

« FICHE CONTRADICTOIRE »

Evaluation of the Commission’s External Cooperation with partner countries through the organisations of the UN family

(*For details on the recommendations please refer to the main report)

Update as of April 2010

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
<p>1. Clarification of the Commission’s general framework for funds channelling through the UN bodies and the current overall and operational objectives for it. These objectives will be based on factors of added value and encourage capitalisation. Issuing a new Communication updating COM (2001) 231 and COM (2003) 526; or developing general guidelines.</p>	<p>Agree. COM(2001)231 and COM(2003)526 already provide general guidance to the Commission on when and how to partner with the UN. In the case of some UN entities, strategic partnerships and other bilateral arrangements provide further guidance. In the light of the evaluation, and taking into account the evolution in the UN's functioning and set-up at country level (notably through the System-Wide Coherence reforms) and its implications on EC-UN financial cooperation, we will review the existing framework (the 2001 and 2003 communications) and general principles with a view to providing improved strategic and practical orientations to Commission services.</p> <p>In particular we will consider more specific guidelines to services and Delegations in relation to certain concepts (e.g. working in “partnership”) or types of cooperation (e.g. participation in UN multi-donors funds, participation in calls for proposals, possible implications of UN “delivering as one” activities, thematic cooperation).</p> <p>Framework agreements and objectives agreed at HQ level should be disseminated to field level.</p>	<p>Actions already taken:</p> <p>The EC is considering how best to review and capitalise on the strategic partnership agreements and to develop a strategic framework linked with the major themes arising from the programming exercises, international discussions and the operation relationship between the EC and the UN. The actual reflection favours the idea of areas for partnership based on themes (with the emphasis on climate change, gender, governance and democracy and energy).</p> <p>In a broader sense an instruction note was issued to Delegations and operational staff on 17/6/2009 to provide guidance on Working with International Organisations (IO). It identifies those factors which need to be considered before partnering with an IO and the situations where the best results tend to be obtained, based on findings of the evaluation, the provisions of the framework agreements and other analyses. The note also incorporates aid effectiveness considerations.</p> <p>However, any decision on a new Communication, or other internal strategic document on multilateralism, and co-operation with the IOs and notably on the UN system, building on the relevant Communications of 2001 and 2003, will</p>

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
		need to be taken in the light of the new Lisbon Treaty's institutional and organisational framework. In particular, action in this area will be dependant on the final shape of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the concrete working arrangements that will be put in place between the new service and COM.
2. Build on specific agreements based on cooperation in practice in well-defined specific areas of successful cooperation between EC and UN like the field of electoral assistance.	Agree. It may be useful to consider operational guidelines in some well-developed areas this can bring added value and provide a means to share best practice and where sectoral guidelines are not yet in place.	Actions already taken A list of relevant guidelines, reference documents and working documents produced by EuropeAid is available. Moreover, under the Aid to Uprooted People (AUP) component of the Asia Regional Programme, UN agencies - as UNHCR or UNDP (for elections) - have a role to play.
3. Partnership with the UN in newer focus areas which are under the UN system or where UN has received a mandate for them (e.g. climate change, AIDS, trafficking in human beings).	Agree. We agree that this type of cooperation should be considered especially in the context of thematic programmes and in newer areas of co-operation drawing from the experience of the electoral assistance partnership and taking into account the specificities of each sector. The Commission will pursue and strengthen the cooperation already initiated on some of these newer areas of cooperation and explore with the UN possible themes for new partnerships based on potential added value.	Actions already taken Areas where is a possibility to develop cooperation and how best to strengthen this cooperation are being identified. However, the identification of potential enhanced cooperation areas should not be understood as a commitment by the EC to increase its cooperation with the UN or to deliver joint programmes in all these areas. Remaining actions required To develop a more systematic approach to thematic cooperation covering policy and operational (but not necessarily financial) cooperation in areas related to development, conflict prevention and post crisis recovery.
4. Regular institutional capacity assessments of partner UN bodies with a view to have a better appraisal of their characteristics, avoiding bringing UN bodies into interventions which go beyond their <i>modi operandi</i> . Joining existing	Agree. While the strengths and weaknesses of UN organisations vary considerably from country to country, dissemination of lessons learned and best practice needs to be improved. Feedback systems (e.g. ROM exercise and reporting/monitoring from	Actions already taken EuropeAid has carried out the following: • Review of External Assistance Management Reports (EAMRs) • Preparation (in consultation with operational services) of information fiches on

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
<p>assessment initiatives such as Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), in order to limit duplication or capitalise on them.</p>	<p>Delegations), in-house tools, MOPAN, annual review meetings of SPAs and other arrangements, dialogue with UN agencies/HQ, and joint assessments all contribute to improving our knowledge of the way we cooperate with the UN.</p> <p>Analysis of the effectiveness of key UN partners at country level will contribute to a dialogue on the institutional capability of these partners.</p> <p>The "Delivering as One" initiative should introduce greater coherence and minimise competition between agencies and ensure that individual agencies work to their strengths.</p>	<p>individual UN agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of key UN agencies in Nigeria and Bangladesh <p>Remaining actions required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission has asked to become a member of MOPAN. EuropeAid will place a range of analyses already completed on the internet. • A methodology for a general capacity assessment is being developed for monitoring of delegated cooperation. Guidelines on the management, evaluation and monitoring of Pool Fund Operations have already been prepared, but have still to be approved by the Management. • A SWOT analysis is being carried out for the EC-UNDP electoral assistance task force with a view to developing a strategic plan. Results are expected to be available at the beginning of 2010.
<p>5. Further clarification of concrete mutual obligations necessary to comply with respective accountability requirements, in particular on reporting and management of operations.</p>	<p>Agree. This is the function of the FAFA (Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement) working group meetings which are held annually. Joint Reporting Guidelines were adopted in 2007.</p> <p>The FAFA focuses on results, and management should reflect this. However, the Commission needs to be appropriately involved in management of programmes for a variety of reasons. An authorising officer may decide, on the basis of his/her risk assessment that closer follow-up is required. In larger, high profile Trust Fund type operations, the Commission is generally represented in the governance structure,</p>	<p>Actions already taken</p> <p>A Joint Reference Group (JRG) was established by the EC-UN FAFA (Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement) Annual Working Group. It addresses systemic implementation issues and provides clarifications through the FAQs (produced by EuropeAid). The work of the JRG contributed to the EuropeAid's updates of its intranet and internet sites for IOs. Those activities, combined with the ongoing work of the annual EC-UN FAFA working group, effectively respond to this recommendation.</p> <p>Regarding the governance structure of the programmes it is systematically checked at QSG-</p>

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
	usually at a strategic level (such as a Policy and Strategy Committee, Donor Committee, Steering Committee, etc).	D level and in finalising the Contribution Agreements following the adoption of the Commission Decisions / Action Fiches. Remaining actions required UN-EC FAFA shall better reflect/integrate the EC Backbone Strategy on Technical Cooperation
6. Clarification of administrative and specific issues , creating problems, in particular on overhead levels, justification of expenses, rules for reimbursement of residual funds and the level of Commission pre-financing.	Agree. At the 2008 meeting of the Working Group, a 'joint reference group' was created which considers administrative difficulties which have arisen in the implementation of co-operation under the FAFA and decides if further guidance to staff is required.	Actions already taken EuropeAid has produced a set of FAQ addressing systemic implementation issues and providing clarifications. This, combined with the ongoing work of the annual EC-UN FAFA working group and the JRG (see above), effectively responds to this recommendation. In addition, the EuropeAid has updated its intranet and internet site for IOs.
7. Common training at operational level to ensure a shared understanding of the legal and regulatory framework of the partnership, and that all staff involved in channelling is trained.	Agree. Training is regularly organised jointly and provided to both Commission and UN operational staff in the procedures under the FAFA. Training covers the policy background to the partnership, changes to the regulatory framework and recently adopted guidelines (reporting, visibility and verification). Joint EC-UNDP training on Effective Electoral Assistance is an example of a successful joint training initiative. In this area a flexible e-learning training course in modular form will be produced in 2008/2009 by the EC and UNDP. One of the outcomes of the "joint reference group" is a Frequently Asked Questions section on the internet.	Actions already taken In addition to the on-going training activities already outlined in the "Response of Commission services": With regard to Train4Dev, cooperation has been strengthened through the chairing of the network by EuropeAid for the period 2008/2009. Within this network, 8 distance learning modules have been made available in cooperation with the FAO. Moreover the mentioned "Effective Electoral Assistance" sub-group, co-chaired by EuropeAid, has finalised a flexible e-learning training course in modular form. This course was produced by the EC and UNDP and first delivered in Accra in June 2009. In order to make the best use of limited time and resources, it is suggested that, where cooperation with IOs is significant, Delegations nominate an 'IO co-ordinator' familiar with the procedures applying to IOs to receive specific training.

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
		<p>Delegations were invited, through the instruction note issued to Delegations and operational staff on 17/6/2009 on Working with IOs, (mentioned under recommendation 1 above) to nominate "IO co-ordinators". A reminder was issued in December 2009.</p>
<p>8. Focusing on the visibility of the partnership, rather than on elements of 'static visibility' such as stickers, banners, etc... at intervention level. Considering visibility as part of a comprehensive communication strategy at general and country levels.</p>	<p>Agree. In April 2008, joint visibility guidelines for field staff were adopted which cover static visibility requirements but which also put emphasis on the need to develop more dynamic visibility and communication activities. Management reports from Delegations have been updated to monitor the implementation of the joint visibility guidelines and guidance is provided to staff in the field and at Headquarters through the regular Information and Communication seminars. The signature in September 2006 of a joint action plan on visibility already emphasised the importance of communicating on the wider partnership.</p> <p>A communication strategy to encompass all aspects of the EU-UN relationship will be explored, addressing different levels of communication and target groups. Initiatives such as the EU-UN Partnership Report, now in its third year, help to promote the partnership at a more general level.</p>	<p>Actions already taken</p> <p>A communication and visibility training module covering IOs aimed at EC project managers in delegations has been developed. Communication and visibility has been integrated in the common EC/UN training.</p> <p>Annual EU-UN Partnership reports have been published by the UN, with input and support from COM, covering cooperation since 2006. These reports, which were widely distributed, have contributed to raise awareness and visibility on the EU-UN relationship. The 2009 report is currently in preparation. A short leaflet in 5 languages on EU-UN relationship was prepared by the EC to communicate this relationship to a wider audience.</p> <p>Together with UNRIC (United Nations Regional Information Centre), the EC identified a number of key "UN days" for joint communication activities at field level. A note on this initiative was sent to Delegations.</p> <p>Remaining actions required</p> <p>In the framework of the possible review of the existing strategic framework, a discussion will take place at Commission level on the type of</p>

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
		<p>visibility to give to the partnership between the Commission and the UN and how to fund this aspect.</p> <p>Revision of the existing framework will be given due consideration by services during the second half of 2010, in view of a possible new policy document to be agreed in the course of 2011. Action in this area will be linked to the discussion on the possible revision of the current EU-UN strategic cooperation framework (see above, Recommendation 1).</p>
<p>9. Existence within the Commission of an adequate organisational structure; for providing a comprehensive view of the funds channelled through UN interventions and for centralising information; for providing sufficient information as a basis for reliable decision making through the Commission's information systems.</p>	<p>Agree. The collection and publication of information on both the quantity and quality of our aid channelled through the UN has been significantly improved, particularly since 2005.</p> <p>The merger of the CRIS and OLAS databases (planned for 2009) should facilitate the collection and consolidation of information, at least for those contracts managed by EuropeAid. The possibility to develop a centralised database, allowing for information on all contracts with the UN will be considered.</p>	<p>Actions already taken</p> <p>With the merger of the CRIS and OLAS databases, the collection and consolidation of information has been improved. Information on UN contracts managed by other DGs is communicated annually to EuropeAid.</p> <p>A project which aims to improve the data available on IOs, through the improvement of existing fields and the introduction of some new fields in CRIS was accepted in the IT master plan for 2009. However, due to a change in priorities, this programme will now be delayed until 2010. The information should be consolidated into a separate IO template.</p> <p>A viable measure could be represented by the nomination of focal points in each Delegation for dealing with IO issues so including UN agencies. [Beyond the question of structures, a good practice reported in some countries is the regular / bi-annual EC-UNDP meetings (Head of</p>

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up
		Agency/HoD + all staff dealing with the projects)].