



Defending the EU via international stability and development:

The Successfulness of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement

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Abstract

The defence of the European Union (EU) shouldn't just be linked to military means, but also aim to tackle the sources of threats. International development is key to improved communication, stability, human rights and in turn EU security. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) set out to do just that. The CPA aims to reduce poverty, integrate African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries into the world economy as well as contribute to peace and security. This paper aims to gauge the successfulness of the CPA. A framework has been developed based on a framework designed for the measurement of success of military conflict management by Rodt (2011). The framework divides success in four criteria: "Internal Goal Attainment", "Internal Appropriateness", "External Goal Attainment" & "External Appropriateness". The analysis found the internal goal attainment to be successful and the internal appropriateness largely successful. Both the external goal attainment and appropriateness were deemed partially successful, as long term effectiveness of measures haven't been taken into account sufficiently.

Introduction

The defence of the European Union (EU) shouldn't just be linked to military means, but also aim to tackle the sources of threats. International development is key to improved communication, stability, human rights and in turn EU security. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) set out to do just that. The CPA is an agreement which started in the year 2000 between the EU and a large set of countries from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) (European Commission, 2016). The Agreement set out to eradicate poverty, integrate ACP countries into the world economy and aid the participating ACP countries to develop. The agreement was set to last for 20 years and will expire on 29 February 2020 (European Commission, 2016).

As the Cotonou Partnership Agreement is nearing its end, this paper aims to evaluate the successfulness of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Therefore, the following research question has been formulated:

“Has the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries been successful?”

In order to answer the posed question, first success has to be defined. In order to do so the next section will introduce a framework which will be used to approach the question. Next, the Cotonou Partnership Agreement itself will briefly be discussed, followed by an analysis of its successfulness in accordance with the introduced framework. Lastly a conclusion will be drawn and the research question will be answered.

1 Framework

The involvement of multiple parties with different priorities and conflicting goals makes success a difficult concept to define. Rodt (2011) developed a framework via which the success of military operations could be measured. This paper will take the framework introduced by Rodt and adapt it

in order to measure the success of development aid strategies. This section will first introduce the framework developed by Rodt, after which the adapted version will be discussed.

1.1 Success in Military Conflict Management

The first thing Rodt (2011) defined was the difference between internal and external success in conflict management. She defined internal success as the successful completion of the operation, whereas external success focused on the effect the operation has had on the conflict itself. The next step was to differentiate between the goals and the road that was taken to get there. Rodt (2011) defined these subcategories as “goal attainment” and “appropriateness” respectively. Combined with the earlier differentiation between internal and external success, this results in four different criteria for success: Internal goal attainment, Internal appropriateness, External goal attainment and External appropriateness. Lastly, these criteria were further defined via the addition of specific indicators for each of them. Internal goal attainment was defined as the successful completion of the mandate for the operation. Internal appropriateness was defined by the timely, efficient and cost-effective implementation of the operation. External Goal attainment looked at the conflict itself and was thus measured by the continuation, diffusion, escalation and intensification of violence in the region. Lastly, external appropriateness looked discrimination and proportionality in the application of force. An overview of the success criteria as defined by Rodt (2011) can be found in figure 1.

1.2 Success in Development Aid Strategies

In order to adapt the framework to development aid strategies it is important to look at the similarities and differences it inherently has with military conflict management. The most essential similarity is the fact that both types of operations can be defined by internal and external success, as they both involve the actor in charge of the operation as well as an external situation or problem they aim to resolve.

More specifically there is no reason to fundamentally change the indicators used to define in-

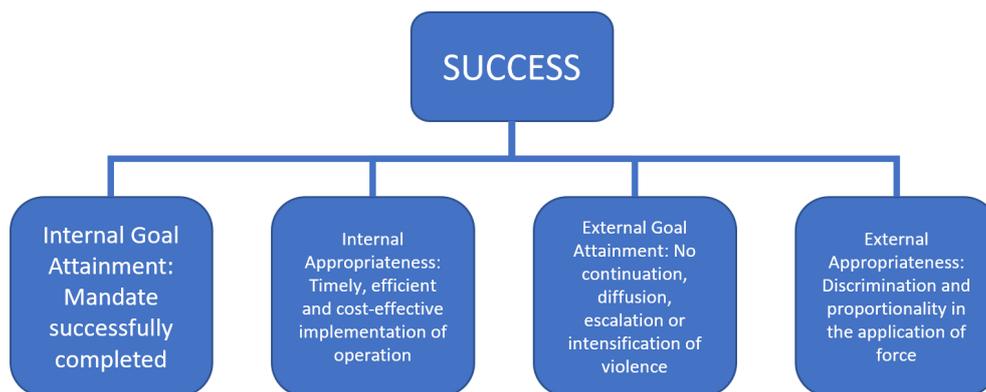


Figure 1: Success in military conflict management operations (Rodt, 2011)

ternal goal attainment and internal appropriateness, except for a slight modification in the used language. Indicators affecting external success do need to be adapted to this application of the framework though. Indicators used for External Goal Attainment were aimed at successfully dealing with the situation at hand compared to simply completing the set-out goals of the mission. In conflict management this aimed at ending violence, whereas this might not have been the goal formulated in the mandate. When it comes to development aid the mandate and the external goals are more aligned, as they both aim towards successful development. While the developments achieved via aid forms and important indicator, External Goal Attainment will have to take a more long-term perspective in this adapted framework and look at the sustainability of the development as an important indicator as well. When translating the External Appropriateness to development aid, success is best indicated by looking towards the way in which receiving countries are included in the process and how their culture has been taken into account. An overview of the adapted framework can be seen in figure 2.

2 The Cotonou Partnership Agreement

In the year 2000 the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) replaced the Lomé treaties between the EU and a large group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (Van Moltke, 2004). Compared to the Lomé treaties, the CPA had a much stronger focus on trade and private investment



Figure 2: Success in development aid strategies

(Von Moltke, 2004). What made the CPA truly unique though, was the specific goal of combating and ending poverty. This was not just significant as a goal, but it was also a sign of acknowledgment of the extreme poverty many ACP countries had been suffering under (Banthia, 2007).

The CPA was seen as an ambitious attempt at showing a casual relation between trade and development and hinged on liberalization of the trading market (Von Moltke, 2004). The CPA differentiated the Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) from countries able to participate in global trade (Banthia, 2007). LDCs, under the Everything But Arms (EBA) initiative, had the opportunity to access the EU market without being required to allow imports as well (Banthia, 2007). The non-LDCs had to enter Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the EU (Banthia, 2007). EPAs would be designed between the EU and subsets of ACP countries, after which ACP countries individually had to finalize the agreement (Von Moltke, 2004).

2.1 The Goals of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement

While article 1 of the agreement specifically mentions that many different facets of development will be part of the CPA framework and inform the decision-making process, it is made clear that

the partnership mainly focuses on two specific goals: eradicating poverty and integrating ACP countries into the world economy (European Commission, 2014). Outside of these main goals, the CPA also aims to contribute to peace and security and to stable democratic environments respecting human rights (European Commission, 2016).

3 Successfulness of the CPA

In this section of the paper, the successfulness of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement will be analysed and discussed via the framework introduced in the section 1. In accordance with the framework first the internal success will be analysed and secondly the external success will be analysed, both of which have been split into goal attainment and appropriateness. The results of the analysis will be discussed and used to answer the posed research question in the conclusion of the paper.

3.1 Internal Goal Attainment

The sole indicator specified for successful goal attainment within the framework is completion of the mandate. In this case the mandate is defined by the goals set in the CPA. As discussed in section 2.1, the main goals of the agreement are the eradication of poverty and the integration of ACP countries into the world economy. These goals have been supplemented by the wish to contribute to peace and security, as well as to democracy and human rights.

Over the years in which the CPA has been active, poverty hasn't been eradicated. However, the European Commission (2016) concluded in their recent evaluation that the CPA has been able to make a difference in the fight against poverty. Furthermore, budget support to ACP countries has helped improve the financial governance of these countries, which in turn improved the food security and social protection its population enjoys (European Commission, 2016). Not everyone seems to agree though, as some argue that while the CPA has facilitated economic growth, its benefits have failed to reach the neediest of the societies in question. While it is difficult to say for certain how much the CPA has contributed in combating poverty, it seems fairly safe to say that

the CPA has contributed to the made progress so far.

The level of integration of ACP countries is relatively easy to measure. Since the beginning of the CPA the number of EPAs has increased, more and more ACP countries have become members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and trade flows coming to and from ACP countries have relatively increased (European Commission, 2016). Furthermore, there seems to be a consensus that EPAs, the EBA initiative and assistance to LDCs have helped improve the position of ACP countries on the world market (European External Action Service, 2016).

With regards to the additional goal of contributing to peace and security in the ACP countries it can be concluded from the evaluation by the European Commission (2016) that the CPA was able to do just that by supporting regional mechanisms. A successful example of this is the African Peace Facility. The evaluation done in a consultation round supports this as participants found the efforts aimed at peace and security useful and fitting (European External Action Service, 2016).

It has also become clear from the evaluations that the CPA has been able to contribute to strengthen the position of human rights and democratic institutions (European Commission, 2016). Still many are critical of the effectiveness of the CPA on these issues (European External Action Service, 2016). The reasons for this criticism will be further discussed in section 3.4.

Overall, the ACP has played a role in fighting poverty and has very conclusively contributed to an increased integration of ACP countries in the global trade network. Progress towards the additional goals of contributing to peace and security as well as democracy and human rights has been noteworthy as well.

3.2 Internal Appropriateness

The success criterium of internal appropriateness examines the successfulness of the tools used to achieve the internal goals. To do so the indicators used of this success factor have been timeliness, efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

The most important tool available in the CPA are the EPAs. While EPAs are initially negotiated per region, they are finalized on a bilateral level. This allows for a decent amount of adaptability

to the region at hand, but it has also complicated procedures causing delays and infringements of the set-out quality standards as a result (European Commission, 2016).

Furthermore, while EPAs have shown to be an effective measure to fight poverty and integrate ACP countries into the world market, it has done very little to improve democratic institutions and human rights. The reason for this is that these issues are negotiated separately from the EPAs (Gathii, 2013).

The established framework of the CPA has created alternate opportunities. Not only has the CPA shown to work well when trying to establish clear and open communication on difficult and important issues (European Commission, 2016), but the CPA framework has also shown itself to be adaptable to tackle larger collective problems, e.g. the Paris climate accord (European External Action Service, 2016).

Overall, the internal appropriateness has been largely successful. The framework supplied by the CPA leaves sufficient room for adaptability and even offers potential to work as a basis to tackle larger collective problems. However, the EPAs could offer a more efficient tool if it was used to improve democratic institutions and human rights.

3.3 External Goal Attainment

External goal attainment takes a more long-term perspective. Therefore, the indicators specified for this success criterium are the effectiveness and sustainability of development.

One major factor hurting the sustainability of the achieved development is high population growth (European Commission, 2016). The ever-growing population has significantly increased the vulnerability of affected regions and, in some cases, have even caused progress in social issues to come to a standstill or reverse all together (European Commission, 2016). Not accounting for high population growth leaves the impression that needs of ACP countries to actually develop haven't sufficiently taken the foreground in the CPA.

While all the measurable signs showed a significant step forward into the integration of ACP countries in the world economy, they don't say much about the actual lasting economic effects. In

fact there is a lot of doubt on the long term benefits the trade focused policies will have for the ACP countries (European External Action Service, 2016).

One way in which the trade focused policies hurt the ACP countries is the inclusion of government procurement in some EPAs, even though the concept isn't touched upon by the CPA itself (Gathii, 2013). The inclusion of government procurement will likely cost the ACP countries more than it will earn them in the long term. This effect becomes even larger when it is taken into account that ACP governments would have to allow foreign competition into the procurement process which would likely outcompete local competition.

Another way in which some ACP countries felt their economies to be hurt was via disagreements on the access to market. The EU doesn't agree with the ACP countries' wish of not extending market access to every area of their economies (Gahtii, 2013). ACP countries would prefer to only extend market access to the areas they can compete in, as they would otherwise miss out on import taxes and be easily outcompeted by the EU (Gahtii, 2013).

With regards to contributing to peace and security in ACP countries, the evaluation done by the European Commission (2016) showed that while significant contribution had been made via the CPA, there had been a lack of focus on the actual causes of the conflicts. Failing to do so hurts the sustainability and longevity of the contribution the CPA was able to make.

It can be concluded that while it is true that the CPA has contributed to the development of the ACP countries within the set goals of the agreement, insufficient focus has been placed on the long-term effects of the policies. Thus, based on the external goal attainment criterium the CPA has been partially successful.

3.4 External Appropriateness

The indicators of External Appropriateness were defined as “sufficient input from receiving countries and fitted to local economy and culture”. What this indicator mainly entails is the negotiating position the ACP countries found themselves in and the way policies were adequately adapted to the situation at hand.

A big problem in the external appropriateness of the CPA has been the relatively weak negotiation position ACP countries had. This became a problem as there were commonly conflicting ideas of what trade policies would end up supporting lasting development. Whenever such a disagreement would arise, the trend seems to be that the eventual EPAs favour the interests of the EU (Gahtii, 2013). It would have been better if the EPAs would have included efforts to improve the negotiation capacity of ACP countries (Gahtii, 2013).

Regarding the adaptability of the policies, the European Commission (2016) was able to find great benefit in the room the EPAs structure left to adapt deals and policies to the needs of specific regions. Moreover, this has been key to the successfulness of the CPA.

The criterium of external appropriateness has been partially successful. The structure in which EPAs are developed, i.e. negotiated on a regional level with bilateral finalization, leave enough room for the agreements to be catered to the needs of each country and/or region. The reason it has only been a partial success is the fact that little has been done to improve the negotiating position of the ACP countries. The result of this is that ACP countries are in a weak position during negotiations and might not be able to secure what they need in order to achieve long-term development goals.

4 Conclusion

At the start of this paper the following research question was posed:

“Has the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries been successful ?”

In order to answer this question a framework was introduced aimed to be able to measure the successfulness of development aid strategies. The framework divided the overarching success criterium into four sub-criteria. These criteria were “Internal Goal Attainment”, “Internal Appropriateness”, “External Goal Attainment” and “External Appropriateness”. Subsequently the

results of the CPA were discussed and analysed for each of these success criteria. The results of these analyses can be found in table 1.

Success criterium	Level of successfulness
Internal goal attainment	Successful
Internal appropriateness	Largely successful
External goal attainment	Partially successful
External appropriateness	Partially successful

Table 1: Level of successfulness for each success criterium

When looking at the results in table 1, it becomes clear that it would be too easy to call the CPA to be successful solely based on the goals the EU had set for itself. At the same time, it shouldn't be dismissed either.

The CPA has contributed towards the development and economic integration of ACP countries. Furthermore, the internal appropriateness has been largely successful as well. While there is room to be critical on the efficiency of the agreement, the potential the agreement offers in adaptability and to work as a basis for larger collective problems is significant and can't be ignored.

The results found with regards to external goal attainment and external appropriateness are much more mixed. Factors affecting the long-term effectiveness have not gotten the attention they warrant. Furthermore, ACP countries have been left in a relatively weak negotiation position after which they are left to accept agreements far from ideal.

All in all, the CPA has been successful in tackling its main objectives in the development of ACP countries. However, while the CPA has been able to make an important impact, its successfulness would significantly increase if EPAs would set the lasting development of ACP countries as the most important goal instead of complete liberalization of the international market, especially as the framework of CPA already allows for this.

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