

EVINFO

Evaluation of the Commission's support to the Southern Africa Development Community, SADC – ref. 1095

Abstract

The European Commission's cooperation with the SAD region during the period 1996-2007 is increasingly poverty oriented, however actual little impact could be documented. The combination of an organisation lacking capacity (SADC) with an organisation where adherence to procedures is very important (EC) has contributed to delays at all stages.

The three main sectors which form the core of the evaluation (Trade, Transport and Food security) are closely inter-linked and coherent.

The future of SADC remains uncertain. To some extent, the EPA negotiations have been a further factor, adding to an on-going internal political process within the region, which is affecting the existence of the present political configuration.

Subject of the evaluation

This evaluation assessed the Commission's past and current co-operation with SADC and their implementation for the period 1996-2007, with special focus on the following fields: regional integration, trade; transport and communication, food security and HIV/AIDS

Purpose

The scope of the evaluation is to provide the relevant external services of the EC and the wider public with an overall independent assessment and identifies key lessons

Methodology

The evaluation was based on 10 evaluation questions, relating to the five DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact) plus coordination, coherence and value added of the Commission. The evaluation was carried out in 3 phases: (i) desk (ii) field () and (iii) synthesis. The evaluators used mainly document analysis, interviews and focus groups to gather data.

Main conclusions:

1. EC's regional interventions are generally relevant, coherent and poverty oriented. The enhancement of coherence and the development of linkages between Regional Strategy Paper/Regional Indicative Programme and the Country Strategy Paper/National Indicative Programme is a key factor in facilitating the Commission's future regional support.
2. The issue of the multiplicity of regional organisations has not been seriously tackled, neither by SADC nor by the EC. In addition the split of SADC Member States into two EPA groups definitely complicates inter-, and intra-regional co-operation.
3. There has been a focus on capacity building activities to support a regional organisation (the SADC Secretariat) in a situation where: there are too few posts for the mandate; existing posts are frozen or unfilled; the posts that are filled are often filled through a quota system and not through a competitive procedure; and the Executive is dominated by the SADC heads of state and has little independent manoeuvrability
4. Delegations with Regional responsibilities do not meet on a regular basis and thus have difficulties to coordinate their activities, and to expand their agenda to also take on board regional aspects.

5. The EC transport interventions have positive outcomes at the national level, but outcomes at the regional level are being constrained by a transport market in the SADC region where the liberalisation reforms are still in their early life stage.
6. The problems posed by HIV/AIDS in the SADC region are nowhere near a solution. Regional HIV/AIDS strategies are in place and supported by regional donor support programmes but there are no immediate indications that infection levels are going down, while life expectancy trends remain negative.

Recommendations:

Strategy

1. Strong efforts should be made to integrate the regional (Regional Indicative Programmes) and the national (National Indicative Programmes) so that the respective links becomes clear and the regional dimension in NIPs becomes evident.

Implementation

2. EC procedures are considered cumbersome and time consuming. Hence, the Commission should, in accordance with Paris Declaration, move towards channelling funds using recipient countries organisation procedures. This poses particular problem to SADC as their procedures are extremely weak.
3. The EC should provide the required funds to help SADC – or other relevant region, for example, SACU – to develop their procedures to such an extent that these organisations will be able to receive EC funds directly and implement using their own procedures as defined through a contribution agreement.
4. The EC should institute the practice of regional delegations meeting regularly to address regional issues; that national delegations join the debate on regional integration; and that budget lines are provided to allow for this to happen.

Sector specific

5. EC facilitates the EPA related discussions at the regional as well as the national level, while also addressing coordination and harmonisation issues between SADC and COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa), and assisting the discussion on the optimal constellation of states in the two emerging EPA groups.
6. EC should increase support SADC's facilitation and coordination role in: liberalising the transport market in Member States; promoting regional development corridors; and establishing prioritisation criteria for distribution of available infrastructure funds; and that support to the transport sector as contained in the NIPs adopts both a regional and national focus.
7. The EC approach to food security should emphasise its long-term character. The link between national food security strategies within regional security approach should be strengthened and the focus should be not only on food availability, but also on its accessibility and utilisation.

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