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As part of the European project “Developing capacities together: European CSO-university networks for global learning on migration, security and sustainable development in an interdependent world - InterCap”, in 2018 Kopin started working towards the creation of a national PC(S)D Network. This activity was mainly framed within existing advocacy and policy monitoring processes at national level, implemented mainly by Civil Society Organisations working in the fields of Development Cooperation and Education.

The work carried out by the Maltese National NGDO Platform SKOP and its working groups focusing on Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) and the Official Development Assistance Policy and Development Aid (AidWatch) served as a starting point to look at the current state of affairs and the idea of creating a shared space to discuss PC(S)D was introduced to the DEAR Working Group as a first step, in view of the educational focus of the InterCap project.

A review of the latest developments in terms of research and policy monitoring highlighted the need for the creation of mechanisms at national level to monitor and measure policies impacts in line with Malta’s commitment to PCD.

Introduction

One of the key objectives of the European project “Developing capacities together: European CSO-university networks for global learning on migration, security and sustainable development in an interdependent world - InterCap” looks into raising awareness on the importance of Policy Coherence for Development among relevant stakeholders at national and EU level.

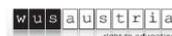
This is in line with the increasing efforts of the European Union towards PCD, whose importance has been reaffirmed and embedded in the latest European Consensus for Development (2017), recognising it as a key element to achieve the Goals set within the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.¹ Moreover, within the framework of the Agenda, increased importance has been given to the central concept of sustainability when addressing PCD, establishing Target 17.14 of the Global Goals, namely “Enhance Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development”.

SKOP, the Maltese National Platform of NGDOs, has been at the forefront in advocating for PCD with the Maltese Government during the past 18 years. Starting from the work carried out by the platform itself, through its working groups and with active input from Kopin (as National Focal Point for Social Watch in Malta), a state of affairs with regards to PCSD in

¹https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/policy-coherence-development_en



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Malta has been drawn and potential synergies with the proposed PCD Network have been identified. This aims at maximising the impact on ongoing advocacy for PCSD.

State of the art for PCSD in Malta

According to a spotlight report focusing on PCD in Member States published by CONCORD Europe in 2015, Malta presented a complete absence of monitoring mechanisms and impact assessments of its domestic policies in relation to the country’s development objectives. Furthermore, PCD was mainly absent from public policies and discourse, only appearing in connection with financial and trade policies².

This is further confirmed by the replies provided by representatives at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion (MFTP) to a publicly-accessible EU-wide survey launched by the European Commission (Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development) in 2018. Although the Ministry does state that Malta has a political commitment to PCD, it fails to mention any mechanism that assesses the impact of Malta’s domestic policies on developing countries and, more in general, on sustainable development. The survey reports that, in fact, no such assessment or study has ever been carried out.

The survey also fails to elaborate on the concept of ‘political commitment to PCD’, citing instead Malta’s ODA Policy which “*features most of the PCD priorities such as health, food security and nutrition*”.

Moreover, as already noted within the CONCORD report, any PCD coordination mechanisms put in place are not transparent enough for relevant stakeholders to be able to provide their input or monitor their implementation or effectiveness. In fact, the replies given within the EU survey mention an inter-ministerial PCD Task Force set up in 2014, of which no further information can be found online. Although in its replies the MFTP states that an ODA implementation plan, in line with the adoption of both the European Consensus for Development and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, was adopted, the plan has not yet been made public or shared with relevant stakeholders.

Whilst the Sustainable Development Act (2012) establishes a number of measures to mainstream sustainable development across all policy sectors in Malta, including coordination mechanisms among different ministries and Government agencies, the latest

²Operationalising Policy Coherence for Development. A perspective of civil society on institutional systems for PCD in EU Member States



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issue of the Social Watch Report (2017)³ for Malta further highlights how a number of policies still lack cohesion between themselves as well as with the concept of sustainability. The report, which draws largely from a previous research published by SKOP, goes on to suggest that “*there is an obvious lack of coherent and comprehensive approach to the legal and policy framework relating to the SDGs*”; one of the reasons for this being that the majority of policies and legislation relevant to address and achieve the SDGs were put in place before the establishment of the Agenda 2030.

To conclude, an overall lack of consultation with civil society with regards to PCSD and monitoring of progress on the achievement of the SDGs at national level transpires from the reports and the survey analysed, with the issue being raised by the National Platform SKOP already in a number of occasions, especially with the MFTP. One such input having been given in occasion of the Voluntary National Review presented by Malta at the latest High Level Political Forum in July 2018, when no consultation happened with the NGDO Platform, despite the claim that a comprehensive process of consultation with all stakeholders had taken place⁴.

Report from National Network on PCSD

Based on the current situation with regard to PCSD in Malta, Kopin decided to concentrate its efforts in establishing synergies with the already existing policy monitoring and advocacy mechanisms for specific development-related areas put in place by the National Platform SKOP. In particular, given the Global and Development Education focus of the InterCap project, the starting point for the creation and development of the PCD Network was at first identified within SKOP DEAR working group⁵, currently counting 10 members coming from different educational backgrounds.

The project was presented in its entirety during a face-to-face meeting of the SKOP DEAR working group in March 2018, during which the members agreed to synergise efforts towards PCSD, contributing with their experience and expertise in the area of Global and Development Education. The first face-to-face meeting of the National PCSD Network was then organised on the 17th of September, with five members of the working group.

³<http://www.socialwatch.org/report2017>

⁴<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/malta>

⁵<http://skopmalta.org/working-groups/dear/>



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During the meeting, the objectives of the PCD Network were presented and participants focused their attention on recent reports addressing the state of the Agenda 2030 in Malta and financing for Global and Development Education, as well as advocacy activities.

The key role of Global Education in achieving Sustainable Development was discussed, with reference to an ongoing consultation on the Official Development Assistance funding, whereby members of the working group shared their feedback presented to MFTP, including reference to funding for Development Education to be included within the ODA Policy and call. A specific focus was on the lack of national funding for GCE and DEAR, already highlighted in a report published at the beginning of 2018 by CONCORD Europe, to which SKOP (through the DEAR WG) had contributed.

During the meeting, the need for including representatives of the SKOP AidWatch working group within the PCD Network was highlighted, with the participants agreeing to call for a joint meeting at the beginning of 2019, to explore possible joint advocacy actions on PCSD in 2019, with the support of the SKOP Board, to target decision makers under the competent Ministries (mainly MFTP and MSDEC).

Based on the discussion, the participants to the first face-to-face meeting of the National PCD Network decided to hold a second meeting towards the end of the year, to better define possible advocacy actions as well as to develop synergies with SKOP's ongoing work.

Thematic examples of PCD (or lack thereof)

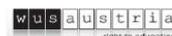
The main aim for 2018 with regards to the national PCSD network was to align its development in relation to ongoing initiatives at national level, as well as to review the current state of affairs, especially in relation to the ODA Policy and Global Education efforts. Therefore, no proper discussion was conducted with regards to specific thematic examples, although the review of recent reports provided in the first chapter of this paper constitutes a good basis from where to start.

Considering the focus of the InterCap project on the links between migration and sustainable development, it will already be interesting to point out an example of lack of PCD found within the AidWatch report with regard to ODA expenditure. The main concern is the high proportion of ODA being in-donor refugee costs being reported as development aid.

Resorting to counting this type of expenses as ODA has become a common practice, particularly in recent years and reflects the shift in political priorities that ODA has been subjected to. The instrumentalisation of ODA to address emerging non-development



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objectives (such as curbing migration) decreases the effective use of funds and reduces the value of development cooperation.

Conclusion

As it emerges from the brief review of PCSD in Malta based on recent policy monitoring and advocacy from SKOP, Malta’s commitment to PCSD is rarely reflected in practice, with policy impact assessment and monitoring mechanisms for PCD being conspicuous in their absence. Quite some room for improvement has also been identified in the involvement of civil society in consultation processes and monitoring of mechanisms related to PCSD and the achievement of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development at national level.

In view of the above, the focus for the PCD Network for the second year of the project will be to establish further synergies with other existing spaces addressing PCD and come up with an action plan involving dialogue with decision makers and other relevant stakeholders.

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