

CONCORD AidWatch Briefing Paper

EU blending in LDCs

Call for consultant

February 2021

Introduction

In the framework of its work on EU Official Development Assistance trends, CONCORD Europe, the European Confederation of Development and Relief NGOs, is launching a call for external consultants. As CONCORD leads the work of civil society on the quantity and quality of European ODA, the AidWatch briefing paper about EU blending in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) aims to inform coordinated EU advocacy work and to influence policy makers.

Timeline

The work should be carried out between February and April 2021, when the briefing paper should be released.

Job description

The main tasks of the work would consist in:

- Conducting desk research, interviews and focal groups with CONCORD and other EU aid experts on a structured basis (webinars) on the topics of the briefing paper;
- Drafting and finalising the briefing paper, including graphs and tables and incorporating comments from the consultation process with CONCORD members and Secretariat.

Report content and format

Background

In recent years, LDCs have suffered from a significant decline in overall ODA spending, while DAC – including the EU – donors have increasingly supported blended finance in low income countries. Data shows that blending, however, does not help LDCs to graduate from poverty and, as civil society, CONCORD is keen to monitor and contribute evidence on.

Objectives

As an advocacy objective, the paper aims to influence the Council Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council (development) meeting in the first half of 2021. The FAC (dev) Council Conclusions on 25 May deals with EU ODA. Therefore, we as civil society must reiterate our key asks about EU ODA use, allocations and objectives. Ideally, the paper will also be part of CONCORD's reaction to the DAC 2020 preliminary statistics release. More broadly, the messages point to addressing EU ODA implementation over the upcoming years.

The paper aims to gather further evidence on the fact that blended finance is a tool better suited to MICs – but does not contribute to reduce poverty and inequalities in the least developed countries. If Team Europe wants to keep faith with the Leave No One Behind

pledge, CONCORD believes that EU donors must prioritise the use of ODA in the form of grant-based finance in LDCs.

As these contexts have been more challenging, blending should not come at the expense of other concessional finances in LDCs and other vulnerable countries. Given the growing EU support to the private sector (EFSD+ is an example), the paper will bring together some key principles that EU ODA channelled through blending in LDCs must respect. These are, for example: the respect of national ownership, the alignment with national priorities, the application to a broader SDGs strategy which strengthens all 4 dimensions of sustainable development of partner countries.

Format

We want to have a handy, short and accessible paper about blending in LDCs, with a special focus on EFSD+. The paper should be of 6-8 pages maximum (including graphs and recommendations once it'll be designed). It will be structured as follows:

- **Background:** which will briefly explain the EU approach to blending in LDCs (with references and footnotes), but most importantly will gather evidence and literature on why blending in LDCs is inefficient.
- **Main analysis:** which will include, in addition to the narrative:
 - A table summarising pros and cons of each modality in LDCs.
 - Boxes with case studies (one story about blending in LDCs which brought privatisation; one positive story about ODA-grants in LDCs).
 - A section which analyses the EFSD+.
 - A section about the principles that EU ODA blending should adhere to in LDCs.
- **Recommendations:** with targeted messages for the European Commission and Member States.

Methodology

One of the aims of this paper is to be evidence-based. Some tools to carry out an evidence-based analysis could be:

- An analysis of the geographic allocations of the blended finance in the final NDICI agreement.
- An analysis of the EFSD+ (the EFSD+ procedures, investments in LDCs, examples of EFSD+ projects) with some comparisons with EDFI data for different EU member state DFIs. An assessment between the European Commission, some key Member States approaches to blending in LDCs and the results achieved over the last years.
- Through gathering of unsuccessful examples in partner countries of blending which led to privatisation and increased inequalities; of successful stories in partner countries where grant-based modalities helped LDCs graduate from poverty.

Candidate profile

Successful candidates for this offer will respond as much as possible to the following profile: Essential:

- Experience of quantitative and qualitative data analysis (including use of OECD databases preferably).

- Excellent English writing and editing skills; ability to write about complex issues in an engaging way.
- Excellent knowledge of EU Development Cooperation issues.
- Very good understanding and knowledge of the aid/development effectiveness agenda.
- Very good understanding of different aid financing mechanisms, modalities and instruments (including Private Sector Instruments - PSI).
- Experience of coordinating and managing networks or multiple stakeholders would be an advantage.

Desirable:

- Experience of working in the NGOs environment, with complex multicultural networks and under pressure.
- Some experience in communication.

Application process

To apply for this post, please send:

- your CV outlining your relevant expertise to meet this assignment (1 page max);
- your proposal on how you will undertake this research, including a suggested number of days and their distribution between the different tasks and phases of the work and your day rate (2 pages max).

Please submit this to Riccardo Roba (riccardo.roba@concordeurope.org) and Celia Cranfield (celia.cranfield@concordeurope.org) by 19 February at midnight cob.¹ Interviews are planned to take place in the week of 22 February.

Budget

The maximum budget available for this assignment is 8,800.00 EUR, including VAT. For any additional information, don't hesitate to contact Riccardo at his email address riccardo.roba@concordeurope.org before the deadline.

¹ The call was launched publicly on CONCORD website on 8/02/2021 (available until 19/02/2021 end of the day) at the following link:
<https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Call-for-consultant-of-CONCORD-AW-Report-2020.pdf>

