

« FICHE CONTRADICTOIRE »

Joint Country Level Evaluation of Bangladesh

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

Recommendations	Response of Commission services	Follow-up (one year later)
<p><i>R1. Further seize both incremental and transformative opportunities by using more politically smart iteration as guiding principle. (Evaluation Partners (EPs) should adjust the level of their ambitions, should be more flexible and should be selective in their support)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate detailed responses for the areas/sectors where there is demand for EPs' support and shared vision of the objectives pursued. • Intelligently strike a balance between engaging into flexible and adaptive dialogue with the Bangladeshi authorities and the imperative of being accountable to HQs. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MIP 2014-2020 provides a detailed response to support government policies in alignment with strategic priorities. In mid-2015, support was synchronised with Bangladesh's 7th Five Year Plan 2015-2020. A mid-term review is scheduled to re-assess priorities where relevant. • In the context of the EU+ joint programming process, EU, EUMS, Norway and Switzerland (EU+) have agreed on a <i>Shared Vision</i> of development priorities for EU+ cooperation which aligns with the national agenda. De facto division of labour and joint implementation of interventions is already a reality on the ground. The agreed roadmap for a joint analysis and response paves the way for the next steps of the process of joint programming. The priority remains to push forward results-oriented policy dialogue with the Government in selected areas of intervention – building on synergies and joint operations at EU+ level. 	

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<p><i>R2. EPs should be selective in their support and focus financial and human resources on fewer engagements.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen the knowledge of local realities. Through an increase in the in-house understanding of the sector-specific context; and/or through quality and long-term staff/TA • Consider reducing the number of sectors where each EP will be actively engaged • The EU should continue engaging in the trade sector where all DPs and, more importantly, the government consider the EU has a comparative advantage. 	<p>Partially agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the framework of the MIP 2014-2020, support focuses on three sectors which will contribute to the achievement of jointly-agreed strategic objectives: Governance, Food and Nutrition security, Education and Skills Development. In the context of the EU+<i>Shared Vision</i>, de facto division of labour and joint implementation of interventions is taking place. • MIP 2014-2020 considerably moves away from a traditional project approach towards policy dialogue and budget support in wider focal/sectorial areas of intervention. • As part of a strategic decision, the EU has moved away from direct engagement in trade sector in Bangladesh under the current MIP. However, assistance will be continued indirectly to support the trade sector through interventions in the areas of skills development and sustainable production and consumption. 	
<p><i>R3. (Not applicable since it is addressed to Denmark and Sweden)</i></p>		

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<p><i>R4. Reinvigorate pragmatic coordination efforts for promoting joint approaches.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlarge the scope of joint analyses of challenges at stake, especially in areas such as political economy analyses at sector and sub-sector levels (see also R1). • Develop a common EU strategy to the challenges at stake within the country, with a view to having a more substantiated and joint position of the wider DP community. • Commonly identify the DP which presents the best comparative advantage in the sector and select it as lead implementing partner. • When channelling through an IO, treat the IO as a partner and not as contractor to ensure smoother implementation. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As indicated in R1, EU is jointly defining and implementing actions with MSs. • As indicated in R1, EU and EU+ MSs have agreed on a Shared Vision of development priorities. • With the wider donor community, the EU participates in the ongoing design of a Joint Cooperation Strategy. The EU highlights the relevance of advocating in cross-cutting themes of paramount importance like PFM, quality education and overall policy framework. • Agreed, but is also requires the IO to engage more proactively and in a transparent manner with the EU. 	

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<p><i>R5. Select the aid modalities that provide the opportunities for learning, added value, increased harmonisation and alignment, while reflecting the demand from the counterparts.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse the demand and preference from the counterpart in terms of aid modality. • In the choice of aid modalities, seek to promote (i) partnerships with local counterparts; (ii) coordination and harmonisation between DPs; (iii) alignment with country systems according to context and risk willingness; and (iv) learning opportunities for the partners • In joint programmes, aim at having one joint results matrix and joint disbursement mechanisms. • Reduce the number of parallel TA schemes and favour a more demand-driven, coordinated delivery of quality TA. • Support financial management reforms so as to advance the capacity of Bangladesh to channel assistance through country systems. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU has been using the modality of budget support in a context of multi-donor budget support. The selection of a specific type of aid modality might facilitate some specific opportunities but it should not be taken for granted. The EU will seek to extend budget support operations to other key sectors of intervention, where a clear nationally-owned strategy is available and provides a framework for results-based policy reforms. • Support to PFM reforms is and remains a priority for the EU. New approaches to reinforce capacities in the sector will be promoted under the AAP 2017. • On joint programming, refer to R1. 	

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<p>R6. Budget support should be used highly selectively considering the high fiduciary risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rigorous analyses of the PFM situation. They should be taken into account when deciding whether Bangladesh is eligible or not for budget support (cf. PFM conditionality of the EU). • In primary education, if the treasury model is maintained in the next phase of PEDP (after 2017), the EU should continue with SBS. This aid modality constitutes the best (and only) option for the EU to play a role in the policy dialogue. The design and implementation of such an SBS should nevertheless be improved. In particular, the PFM conditionality should not be linked to the performance of any specific donor-funded project supporting PFM. Given its relative small financial weight, the EU should also promote the creation of alliances with other EU member states or like-minded donors in order to counter-balance the current dominance of the ASB and the WB. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially as a part of the budget support operation in the Education sector, rigorous analyses of the PFM situation is regularly carried out by the EUD. • The EU already de-linked the assessment on progress on PFM from the SPEMP project in the monitoring of the PEDP3 programme. This logic will be maintained in new sector budget support programmes. • EU has started informal bilateral discussions with post PEDP3 donors other than ADB and WB to explore common views on policy approaches for the new education programme. 	

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<p>R7. Broaden the education focus to encompass the whole sector's dynamics. Embrace a more trust-based approach towards government's ability to deliver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in a more trust-based relationship, given that 'learning by doing' and 'errors and trials' processes constitute effective capacity and ownership building mechanisms. • Make the policy dialogue evolve towards an engagement with the ministerial level including MoPME, MoF and MoE in encouraging the government to take a longer-term strategic view of the education system. • Pay greater attention to the human resource implications of the treasury model/budget support since the conduct of a meaningful policy dialogue is time-consuming. • Pay greater attention to intra-sector interdependence, especially between primary and junior secondary education, and to sector fragmentation. • Encourage a process of cross-fertilisation between formal and non-formal education. • Ensure better aid effectiveness in the support to NGOs. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new budget support operation will cover different sub-sectors under one single programme, namely basic education and skills development. • Close interaction with Government officials has been entertained during the design of the new budget support programme. • Number of meetings at ministerial level has been increased. • Staffing is likely to continue as a challenge taking into consideration the reduction of staff. • The design of one single programme covering several sub-sectors will logically improve intra-sector understanding and interdependence. • The budget support programme will pay extra attention to the status of non-formal education in Bangladesh. 	

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<p>R8. <i>Integrate socio-economic analyses and monitoring in private sector support not least when partnering directly with the private sector.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse likely socio-economic, employment and environmental impacts of private sector interventions where relevant. • Ensure that the design of M&E systems capture these impacts in real time allowing for fast adaptation and reorientation if needed. Encourage great domestic engagement in and ownership of such M&E systems. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations are notably at the core of the ongoing green-growth projects in different environmentally sensitive and economically important sectors. • These projects have in place M&E systems to identify potential impacts and challenges. 	

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<p>R9. <i>Defend the rights of vulnerable and exposed groups by more forcefully combining development interventions and political action.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate capacity of EPs in-country staff to engage in evidence-based assessments of the local Human Rights & Democracy situation, and in particular of its impact on vulnerable or exposed groups. • Prioritise human rights awareness of vulnerable and exposed groups in order to enable them to formulate their own human rights claims and strategies. • Encourage alliance-building between the government and civil society organisations on improved human rights protection for vulnerable and exposed groups. • Maintain hands-off core support for HR&D advocacy NGOs and encourage cooperation among NGOs on confrontational HR&D issues. • Maintain support to government institutions removed from the central executive power that may act as HR&D guardians, but include performance indicators with regard to their independence and the relevance of their activities to vulnerable and exposed groups. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel involved in the human rights area (both at the political and operational level) will continue to work in synergy; to engage with human rights organisations; and will follow appropriate trainings to raise their capacity, as recommended. • Both human rights awareness of the vulnerable and alliance-building are core elements of the projects financed under the EIDHR and CSO Thematic programme and are part of the EU Roadmap for engagement with the CSOs. • The EIDHR programme provides fund to human rights advocacy NGOs to address critical issues of human rights and democracy when they/as they consider it appropriate, acting alone or in coalition with other NGOs. • The National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh remains a key interlocutor on human rights issues. Support may be provided to the institution (also in the framework of the EIDHR) including on promoting its independence. 	

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<p><i>R10. Accelerate efforts aimed at mainstreaming climate change and disaster preparedness approaches, realising the need for long-term perspectives.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise the Ministry of Finance for fund management and overall coordination, under the overall guidance of the Inter-ministerial Climate Change Committee. • Strengthen MoEF and MODMR's capacities for providing technical inputs. • Ensure that future programme support and policy dialogue related to DM and CC has a strong focus on the main constraints, especially at the local level. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The named Inter-ministerial Committee is yet to be institutionalized. There are several committees set up to carry forward specific tasks. The EU works with several of them. • Specific actions aiming at improving CC financing mechanisms at the local level which are about to start implementation were designed already considering the strong involvement of the MoF as part of the Governance structure. The same actions have already considered improving the technical capacities of MoEF and MoDMR. • Through LCG (Local Consultative Groups) potential support for future programming is continuing and all donor agencies interested in CC in Bangladesh are keeping the momentum of a structured coordination. 	

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<p><i>R11. Strengthen internal staff capacity on gender issues and ensure systematic gender mainstreaming in all interventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EU Delegation and Member States should implement the recommendations of the 2014 <i>Gender Country Profile</i> concerning the need to set up a knowledge hub. • EPs should invest in strengthening staff capacity so that they can adequately meet their mandates on GEWE. • In its monitoring and evaluations, EPs should assess more fully GEWE issues and in particular qualitative changes in gender relations. • Support to programming working against Violence against Women should increase attention to prevention. • Targeted actions should focus in more depth on working with men as well as women. 	<p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and best practices sharing are being done periodically through LCG WAGE (Women Advancement and gender Equality). • The EU's Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 provides a clear framework for results-oriented measures on gender issues. • Specific attention is given to gender monitoring in newly approved programmes. 	