a stakeholder in JAES could add value to prevent premature conclusion of EPAs that are not development friendly.

Recommendations on the way forward on the Africa-EU Partnership

1. Knowledge of the informal economy, its high relevance for rural employment and the mechanisms developed by the ILO towards ensuring that decent work is integrated in informal employment relations need to be heeded. Therefore, the actors of the JAES are advised to recognise the role of civil society organisations (CSO) in participatory research and that of the ILO in implementing innovative solutions and ensure that both CSO research and ILO best practices are taken into account.
2. African countries as members of the ILO are meant to implement the 1998 Declaration of Fundamental Freedoms and Rights at Work, comprising the Core Labour Standards which are one pillar of the ILO Concept of Decent Work. Therefore, any investment, Foreign Direct Investment and local or national investment should be compliant with ILO core labour standards. African and EU Governments should live up to their commitments, and should engage in awareness-raising on people’s rights and empowerment to promote adherence to ILO core labour standards. Furthermore and in line with the ILO’s Social Security for All campaign, African and EU governments should explore options for the financing and operation of social protection schemes.
3. The African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) as developed by the UN Economic Commission of Africa looks into informal economic sectors and different levels, that is, social, economic and political empowerment, and gender division in the labour market. The Partnership should support documentation of and be informed by economic realities of informal markets and women and male economic actors in the informal economy – and decent work status therein.
4. Privatisation under structural adjustment programmes and de-centralisation have led to increased informalisation and weakening of decent work in rural development. Increasingly, industrialised sectors and food processing are moving to the hubs, the urban areas, to the cities, i.e. to the centre and administrative districts. The impoverishment of the rural areas has led to the weakening of agricultural sectors, lack of infrastructure and supply capacity, and has, in turn, a negative impact on ever more precarious working conditions. To remedy this situation, extension service and labour inspection have to be upgraded and technical capacity of both employers unions and governments to implement labour laws improved. Particular attention should be paid to the role of social dialogue, including with associations of informal workers and local authorities, in improving the working conditions of agricultural workers. Funds must be made available for that.
5. JAES actors are advised to learn from the best practice fair trade supply chains and explore its potential to bridge or act as an intertwining of the formal and the informal sector: it creates food chains that start with the production in rural development and integration into formalised export sector. It brings decent work into the informal sector, e.g. increased wage, price, infrastructure, and health, and creates incentives.



Infrastructure for smallholders and small and medium producers in rural areas

The importance of infrastructure for sustainable African development is undisputed. Not only does insufficient investment in infrastructure hinder local, regional and international trade and impede production, entrepreneurial development and employment creation, but the lack of it also affects all other areas of development as well as achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Today, over 40 percent of the African population lack access to clean water, while 60 percent do not have access to sanitation and less than 20 percent have access to electricity. The rural networks are in a poor state, and some areas are completely inaccessible during the rainy season.

The EU-Africa Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure aims to facilitate private in-

vestments in transport networks; water and energy infrastructures; information and communication technology networks and related services in order to interconnect the African continent, further regional and continental integration and expand Africa's participation in global trade. Within the Partnership, the EU financially particularly supports large cross-national projects.

Although the engagement of the EU and its efforts to drastically increase investments into these infrastructure projects are laudable, the question arises as to whether these projects will benefit local communities and smallholders rather than the big, export-oriented enterprises and large-scale plantations.

Recommendations for ways forward in the Africa-EU Partnership

1. The goal of infrastructure development should be to address education, health, food security, water, employment creation and access to basic social services. Thus we recommend that infrastructure for development should focus more on providing economic opportunities for smaller and poorer economic actors and traders in the rural economy, and improve linkages of rural to urban markets.
2. African governments primarily hold responsibility for infrastructure development in their respective countries. As much as we appreciate JAES investing in this area with a priority set for infrastructure, projects have to respond to priorities that service broader and poorer segments in rural sectors. The African governments should be accountable for infrastructural development in their countries.
3. Infrastructural development should be part of democratic process integrating all stakeholders in a participatory manner. These must be valid for the decisions in the partnership cover decisions, including those on the allocation of funds. There is a need to step up the management and accountability on utilization of funds for infrastructure development.
4. There is a need to invest and focus more on small-scale schemes for agriculture in Africa. Rain-fed agriculture is always unreliable and especially in the wake of climate change and global warming.

Access to finance and investment in human resources in rural development

The current food crisis and the economic and financial crisis are having an impact not only on the G 20 and the export industries in developing countries but also on the rural economies and farmers in the African countries. They are affected because agriculture has been a subject neglected both by Africa and the EU. Lessons from Structural Adjustment Programmes clearly show the damaging effect of reducing institutional capacity in African governments and support farmers to produce food. This has contributed to most of the African countries becoming net importers of food and has led to only small investments in food production of the local population.

Access to extension services that improve farmers' capabilities to combine their traditional with new knowledge, to use organic methods for sustainable management of agricultural resources such as water, soil and biodiversity,

is of utmost importance. Increasing knowledge of women farmers and decreasing dependency of male farmers on external inputs that are often not affordable is a key to improving household economy, nutrition and food supply. It is very difficult to get access to microcredit financing in rural areas. Therefore, improving all conditions of access to advice, agro-ecological farming methods and financing for the rural population living in poverty should be a major concern of the Partnership on Trade, Infrastructure and Regional Integration. Women in Africa are among the poorest in all developing countries. Women still eat and earn less and also have poorest access to loans, extension services and new knowledge or any help schemes. In contrast, women do excellent credit management and are responsible for 80 percent of food security in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Recommendations for ways forward in the Africa-EU Partnership

1. A bottom-up approach is needed that is adaptable to local needs. The majority of people in African countries, mostly women, depend on agriculture. Therefore, food security has to be put first. Discrimination of smallholder (peasant) agriculture has to be stopped.
2. The conditions of small-scale farmers have to be improved regarding access to land (ownership, control), finance and loans, education, knowledge of organic farming methods and expertise.
3. Women and young people have to be brought back into the spotlight of development, regarding all areas, but: if men are left out, violence towards women will increase. This means that a gender-sensitive development needs to be embraced that explicitly addresses constraints and opportunities for men and women farmers alike.
4. Access to finance for rural areas is urgently needed. This has to be linked to education, training and capacity building to make investment productive and sustainable.
5. There is a need to put in place farmer-friendly credit schemes in Africa since agriculture is a highly risky industry. This may include insurance schemes to protect and cushion farmers from adverse and unpredictable rain systems and weather.
6. There is a lack of civil society participation at all levels: more stakeholders at local and regional levels are needed to bring in their interest, positions and needs. Funds for mobilisation and strengthening of rural and social movements have to be made available.
7. Development inputs for agricultural production have to be adapted to local and regional needs.
8. Accountability and responsibility of local and national politicians should be increased.

Participants of the Workshop

- Olivia Baciu, Romanian NGDO Platform, Romania
- Rev. Malcolm Damon, Economic Justice Network, South Africa
- Dr. Hildegard Hagemann, Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax, Germany
- Alessa Hartmann, VENRO, Germany
- Henry Richard Kimera, CONSENT, Uganda
- Michael Kömm, Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Germany
- Jakob Kotcho, ACDIC, Cameroon
- Axel Krumsiek, DIE, Germany
- Tilder Kumichii, GEED, Cameroon
- Dr. Rolf Künnemann, FIAN, Germany
- Anke Kurat, VENRO, Germany
- Figan Lafci, Womnet, Germany
- Kerstin Lanje, Germanwatch, Germany
- Zachary Makanya, PELUM, Kenya
- Francisco Mari, EED, Germany
- Jane Nalunga, SEATINI, Uganda
- Rebecca Ntim, VENRO, Germany
- Prof. Dr. h. c. Christa Randzio-Plath, VENRO, Germany
- Christoph Riese, VENRO, Germany
- Graça Samo, FORUM MULHER, Mozambique
- Annika Schulte, DIE, Germany
- Dieter Simon, KOSA, Germany
- Rebecca Tanui, BEACON, Kenya
- Nadine Tatge, DIE, Germany
- Karin Ulmer, APRODEV/CONCORD, Belgium
- Lucas Wadenya, STIPA, Kenya



VENRO-Members (March 2010)

- action medeor
- ADRA Deutschland
- Ärzte der Welt
- Ärzte für die Dritte Welt
- Ärzte ohne Grenzen*
- africa action/Deutschland *
- Akademie Klausenhof
- Aktion Canchanabury
- Andheri-Hilfe Bonn
- Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Eine-Welt-Landesnetzwerke in Deutschland (agl)
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Evangelischen Jugend in Deutschland (aej)
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft Entwicklungsethnologie
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungshilfe (AGEH)
- ASW – Aktionsgemeinschaft Solidarische Welt
- AT-Verband*
- AWO International
- Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (bezev)*
- BONO-Direkthilfe
- Brot für die Welt
- Bündnis Eine Welt Schleswig-Holstein (BEI)
- Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend (BDKJ)
- Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe für Menschen mit geistiger Behinderung
- CARE Deutschland-Luxemburg
- Caritas International
- Casa Alianza Kinderhilfe Guatemala
- ChildFund Deutschland
- Christliche Initiative Romero
- Christoffel-Blindenmission Deutschland
- Das Hunger Projekt
- Dachverband Entwicklungspolitik Baden-Württemberg (DEAB)
- Deutsche Entwicklungshilfe für soziales Wohnungs- und Siedlungswesen (DESWOS)
- Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax
- Deutsche Lepra- und Tuberkulosehilfe (DAHW)
- Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)
- Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband
- Deutsches Blindenhilfswerk
- Deutsches Komitee für UNICEF*
- Deutsches Komitee Katastrophenvorsorge*
- Deutsches Rotes Kreuz*
- DGB-Bildungswerk – Nord-Süd-Netz
- Difäm
- Eine Welt Netz NRW
- Eine Welt Netzwerk Hamburg
- EIRENE – Internationaler Christlicher Friedensdienst
- Evangelische Akademien in Deutschland (EAD)
- Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED)
- FIAN-Deutschland
- Gemeinschaft Sant’ Egidio
- Germanwatch
- Handicap International
- HelpAge Deutschland
- Hildesheimer Blindenmission*
- Hilfswerk der Deutschen Lions
- humedica
- Indienhilfe
- INKOTA-netzwerk
- Internationaler Hilfsfonds
- Internationaler Ländlicher Entwicklungsdienst (ILD)
- Internationaler Verband Westfälischer Kinderdörfer
- Islamic Relief Deutschland
- Johanniter-Auslandshilfe
- Jugend Dritte Welt (JDW)
- Kairos Europa
- Karl Kübel Stiftung für Kind und Familie
- KATE – Kontaktstelle für Umwelt und Entwicklung
- Kindernothilfe
- Lateinamerika-Zentrum
- Lichtbrücke
- Malteser International
- Marie-Schlei-Verein
- matterna – Stiftung Frau und Gesundheit
- medica mondiale
- medico international
- MISEREOR
- Missionszentrale der Franziskaner*
- Nationaler Geistiger Rat der Bahá’i in Deutschland
- NETZ Bangladesch
- Ökumenische Initiative Eine Welt
- OIKOS EINE WELT
- Opportunity International Deutschland
- ORT Deutschland
- Oxfam Deutschland
- Peter-Hesse-Stiftung
- Plan International Deutschland
- Rhein-Donau-Stiftung*
- Rotary Deutschland Gemeindienst*
- Salem International
- Samhathi – Hilfe für Indien*
- Save the Children Deutschland*
- Senegalhilfe-Verein
- Senior Experten Service (SES)
- Society for International Development (SID)
- SODI – Solidaritätsdienst-international
- Sozial- und Entwicklungshilfe des Kolpingwerkes (SEK)
- Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden (SEF)
- Stiftung Nord-Süd-Brücken
- SÜDWIND – Institut für Ökonomie und Ökumene
- Susila Dharma – Soziale Dienste
- Swisscontact Germany
- Terra Tech Förderprojekte
- terre des hommes Deutschland
- Tierärzte ohne Grenzen*
- TransFair
- UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe
- Verband Entwicklungspolitik Niedersachsen (VEN)
- Verbund Entwicklungspolitischer Nichtregierungsorganisationen Brandenburgs (VENROB)
- Weltfriedensdienst
- Welthaus Bielefeld
- Welthungerhilfe
- Weltladen-Dachverband
- Weltnotwerk der KAB Deutschlands
- Werkhof
- Werkstatt Ökonomie
- World University Service Deutsches Komitee
- World Vision Deutschland
- W. P. Schmitz-Stiftung
- Zukunftsstiftung Entwicklungshilfe bei der GLS Treuhand

VENRO currently as 118 members

* Guestmember



VENRO is the umbrella organisation of development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Germany. The organisation was founded in 1995 and consists of around 120 organisations. Their backgrounds lie in independent and church-related development co-operation, humanitarian aid as well as development education, public relations and advocacy. 16 one-world networks are part of VENRO. These represent about 2,000 local development initiatives and NGOs. VENRO’s central goal is to create fair globalisation, with a special emphasis on eradicating global poverty. The organisation is committed to implementing human rights and conserving natural resources.
www.venro.de



CONCORD is the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. Its 18 international networks and 24 national associations from the European Member States represent more than 1,600 European NGOs vis-à-vis the European Institutions. The main objective of the Confederation is to enhance the impact of European development NGOs vis-à-vis the European Institutions by combining expertise and accountability.
www.concordeurope.org



With the project “Prospects for Africa – Europe’s Policies”, VENRO seeks an active civil society contribution to the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. The project builds on co-operation with African partners that began during VENRO’s successful EU Presidency Project in 2007. VENRO member organisations then worked together with their African partners to develop statements for policy-makers, the media and the interested public on the main topics of the project: energy and climate policies, regional integration and trade; and gender.
www.prospects-for-africa.de

Publishers

Association of German Development NGOs (VENRO)
Dr. Werner-Schuster-Haus
Kaiserstr. 201
D-53113 Bonn, Germany
Phone: +49 (0) 228/946 77- 0
Fax: +49 (0) 0228/946 77- 99
Email: sekretariat@venro.org
Website: www.venro.org

Editor: Anke Kurat (responsible), Karin Ulmer, APRODEV/CONCORD
Final editing: Kirsten Prestin, Venro

Design and Layout: i-gelb GmbH, Cologne

Print: Molberg GmbH, Bonn

Photo Credits: Sven Torfinn (title, page 8), Lineair (page 3, 4,6)



This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of VENRO. It can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Reprints only with publisher’s permission.

Bonn, March 2010



PROSPECTS FOR AFRICA – EUROPE'S POLICIES

The VENRO Project on the
Africa-EU Partnership

