



## Getting involved in the EDF programming exercise

*Implementing partners:* National Authorising Officer (NAO), EU Delegation of Zambia and ACP-LG Platform

### Reasons, goals and methods

In the Cotonou Agreement that has been signed by the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) states and the European Union in 2005, is declared that local governances (LG) are recognised as key actors of development that should participate in all aspects of development cooperation. For instance in programming, formulation, implementation, and evaluation of the ACP-EU cooperation programmes and policies.

However, this wasn't the case at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) programming exercise in early 2006. The ACP Local Government Platform (ACP-LG Platform) advised local governments to establish contacts with the National Authorising Officer (NAO) and the Delegation of the European Commission (EC) of their country, with the intention to participate in the dialogue taking place in each ACP country, concerning the strategies and programmes of ACP-EU cooperation under the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF (2008-2013).

The Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) showed their desire to participate in the programming process by sending a letter to the NAO after this advice. The response turned out to be negative, explaining that despite the recognition of local governments as important actors in development, there wouldn't exist a provision for them in the EDF. Subsequently the LGAZ decided to inform the ACP LG Platform about these developments. The Platform contacted the EC headquarters and the ACP Secretariat in Brussels and confronted them with the fact that in theory LG are encouraged to be involved in the cooperation process, but in practice they were being excluded from the process.

### Cooperation & alignment

The LGAZ sent a formal letter to the Delegation, while the Platform was dealing with the ACP-EU institution headquarters.

The fruit of the Platform's and LGAZ's effort came a few weeks later when the LGAZ was formally invited by the EC Delegation to the first meeting with high level representatives of the NAO and the Delegation. Several points were agreed upon during the meeting, of which the most important were: i) consideration will be made to extend EDF support to LG through the focal areas relating to district infrastructure and the non-focal sectors agriculture and food security; iii) consideration will also be made to support selected urban LG with respect to appropriate planning and upgrading of road infrastructure; the Commission will support good governance and in particular decentralisation and lastly, v) both parties agreed that the LGAZ will be supported to lobby for increased allocation of budget resource to LG funded out of the EU direct budget support.

### Project Outcomes and Lessons Learned

As a result, the LGAZ was fully involved in all meetings related to the 10th EDF exercise. Their comments on the Country Strategy Paper have been taken into account in the finalisation of the document. The LGAZ was also invited to another meeting with the Delegation to discuss about possible specific areas of assistance they could benefit from in the decentralisation implementation process.

The Zambian case became quickly "the ACP-LG case" and served as an example to other national associations of LG to encourage them to undertake similar initiative. The LGAZ case has served as incentive to other LG national associations. Some of them are making improvement in achieving similar results.

*The project has been supported by the ACP Platform. Contact information: Please contact the ACP Platform at [www.acplgp.net](http://www.acplgp.net) , [platform@acplgp.net](mailto:platform@acplgp.net)*