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THE POLITICS
OF WATER
IN AFRICA

The European Union's
Role in Development
Aid Partnership

CHRISTOPHER ROWAN

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FOREWORD

This book examines the concept of partnership as expressed within the current relationship between the European Union (EU) as an aid donor and certain countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group (ACP) – primarily Lesotho but also Mozambique – as aid recipients. The concept of partnership is central to this work which shows how, although its meaning has evolved, the concept remains an important organising idea in EU development policy, and an important ideological framework. The way the parties use it or put it into action is examined through a study of the policy of the EU to help improve the water supply, and sanitation, of Lesotho. The emerging position is then considered to search for comparisons and differences in the case of Mozambique.

This idea began with a document from the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) entitled: *Water and Development in the Developing Countries – A study commissioned by the European Parliament* (SIWI Report 10, 2000). The executive summary of the report stated that the EU should provide aid ‘in particular for the SADC region’, and should work to help SADC implement its own water protocol and bilateral agreements. I also have a personal interest because I have experience of living in Southern Africa.

Taking into consideration international security issues as well as the more personal security issues raised by various other authors such as Buzan, Waever, de Wilde and Little, the relationship between the EU and the ACP is particularly interesting when the human right to water¹ is under consideration. The relationship can be seen in two ways: as representing all that is good in partnership between two groups, or as evidence of the use of development discourse by the EU to continue the domination of areas of the Third

World in the postcolonial era.

The contrasting theories of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau provide possibilities for the basis of the EU–ACP relationship as each of them has a different idea of the concept of partnership. A study of current EU documents and evidence gathered from officials in Lesotho and Mozambique enable an examination of the relationship up to the position where the EU is considering (at the time of research) a ‘postparticipation paradigm’, thus in reality making a definitive statement about the type of partnership that actually exists. The impression of a balanced relationship between respected equals is dashed by the empirical evidence and by the position taken by the EU under the midterm review which is part of the Cotonou Agreement.

I will suggest that the apparent disagreement and friction could be avoided and a closer, more harmonious working relationship enjoyed if the two ‘sides’, the EU and ACP, were to choose to work to the same version of partnership rather than taking different starting positions, as seems to be the current case.

Christopher Rowan

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In Lesotho my initial contact with the EU delegation was with Julie Stewart and her knowledge and the speed with which she replied to enquiries made the field trip to Africa much more pleasant and profitable. A special mention must be given to the lady staffing the telephones at the EU delegation in Lesotho who spent time and energy arranging a wide variety of meetings for me whilst in Lesotho, thus allowing me to make the best use of my time there. Further thanks to the EU delegation in Lesotho – its cordial relationship with many in Lesotho paved the way and helped me gain access to many people I may not have met without their help.

In Mozambique the EU delegation again provided me with a great starting point and a list of suggested people to meet. My hotel's receptionist made lots of initial contacts, speaking Portuguese to a wide variety of secretaries, taxi drivers and doormen on my behalf.

At home I would like to express thanks to my parents, who allowed a room in their house to be turned into an office, a filing cabinet, a desk and a communication centre. Their patience in the face of a long project exemplifies the support I have had throughout life.

To Rosie, the only one who really knew what it was about and who has provided support, computer help, typing skills and many other distractions; I hope you get to see the fruits of our labours.

Finally, this is dedicated to my son Samuel, now eleven years

old, who has had an alternative version of partnership put before him but is intelligent enough to work out what is best.

Christopher Rowan

GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAMS	Associated African and Malagasy States. An early grouping of 18 states that cooperated in, among other things, negotiations on development aid from the EU.
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
AIDCO	(Europe) Aid Office of Cooperation
BNP	Basotho National Party (Lesotho)
CAP	(EU) Common Agricultural Policy
CARE	A humanitarian organisation that fights poverty. The name is used in its own right but originated from 'Co-operative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere', which in turn came from 'Co-operative for American remittances to Europe in 1945'
DfID	Department for International Development (UK govt department)
DG	Directorate General (of the EU)
DGVIII or DG8	The Directorate General of the European Commission responsible for development policy towards the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
DNA	(Mozambican) National Water Authority
ECDFM	European Centre for Development Policy Management. An independent foundation that has the role of monitoring EU development policy.
EDF	European Development Fund. The EDF is the main instrument for EU development aid. Each EDF cycle is concluded for a period of about five years. The 9th EDF ran from 2000 to the end of 2007

EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Area
GON	Portuguese for NAO; the title of the NAO in Mozambique
HQ	Headquarters
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
LCD	Lesotho Congress for Democracy
LDC	Least Developed Country
LPC	Lesotho People's Congress
NAO	National Authorising Officer. An official appointed by the government of the EU aid recipient country who has responsibility for the financial management of EU funds.
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NF	National Fund
NGDO	Non-governmental development organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NIP	National Indicative Programme. The EU country instrument to establish development priorities and to determine the necessary means to achieve them.
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
PRA	Participatory rural appraisal
RRA	Rapid rural appraisal
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
Stabex	Stabilisation of export earnings. The EC's compensatory finance scheme to stabilise export earnings of the ACP countries.
SWAP	Sector-wide approach. An approach to providing development assistance, favoured by the EU and many other major funding agencies, in which all funding parties share a single policy and expenditure programme, as well as processes for

	implementing projects. The aim is to ensure some certainty in budgeting and coordinate activities.
TA	Technical Assistant
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
WASA	Water and Sewerage Authority
Washington Consensus	A termed coined specifically to refer to a set of reforms that were prescribed to less developed countries undergoing economic crises in the 1980s in order for them to receive assistance from the IMF and World Bank, among other institutions. Now it is often regarded as synonymous with neoliberalism or market fundamentalism, associated with the Western developed countries and financial institutions, and frequently used in a pejorative sense.
WSCU	(SADC) Water Sector Coordinating Unit
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
Yaounde Conventions	Two agreements, signed in 1963 and 1969 respectively, that governed development assistance between the EU and the AAMS until superseded by Lomé in 1975.

WHAT OF WATER?

This book examines the concept of partnership in the relationship between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific group – specifically between the EU and Lesotho and Mozambique. The specific context is the need to provide an improved water supply and sanitation system in these two countries, and the involvement of the EU in these plans.

The relationship between the two sides – the EU on one hand and the two African countries on the other – has been held up over the years as a model of ‘development partnership’. This is particularly the case in EU publications, where the relationship is frequently praised; for instance, in a speech by Louis Michel at the 30th anniversary of the ACP group on 24 June 2005, wherein he twice made reference to the ‘partnership’. I suggest that the discourse of partnership is used to put a glossy veneer on a relationship that is less about partnership and more about a hegemonic partner using its financial power to dictate terms to aid recipients.

The idea for this book arose out of personal experience of living in Southern Africa and having to deal with drought and unclean water. I approach the subject from a liberal perspective and make suggestions coming from a critical theory perspective. The academic starting point for this work was a document from the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) entitled *Water and Development in the Developing Countries – A study commissioned by the European Parliament* (SIWI Report 10, 2000). The executive summary of this report stated that the EU should provide aid ‘in particular for the SADC region’, and thus case studies from Southern Africa, particularly Lesotho, are used to illustrate the way

the relationship works.

The originality of this work arises from the use of empirical evidence gathered during field trips to Lesotho and Mozambique. A large number of interviews were conducted with a variety of officials in the EU and with officials from each government whose job it is to try to provide clean water for the people of their country. This, when combined with an examination of certain literature and linked to the theoretical appreciation of partnership, has provided a new approach to the EU–ACP relationship.

The security of the Southern African region, or any other region for that matter, is only enhanced by the provision of clean water. This is one reason why the subject of water supply and the right to water has achieved such prominence over the last few decades.

More than a billion people in the developing world lack safe drinking water¹ – something taken for granted in the First World. Over 2.4 billion people live without access to decent sanitation² and are thus in danger from water-related diseases. The failure of governments and the international aid community to satisfy these needs in the past has led to great suffering. In recent years, however, things seem to be changing and the right to clean water and the good health that comes as a direct result of having it are more and more in the public eye.

This chapter will put the case that in the past there was a human ‘right to water’ implicit in many speeches, papers and statements, but recently the ‘right to water’ issue has become much more explicitly stated in international law and in state practices. Governments and international aid agencies now accept the argument of a fundamental right to water and must therefore work to provide this basic need.

The concept of a human right to water took an important step forward in December 2002 with a declaration by a committee of the United Nations³ stating that safe and secure drinking water is a human right. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights further noted that water is fundamental for life and health and a prerequisite to the realisation of all other human rights.

The Right to Water

If the misery of our poor be caused not by the laws of nature, but by our institutions, great is our sin.
Charles Darwin

Here the term 'right' is used in the true sense, as in international law where states have a duty to provide for the rights of an individual. Human rights agreements arise from a concern to rule out any deviations from what could be seen as widely held values and standards of behaviour, particularly in relation to wars, violence and freedoms. As time passed these rights were extended to include wider concerns related to human well-being, and herein lies the argument for a 'right to water'.

The right to water must be acknowledged for a variety of reasons. One reason is to encourage the international community and national governments to continue any efforts to provide this basic need; secondly, this acknowledgement can translate into pressure to create international and national legal obligations. Richard Jolly (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP) has noted:

To emphasize the human right of access to drinking water does more than emphasize its importance. It grounds the priority on the bedrock of social and economic rights, it emphasizes the obligations of states parties to ensure access, and it identifies the obligations of states parties to provide support internationally as well as nationally.⁴

This acknowledgement can also draw attention to the state of water management and to disputes over international watersheds and conflicts over water use. It can also draw up priorities in meeting the need for water. Peter Gleick (the President of the Pacific Institute) has argued that 'meeting a basic water requirement for all humans ... should take precedence over other water management and investment decisions'.⁵

In 1992, McCaffrey looked at the legal position from the perspective of the UN and concluded that there is a right to enough water to sustain life and that a state has the obligation 'to safeguard these rights'.⁶ Evidence from the practice of states seems to support this right.

The attention of the world has been drawn more closely to this subject by a number of conferences, meetings and summits over the past few decades that have increasingly recognised the need for water and sanitation. In 1972, a United Nations conference was held in Stockholm which recommended the preservation of water quality. The 1974 Bucharest Conference on Population mentioned water as necessary for meeting human needs and in the same year, the Food Conference in Rome noted the importance of water to agriculture. In 1977, two important conferences took place: the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) International Conference on Water in Mar Del Plata, Argentina and the United Nations conference on desertification, which focused on water in arid lands. Although the 1980s were declared the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, little progress was made on universal water supply. Gradually, however, the issue of water availability became increasingly prominent. In 1987 a conference in Rome was entitled 'Water for the Future'. The Brundtland Report of 1987, *Our Common Future* (The World Commission on Environment and Development) proposed sustainable development and named water as a key issue in its global environmental concerns. This report suggested that 70 to 80 per cent of the world's water was used for irrigation and was lost. It also suggested that groundwater was being exploited and polluted. At this time, Agenda 21 of the United Nations Sustainable Development report looked for increased investment for water treatment. In 1988, the Water for World Development conference was held; 1991 saw the 'Water for Sustainable Development' conference in Morocco and 1992 saw the Water and Environment Conference held in Dublin, where discussions on water and environmental issues were in the foreground. This conference declared that the security and misuse of water was a serious threat to world peace. There were over 500 participants with government experts from 100 different countries and 80 nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs). This conference was instrumental in getting 'water' firmly on the international agenda, ultimately bringing it to global attention at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The Dublin conference participants called for a new approach to the management of fresh water resources. They identified the need for political commitment and involvement from national governments to the smallest com-

munities. They looked for investment, education, legislative and structural change together with technological development. The conference made recommendations for action based on four principles. The first was that fresh water is finite and essential to sustain life. Second, that water development and management should be based on a participatory approach. Third, that women are central to the water life cycle and fourth, that water has an economic value because of its many competing uses.

The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, recognised fresh water as a primary issue. The conference was attended by heads of state and others in high government office, civil society and United Nations agencies and these delegates spread the message on the importance of water affairs. This conference highlighted the fact that over a fifth of the world's population has no access to safe drinking water and more than half lack adequate sanitation. This conference produced Resolution A/RES/S19/2,⁷ which was adopted by the 19th Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations; item eight had water as the first issue.

A ministerial conference on drinking water and environmental sanitation was held in 1994 in the Netherlands and two years later, in 1996, the World Water Council – an expert think tank to ponder water issues – was established. The Global Water Partnership was set up in the same year and was to provide funding to support integrated water management.

By the time of the 1997 First World Water Forum in Marrakech, Morocco, the issue of water was firmly at the forefront of global affairs. Conference participants developed a vision for the 21st century: 'Water, Life and Environment'. The Second World Water Forum followed three years later in March 2000 at The Hague, Netherlands. At this forum, the World Water Vision was presented and the organisers looked to translate vision into action. The Dutch heir to the throne opened the forum and visits from former presidents of the Soviet Union and Israel were planned to raise the profile of the meeting. However, perhaps the greatest publicity for the forum was achieved by a group of protestors who interrupted the opening ceremony to make their point about large dam construction in Turkey. The shouting, scattering of leaflets, naked protesting and wall climbing certainly caught the attention of the world's media.

Bonn was the venue for the 2001 International Conference on

Fresh Water. At this meeting the individual water concern groups moved from isolation towards partnership.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 continued the good work, with further calls for more action as opposed to mere discussion.

The Third World Water Forum, with the title 'From Vision to Action', held in Kyoto, Japan, kept the issues surrounding water in the public eye and on the agenda of governments everywhere. Preparations for this forum began as early as July 2000, just four months after the second forum had finished. A national steering committee of NGOs was set up in 2001 and the Japanese Parliament gave its 'official nod' to the forum taking place in Japan in March of the same year. This time a call went out for papers informing participants about ongoing actions or actions that had taken place; this led to sustainable solutions being proposed to water problems. A group called 'Water Voices Project' has been set up to canvas the opinions, comments and ideas of as many people as possible. The group claims to be giving voice to the voiceless. There was also a virtual water forum available on the Internet to reach many more people who were not able to attend the forum in Kyoto because of the cost.

The profile of water has thus risen over the past few decades and a change in the way water is seen in official documentation has paralleled this increased exposure. Several papers, as noted below, make the assumption that water is an implicit right, but the change in attitude displayed worldwide has led to more specific declarations of the 'right to water', culminating in the 2002 declaration from the United Nations as mentioned above.

Documents supporting the right to water

A long list of documents support the right to water, including: *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) of (1948); the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) of (1966); the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) of (1966); the *InterAmerican Convention on Human Rights*; and the *Declaration on the Right to Development*. The United Nations interprets Article 8 of the *Declaration on the Right to Development* as explicitly including water when it states that being denied access to 'such essentials as food, water, clothing, housing and medicine in adequate measure

represent a clear and flagrant mass violation of human rights'.⁸ The 1989 *Convention on the Rights of the Child* says in Article 24 that states must take measures to provide 'adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water'.⁹

All these declarations stipulate protected rights to life, a certain standard of living for good health, protection from disease and adequate food; access to clean water is a prerequisite for all these. Water is not specifically mentioned in all of the declarations, but the conclusion to be drawn is that the drafters considered water, like air, to be so fundamental that no specific reference was necessary.

In 1945, a United Nations meeting suggested drawing up a bill of rights and set up the Commission on Human Rights, which held its first meeting in 1947. The Commission drew up a declaration, with moral weight behind it, and then in 1949, a convention that was legally binding. Article 25 of the Declaration was adopted unanimously and states:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing (UN General Assembly, 1948).¹⁰

Here again water is an intrinsic part of the life described, accepted as a subsection of 'food' and as fundamental as air because the adequate standard aimed for is impossible to achieve without water.

*The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*¹¹ implies the right to water in Articles 11 and 12. *The International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights* again does not actually mention water but implies the right to those things necessary to support life. The *InterAmerican Convention on Human Rights* and the *European Convention on Human Rights* both promote the idea that states take positive action to support the right to life. Thus as Gleick has stated:

At a minimum, therefore, the explicit right to life, and the broader rights to health and well-being described above must include the right to sufficient water, at appropriate quality, to sustain life. To assume the contrary would mean that there is no right to the single most important resource necessary to satisfy the human rights more explicitly guaranteed by the world's primary human rights declarations and covenants.¹²

Explicit support in international statements

A second group of agreements show further evidence of a more explicit right to water. These include the statements emerging from the conferences described above. Although not legally binding documents, these statements show that the international community has taken an increasingly active role in promoting these rights over the years. The closing statement of the 1977 Mar del Plata conference said that 'all peoples, whatever their stage of development and their social and economic conditions, have the right to have access to drinking water in quantities and of a quality equal to their basic needs'.¹³

Thus more explicit support for the right to water has emerged in international statements and is beginning to be adopted in certain states. The Bill of Rights of the new Constitution of South Africa of 1994 offers evidence of the practice of a state. In section 27(1) (b) it says: 'Everyone has the right to sufficient food and water.' South Africa is implementing this policy now by trying to ensure that, despite the unequal situation they have inherited from the apartheid era, all citizens of the 'new' South Africa have access to clean water.

More evidence of defining and meeting the need for water comes from the United Nations in 1992: 'In developing and using water resources, priority has to be given to the satisfaction of basic needs and the safeguarding of ecosystems'.¹⁴

The Commission on Sustainable Development of the United Nations states that 'all people require access to adequate amounts of clean water, for such basic needs as drinking, sanitation and hygiene'.¹⁵

The United Nations Convention on the Nonnavigational Uses of International Watercourses of 1997 also explicitly addresses the idea of a basic human need for water. Gleick has suggested 50 litres as being a basic requirement.¹⁶ Over the years, various agencies such as the World Bank and the World Health Organisation have specified exact amounts ranging between 20 and 40 litres per person per day, thus there exists the acknowledgement of a basic right to water and the recognition of this idea by the United Nations and therefore, at least in principle, by the nations of the world. States and international aid agencies must now work to meet this need. If they do not, Gleick notes that 'large-scale human misery and suffering will continue and grow in the future, contributing to

impoverishment, ill-health, and the risk of social and military conflict'.¹⁷

So the implicit finally became the explicit with the UN statement of December 2002. The 145 countries that have ratified the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights now have an ongoing duty to ensure that all their people have access to safe and secure drinking water and sanitation facilities. The Director General of the World Health Organisation, Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, noted that countries are now required to respect, protect and fulfil individual's rights. She went on to say that this is 'a major boost in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of halving the number of people without access to water and sanitation by 2015'.¹⁸ Thus the right to water has become established and explicitly stated.

FRIENDS OR FOES?

The precise definition of the concept of 'partnership' is key to explaining the dynamics of the relationship between the EU and ACP. The philosophy behind the idea of partnership is central to the position from which each side approaches the relationship. It seems, after looking at the 'problem' from the perspectives of both parties, that the initial issue is not only that each side began from a different position, which is understandable, but that they also approach the other partner from different philosophical beginnings. In order to explain why this is relevant, it is appropriate to look at the recent history of the EU-ACP partnership and to briefly review the thinking behind the ideas of partnership expressed by some of the giants of philosophy.

The European Union and the South

'The EU's relationship with former colonial territories of its member states began with the 1957 Treaty of Rome.' According to Archer and Butler, 'their special relationship with the EU is derived largely, but not wholly, from their former colonial status'.¹ But just as development discourse has changed over the years, so the relationship between the EU and the developing world (in this case, the ACP countries) has also changed. According to Green in Long:² 'Yaoundé II and its predecessors were unabashedly neocolonial', and he was not too sure that any positive improvements would be seen: 'nor can one reasonably expect many positive changes within the Child of Lomé operating framework over 1980-85'. However, as Lister noted in 1997,³ 'changes within the series of Lomé Conventions are noticeable'.

There have been several specific changes throughout the history of the Treaty of Rome, the Yaoundé conventions, the Lomé conventions and the Cotonou Agreement, but despite differences in approaches to development and the brief emergence of the call for a New International Economic Order in the 1970s, perhaps 'the main accomplishment of the Lomé Convention is the North-South dialogue it established'.⁴ This continued dialogue is surely important if equality and true partnership are to be maintained, as the EU claims.

A brief history of the agreements seems to indicate at least that dialogue is ongoing, beginning in 1957 with The Treaty of Rome, through Yaoundé I (1964–69), Yaoundé II (1969–75), Lomé I (1975–80), Lomé II (1980–85), Lomé III (1985–90), Lomé IV (1990–2000) and the Cotonou Agreement (June 2000). According to Lister, both groups have taken a fairly realistic approach to the relationship and made change an ongoing process, but it is the specifics of this change that are interesting in looking at the power relations between the EU and the ACP.

Other books associated with this topic deal with specific periods of the EU–ACP relationship, for instance Carol Cosgrove-Twitchett's *Europe and Africa: From Association to Partnership* (1978) 'traces the origins and evolution of EECACP relations from association to the Lomé partnership'.⁵ As Cosgrove-Twitchett notes, 'it analyses the development of association from a closed, colonial system into an open multilateral aid relationship, denoted by the two Yaoundé Conventions'.⁶ Cosgrove-Twitchett's book is relevant to the topic of the evolving EUACP partnership in that it notes a change in the relationship and the emergence of the idea of partnership. She explains the origins and existence of the Pearson Commission and compares the Yaoundé relationship to it:

The Pearson Commission on International Development characterised an ideal aid relationship as having four main features: First it should involve 'advice, consultation and persuasion'; second, there should be 'clear and accepted channels of communication'; third, there should be a 'clear distinction between the responsibilities of the partners'; and fourth, it should rest on 'reciprocal rights and obligations of donors and recipients'.⁷

In relating the ideals of the Pearson Commission to the Yaoundé and Lomé stages of the EU–ACP relationship, Twitchett first notes that ‘the association relationship established by the Rome Treaty was remarkable in that it survived the stresses of African political independence’.⁸ However, she also realises that ‘the donor–recipient relationship envisaged by the Rome Treaty regime could not wholly conform to the Pearson criteria, if only because of its colonial context’.⁹ This comment is worthy of note in order to compare this perspective with those expressed in Brussels later in this work. Despite the history between the two partners, Cosgrove-Twitchett recognises the positive aspects of the relationship when she says ‘the EECACP partnership represents a symbol of hope in a divided world. It shows that black and white can create cooperative frameworks and devise institutions within which they are able to work together on the basis of mutual respect’.¹⁰

Cosgrove-Twitchett provides an assessment of the period of association from varying perspectives: ‘In political terms, association was an undoubted success. The AAMS uniformly desired to continue the relationship’.¹¹ She notes that the ‘community became an increasingly vital source of development assistance for the AAMS over the decade 1964–1974’, and that ‘the “quality” of EEC development assistance to the AAMS was generally regarded as satisfactory’.¹² She then moves on to the Yaoundé period and comments that ‘Yaoundé II cemented links forged by the earlier associations, confirming the Six’s commitment to the economic development of the AAMS’.¹³ Cosgrove-Twitchett also makes a favourable comparison between this stage of the Yaoundé EU–ACP relationship and the Pearson Commission, and believes it represents ‘a viable aid relationship’.¹⁴ Particularly relevant to this work are Cosgrove-Twitchett’s comments on the beginnings of the Lomé relationship, the purpose of which was ‘to establish, on the basis of complete equality between partners, close and continuing cooperation in a spirit of international solidarity’. This she called ‘a new model for relations between developed and developing’.¹⁵ Furthermore, she explains the choice of the ‘new’ word *partnership* as opposed to ‘association’ and believes it was brought in because ‘in the eyes of many non-associated Africans, the term association tended to be linked with the European Community’s colonial legacies ... Consequently, partnership rather than association was considered more appropriate for signifying the new relationship’.¹⁶

Cosgrove-Twitchett's book suggests that at this stage of the relationship, both sides believed in and wanted complete equality between partners and that the relationship had matured into the position noted above. The current position relating to equality of partnership can only be fully understood if this relevant history is noted.

Cosgrove-Twitchett continued her analysis of the relationship in *A Framework for Development: The EEC and the ACP* (1981), which reviewed the relationship after the Lomé I and Lomé II agreements. In this book, she claims that 'any assessment of the ACPEU partnership must ... consider how far the treaty provisions create a viable structure for mutual interest and mutual dependence'.¹⁷ However, Cosgrove-Twitchett believes that even at the negotiating stage of the agreements, the aspirations of the ACP group were dashed somewhat when 'negotiations with the EEC tended to confirm their fears that despite formal parity they remained less than equal partners in European eyes'.¹⁸ At this stage she mentions the divisions within the European camp that are noted later in this work. While she notes that there is evidence that DGVIII 'is committed to partnership with the ACP', thus supporting the EU claims, Cosgrove-Twitchett goes on to comment that 'DGVIII initiatives ... are strictly circumscribed by the EEC member states'.¹⁹ The power of each individual state to limit the influence of DGVIII confirms for Cosgrove-Twitchett that each state sees its own influence as more important than that of the EU and thus links the Lomé regime with the empirical past of each state rather than the more modern and mature concept of partnership that the EU claims to believe in: 'the Lomé relationship is a product of essentially colonial legacies'.²⁰ Thus Cosgrove-Twitchett claims that in 'looking back over north-south relations in recent years it is apparent that the overall development climate has deteriorated',²¹ perhaps due to the 1976-80 recession (she was writing in 1981). The different bargaining positions of the EU and the ACP at the negotiating stage of Lomé II are noted when Cosgrove-Twitchett says 'the ACP states in particular sought to revise their relationship with the European Community'²², whereas, 'from the viewpoint of the European Community, the negotiations with the ACP states were designed primarily to renew the 1975 convention'.²³ So, according to Cosgrove-Twitchett, not only were the two sides coming from differing positions, but the 'actual structure of the negotiations also

worked against ACP interests'.²⁴ Thus Cosgrove-Twitchett notes the imbalance in the relationship as well the fact that each side wanted a different result from the negotiations. This could have been an appropriate point at which to prove the equality of the partners involved and actually *negotiate* (my emphasis), but the power imbalance of the partners and the structural imbalance of the negotiating system contributed to the deterioration in the relationship that appears to have precluded this.

Cosgrove-Twitchett makes some suggestions as to how the ACP could achieve more from the relationship: 'It is probably only via more coherent group activity that the ACP will be able to achieve a meaningful and equal partnership with the European Community'.²⁵ She also suggests what the Europeans should do to dispel fears related to the historical position of each side when she comments that the EC must 'attempt to generate real consultation on a regular basis if this residual ACP suspicion is ever to be overcome'.²⁶ Cosgrove-Twitchett indicates that the Europeans may be taking a hypocritical position when she talks about 'real consultation'; this is presumably because she believes that much of the negotiation and consultation is biased or weighted in favour of the EU and that the ACP is starting from an unequal position on a sloping playing field. She does state that 'the partnership of the ACP states with the EEC is better than nothing',²⁷ but adds that whereas 'Lomé I was presented to the world by its signatories, the EEC and ACP as a model for a NIEO',²⁸ the claims for Lomé II were somewhat muted ... given the asymmetrical nature of the partnership'.²⁹

Christopher Stevens has edited a collection of books that review the relationship that the EEC (at the time) had with the Third World. In the 1983 volume *EEC and the Third World: A Survey*, Willi Brandt notes the close relationship between Europe and the Third World: 'Europe is more dependant on the Third World than either USA or the USSR'.³⁰ Reginald Green contributes a chapter in which he quotes Commissioner Claude Cheysson, speaking in Maputo in 1980, who said, 'what is important in Lomé is the general inspiration rather than the individual points'.³¹ Green goes on to note the willingness and desire of the EEC to work in a harmonious fashion with its partners in the Third World through economic regional integration and coordination bodies (p. 87) and also agrees with the comment made by Cosgrove-Twitchett in her work

when he says that 'EECACP cooperation is an area of North–South cooperation with better prospects than most'.³²

In his 1984 work *EEC and the Third World: A Survey. Renegotiating Lomé*, Stevens does comment favourably on the ability of the two sides to negotiate with each other when he discusses the aid allocation apportioned under Lomé II: 'The Lomé II allocation was negotiated; the ACP rejected the EEC's initial offer which was then improved.'³³ This does seem to indicate that a reasonable process of negotiation was taking place and that this was perhaps indicative of a certain amount of respect between the partners. However, the aid conditionality that was being sought by the EU prompted the need, according to Stevens, for a little more self-examination on the part of the EU: 'A more positive EEC attitude towards reforming itself and accepting dialogue along the whole range of economic relations with the ACP would create the right atmosphere for a frank discussion of aid conditionality.'³⁴ This comment seems to indicate a more arrogant and domineering attitude on the part of the EU and is thus indicative of a far less equal relationship. Comments by other authors such as Trevor Parfitt, in the same book, note the slowness of the process called for by the EU, from the appraisal of aid projects through the tendering process to the disbursement of funds. This could again suggest a lack of trust by the EU in its partner and a desire to oversee the whole process, leading to the creation of a certain amount of ill-feeling – evidenced in the empirical evidence later on in this work.

Stevens' 1985 edition (with Joan Verloren Van Themaat) of *EEC and the Third World: A Survey. Pressure Groups, Policies and Development* continues the examination of this period of EUACP relations and recognises one of the inherent problems of the ACP, which weakens it as a partner in 'opposition' to the EU: 'It is quite clear that the ACP group created by the 1975 Lomé Convention faces great problems in adopting common positions because of differences in the interests of its disparate membership'.³⁵ Stevens and Van Themaat note on page 11 that Lomé III 'is clearly inadequate', thus recognising the deterioration of the relationship from the earlier position of far greater respect and equality to the contemporary one (in 1985) where the EEC was beginning to more openly dominate the partnership. They note no real increase in the aid budget allocation from Lomé II to Lomé III and suggest 'it is best to consider the two aid budgets to be of roughly similar size'³⁶ and that

'its value to the ACP depends upon how fast and how well it is spent'.³⁷ The authors also note that 'the EEC has expressed concern about misuse of Stabex transfers', with the money being spent on luxury cars.³⁸ Thus again we are forced to note the superior position of the European Union and its adoption of a position from which it can withhold any future aid. This indicates a further deterioration of the relationship which had earlier been described by Cosgrove-Twitchett as a viable aid relationship and a new model for relations between developed and developing countries.

The later stages of the Lomé Conventions are examined in a collection edited by William Zartman entitled *Europe and Africa: The New Phase* (1993). Early on in the book Zartman notes the colonial history between the sides and their inability to move beyond it:

The experience of Lomé and other negotiations shows that African states' most powerful bargaining tool is an appeal to the sense of *richesse oblige* of the Europeans and a use of coercive deficiency by the Africans. This is ultimately an argument that is colonial, not one between aspiring equals.³⁹

Thus, again, recognition of the inequality between the sides based on their history. John Ravenhill notes the decreasing importance of the relationship to Europe: 'The ACP countries in general and the institutional relationship with them through Lomé in particular have become less and less important to [the] EC.'⁴⁰ He also claims that 'the relationship between the European Community (EC) and sixty-nine African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries has, over its fifteen years of existence, become routinized, ritualized and marginalized'⁴¹, though he does note that 'the EC Commission had already moved away from its traditional emphasis on infrastructure projects'.⁴² In looking at the ACP countries, Ravenhill comments that the 'divisions within the ACP group, evident in previous negotiations were even more to the fore' and that 'the very structure of the negotiations tended to place the ACP group at a disadvantage'.⁴³ He also believes that 'for its part the ACP group entered the negotiations even less well prepared than on previous occasions'.⁴⁴ Ravenhill makes various comments on the supposed equality between partners when he discusses the equality of status of the partners (p. 49), but he begins to acknowledge the differing versions of partnership that were emerging. The

lack of preparedness of the ACP states and their differing positions on the type of partnership contributed, according to Ravenhill, to the general deterioration of the Lomé Conventions: 'To some extent the ACP states thus have themselves to blame for the demise of Lomé as a model for North–South relations.'⁴⁵

Carol Cosgrove contributes to the Zartman edited book and notes both positive and some more negative aspects of the relationship between the EU and the ACP. In support of the relationship, she notes that 'Lomé IV maintained the principal provisions of the previous Lomé regimes'⁴⁶ and that funding under Lomé IV represented a nominal increase of 40 per cent over Lomé III (p. 65). However, she also recognises the change in approach demanded by the EU when she says:

The EC increasingly insists on participatory development at the grassroots level in economic development priorities and ensuring popular validation of what is done in their name ... This would be an uncomfortable process for most ACP states which still regard the Lomé Convention as an economic rather than a political framework for development.⁴⁷

Thus we see the imposition of EU or First World ideas onto the Third World states, which the ACP states may see as neocolonialism and thus not indicative of a relationship between equal partners but rather the old colonial masters dictating to their empires.

Roger Riddell notes some changes to African–European aid relations under Lomé IV when he recognises a nominal and real increase in EDF funds (p. 155), but perhaps one of the most interesting contributions to this edited collection of comments comes from General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of Nigeria, who states: 'The bald fact is that at present Africa does not have the leverage to deal on equal terms with its European and other trading partners.'⁴⁸

Bretherton and Vogler's work *The European Union as a Global Actor* (1999) contains a section related to the recent history of the relationship between the EU and the Third World. The section begins in a positive fashion, noting the amount of aid coming from Europe: 'In the late 1990s the European Commission and its member states accounted for 60 per cent of world aid' and 'the 40 years since the EC was created have seen the evolution of increasingly

complex relationships with developing countries'.⁴⁹ The book states that after the Cold War the EU would claim development policy as a cornerstone of European integration and a manifestation of European identity (p. 110). This cornerstone of EU policy was focused 'primarily upon the highly structured "association" relationship, governed by the Lomé conventions, between the EC and the African, Caribbean and Pacific former colonies'.⁵⁰ They discern three distinct periods in this relationship; firstly, they note what they call the late colonial period connected to associationism; secondly, they identify the Third World anti-imperialism which they relate to the first Lomé Convention; thirdly, they see a neoliberal period which they relate to the early post-Cold War era when Lomé IV was negotiated.⁵¹ Bretherton and Vogler note the change in the relationship from the earlier period which acknowledged the 'new, legally independent status of the associates while maintaining the core economic aspects of existing arrangements' (p. 113), to the later period which gave 'greater importance to the notion of partnership' (p. 118). They believe that Lomé I had a distinctive Community approach to development cooperation, but they add that there were 'few innovations in Lomé II and III'.⁵² They comment that the relationship at this time has lost much of its impetus but add that Lomé IV 'saw a number of innovations' (p. 119).

Bretherton and Vogler now identify what they call a 'shift in approach to cooperation partnership' when they say that 'explicit political conditionality was introduced',⁵³ thus again noting a deterioration in the partnership, which has moved from having what they saw as a distinctive Community approach to one wherein the more powerful partner had begun dictating to the weaker partner. The lack of interest in the Lomé system around the time of Lomé IV that Ravenhill noted (see above) is also commented on by Bretherton and Vogler. They mention the slow ratification of Lomé IV and claim that it is 'indicative of a general lack of commitment to the Lomé system on the part of the EU member states'.⁵⁴ They note that the EU began to actively promote ideals associated with neoliberalism, namely democratic good governance and economic reforms in the marketplace, whilst recognising ACP complaints of delays when dealing with DGVIII. Bretherton and Vogler believe that 'partnership, the third element of the Lomé System, has been arguably the most significant', but that it has existed in – and therefore ultimately failed in – what they call 'an inherently asymmetrical relation-

ship'.⁵⁵ This piece of work suggests a clear and straightforward explanation of the EUACP relationship throughout the Yaoundé and Lomé conventions whilst recognising the desire for partnership that the EU still claims it wishes to pursue – and notes the impossibility of this ever really occurring in an unequal partnership.

More recent pieces of work review later developments in the ACPEU relationship. Martin Holland's *The European Union and the Third World* (2002) provides a clear, straightforward examination of the Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou agreements. He starts off very positive about the EU, saying 'the EU makes a unique contribution to development aid', and recognises the contribution of the Lomé agreements: 'Through the Lomé Convention the EU attempted to introduce a greater degree of equality into the development relationship.'⁵⁶ Thus he recognises the desire to promote the concept of equality and suggests that the way forward in all development policy is to adopt the same approach. Holland is also positive about the contribution the EU has made in other areas: 'Europe initiated policy and debate on a number of development issues, such as women and development, reproductive health care, AIDS, the environment' (p.13). Also, 'more altruistically, the EU's development policy expresses its belief in democracy'; thus Europe was promoting many areas of development policy that had been hitherto underpromoted, for the good of the recipients, and was also promoting a style of government that it truly believed in. Holland thus states that 'the pervasive application of conditionality concerning human rights, good governance and democracy should not be misinterpreted as the imposition of European values on reluctant developing states' (p. 14). Holland obviously feels that the EU truly believes the approach of democratic good governance will genuinely help the countries in receipt of its aid. However, despite all these positive moves on the part of the EU, 'few if any of the Lomé countries had seen a radical transformation in their economic well-being: dependency continued to define their relationship with Europe' (p. 17). Thus Holland recognises that changes were being considered within the EU and that 'the rationale for reform was initiated by a growing dissatisfaction with the Lomé structures' (p. 17). Holland notes that the EU had to change the way it donated its aid and the approach of 'one size fits all' gave way in what Holland suggests was the greatest challenge the EU faced: 'differentiating between levels or types of developing country' (p. 18).

In reviewing each stage of the relationship, Holland sees the 'Yaoundé Convention as a poorly disguised extension of French foreign and colonial policy' (p. 31). At the beginning of Lomé I, he quotes Ravenhill (1985, p. 72), who said 'the community had little respect for the newly won sovereignty of the associates' (p. 32), but he remains supportive of the 'most distinctive feature of the Lomé Convention', which he calls 'a commitment to an equal partnership between Europe and the ACP', and he quotes from the preamble of the agreement, which calls for 'complete equality between partners' (p. 34). However, despite the desire to promote and achieve this equality that Holland the observer of the EU notices, Holland the academic realises that 'at another level a simple commitment to the principle of partnership can be criticised as ineffectual because such a dialogue could never be between equal partners' (p. 35). In discussing and criticising Lomé IV, Holland realises that the 'much-prized principle of partnership at the core of the Lomé model appeared distinctly compromised' (p. 42) and he goes on to say that 'the differences, rather than the similarities, between the original convention and Lomé IV were becoming increasingly pronounced' (p. 46). Commenting on the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, Holland notes article two and the four fundamental principles therein, one of which is equality of partners (p. 200). Thus the EU maintains the fiction of equality recognised by many commentators. Holland draws the reader's attention to an idea that instead of negotiating a joint agreement, the EU and ACP countries were each trying to achieve different objectives at Cotonou; whilst the EU achieved the differentiation in the arrangements for the ACP countries, Holland believes that the 'principal objective of the ACP group was to protect the integrity of the ACP as a group' (p. 212).

Thus Holland notes what he calls a 'paradigmatic shift in the focus and direction of EUACP relations' (p. 219) over the years from Yaoundé, through Lomé to Cotonou, and he adds that 'Cotonou adopts a fresh approach to development' (p. 232). Holland shows his reader that the relationship has moved from one of French colonial policy – of which he is somewhat disparaging – to one where the aim was that of equality; he seems to be supportive of this. However, the rise of neoliberalism and the dissatisfaction with the lack of results of years of aid move the relationship still further to the paradigmatic shift he observes that also appears later in this work during an interview with an EU official in Brussels.

Grilli notes in *The European Community and the Developing Countries*⁵⁷ that the main goal of Part IV of the Treaty of Rome was to promote the economic and social development of the dependencies. Article 131 states: 'The association shall serve primarily to further the interests and prosperity of the inhabitants of these countries and territories and to lead them to the economic, social and cultural development to which they aspire' (p. 50). At the time, there were disagreements within the EU's as to whether aid should extend the EU's influence throughout the world or should be limited to regions that have a historic relationship with the EU. The regionalists won the day and this was evidenced in the Yaoundé I and II agreements. Grilli states that the basic principles of Yaoundé II include 'equality of partnership'⁵⁸ and that regionalism was 'finally enshrined in the Lomé construction' (p. 68). The arrival of the United Kingdom in the EU seemed to provide the ACP and SADC states with the guarantee of stable, regular, nonpolitical and negotiated aid (p. 91). This appeared to affirm the claim that the relationship between the EU and the regions represented a 'new model' for development assistance. Archer and Butler note that the first Lomé Convention also seemed to show this commitment to equality.⁵⁹ Grilli notes that the gradual untying of aid was first proposed in 1971.⁶⁰ The participatory nature of aid management also contributed to this idea of partnership and equality and is referred to as 'greatly emphasised in the text of Lomé III' (p. 93).

Grilli does, however, refer to what he calls the 'affectation' of any political neutrality. He claims that the EU can have this neutrality as it does not, as a collective institution, have a colonial past and that because it is not a state it does not have the aspirations of one. He contrasts this with various EU memoranda to show the progression towards something like statehood and therefore the associated ambitions. He notes that political neutrality would be based on a desire not to interfere or take into account the internal politics of recipient countries, but that on occasion aid has been suspended because of human rights issues. Thus aid is not as politically neutral as is claimed. Grilli also notes that despite all the protestations of partnership and equality, 'the aid relationship is by nature asymmetrical' (p. 107).

After the 1970s, with the EU commission still stating that the co-management of EU aid with the ACP was 'a practice which has no parallel' (p. 108), it seemed that a change in attitude took place.

Commissioner Pisani moved the relationship from mere discussion on projects to be financed to the effectiveness of policies. This move was not appreciated by the ACP countries that saw it as EU involvement in their internal policy. The EU, however, put some of the blame for the failure of external aid onto the ACP: 'The countries of the Third World are also partly responsible for these disappointing results' (p. 110). This view is also supported by Mahbub Ul Haq when he said: 'I believe that the developing countries have themselves to blame for much of the present sorry mess'.⁶¹

Significant changes took place under the Lomé conventions with the introduction of programming aid under the National Indicative Programmes (NIP). This allowed each country to draw up plans over a period of years with the knowledge that there was a certain amount of money to be spent on agreed plans. Thus the recipient got stability but, as Grilli says, these plans or development priorities had to be 'compatible with EC priorities'.⁶² So the neutrality of the community 'while not being reversed was thus being narrowed'.⁶³ The Commission's influence was felt in Lomé III when emphasis was placed by the EU on food security and rural development; as Grilli puts it, 'the assertiveness of the Community in shaping some of the development policies of the associates clearly grew over time'.⁶⁴ He suggests that this continued into Lomé IV, when the amounts destined for structural adjustment were specified and thus 'what had begun with a modest proposal by Mr Pisani to extend the Community-ACP political dialogue ... had developed in less than a decade into the explicit adoption of policy conditionality by the Community for a consistent part of its aid to ACPs'.⁶⁵ Aid had now become conditional under Lomé IV. Marjorie Lister also notes that 'this political neutrality was a convenient fiction'.⁶⁶ Archer and Butler make the same observation: 'In recent years, the EU has increased conditionality in aid programmes'.⁶⁷

Grilli notes that the development policies of the EU were centred by choice on Africa because of historical factors. He sees associationism as encouraged by the French at EU level and this policy, when combined with interdependence, as 'the standard justification for continued privileged relations with Africa'.⁶⁸ Grilli goes on to state that 'economic interdependence between these two regions did not mean in any case economic equality between them. Africa needed Europe much more than Europe needed Africa'.⁶⁹ Thus a state of inequality existed and this inequality is of particular inter-

est to this author as it forms a cornerstone of this work.

Grilli thus concludes that 'community aid, once depicted as a model of political neutrality and non-interference in the internal choices of the recipient countries, is now becoming distinctively more political'.⁷⁰

This changing level of EU involvement or interference is similar to the general changes in development discourse. Nothing stays the same for very long but instead alters in form as the years and decades change, yet throughout the decades, the different treaties or agreements and the inequality of the development system, the EU has maintained the notion of equality and partnership.

The next stage in the relationship was the 2000 Cotonou Agreement that brought more changes, transformed aid conditionality and again supported a 'Washington Consensus'.

One year after Cotonou had been signed, the Bond network commented that Dr Paul Goodison of the European Research Office said the European Commission must try harder to 'ensure [that] the high aspirations of the Cotonou Agreement are translated into practice'.⁷¹ The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) calls the Cotonou Agreement 'a fairly unique form of North-South cooperation'. They note that it has been built on the Lomé conventions with the aforementioned partnership; they mention equality of partners and ownership of development strategies and claim that all the ACP countries retain all their sovereignty. Central government is noted as the main partner, but others, such as the private sector and civil society, are eligible to take part. The conditionality of aid is noted and linked to 'core values or essential elements', the violation of which can lead, according to ECDPM, to suspension of aid. Thus the idea of good governance is imposed.⁷² ECDPM notes that the EU had wanted good governance included as an essential element but that the ACP countries had a problem with this. Nevertheless, it had to be accepted as a fundamental element. ECDPM also note what they call 'performance based aid management' and thus 'the end of the aid entitlements'. They note that from now on 'EU can use the resources for the ACP in a more selective and flexible way'. Thus, the 'programming of aid resources becomes a strategic management tool'. This surely indicates a level of inequality in the relationship.

The papers mentioned above, together with various comments

below from EU officials, all note that participation, ownership of projects and partnership is the currently accepted method of approach. Poul Nilsson, the EU commissioner for Development, believes that in the context of a globalised world there 'is still room for a true and deep relationship between the North and the South'. He says 'our partnership works', but admits it can still be improved. While he mentions the issues around good governance, he does not mention aid conditionality.⁷³ Also in the *Courier* Jean-Robert Goulongana, the ACP Secretary General, examines the Cotonou Agreement but tells a somewhat different story. He notes that it followed on from '18 months of long and difficult negotiations' involving 'sometimes diametrically opposed positions'. He states that the ACP countries have been 'disappointed by the level of resources under the 9th European Development Fund (EDF)' and notes that the EU 'must genuinely pass on responsibility' to the in-country delegations.⁷⁴ This surely suggests a history where responsibility rested in Brussels – despite the persistent claims of equality.

The ECDPM comments on the 'rather drastic rolling back of the State in favour of market-led approaches and privatisation' and notes 'it was clear' that several ACP countries were against this. Despite this opposition, the idea was pushed through as a major part of any new deal.

Thus the history of the relationship between the EU and the ACP has had its share of confrontation, yet because of its hegemonic position, the EU has managed to impose the dominant mainstream discourse whilst still managing to include the idea of equality in its partnership with aid beneficiaries.

With the rise of organisations in the world of development, other than state governments, and their increased participation as a part of the mainstream discourse, a brief examination of their approach is beneficial.

Wateraid is over a quarter of a century old and now acts as a technical advisor to the British Government's Department for International Development (DfID) and the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF). The autumn/winter 2002 edition of Wateraid's magazine *Oasis* described the agency as working as technical advisors to what Wateraid describe as 'respected local partners' (p. 8). Wateraid's poverty reduction strategy supports the participatory process (p. 12) and they are in favour of self-help and local ownership. They believe that having

local partners can lead to local responsibility and in their annual review of 2001, they note that work in Zambia with the local government led to a change in government policy to involve full community participation. This NGO, whilst originally perhaps seen as alternative to the mainstream of development, now interacts with government and can bridge the gap between local community and government. This reflects a change that has taken place in the discourse as a whole.

The Oxfam website (www.oxfam.org.uk) clearly shows Oxfam's support for and belief in full participation. The institutions created after the Second World War (the Bretton Woods institutions such as the International Monetary Fund) are seen as ineffective and they have therefore rejected the mainstream approach (Oxfam GB policy briefing Jan 2000). The Oxfam paper *Mainstreaming Human Development: The Social Policy Fundamentals* also supports participation, thus underlining that NGOs followed what was seen as alternative development policy and that, by their rise to prominence, they transformed alternative proposals into mainstream policy.

Of relevance is an Oxfam GB Policy Paper September 2000, entitled *The European Union: A potential global force for change*. This paper states that the EU policy framework does not really help and that it reinforces inequality. The paper underlines Oxfam's support for more local ownership. The Oxfam briefing paper of March 2002 entitled *Africa at the Crossroads: Time to Deliver* looks at a different point of view and suggests that it is in the interests of the North to help the South as a contribution to global security. In this paper they suggest that NEPAD (New Partnership for African Development) is a positive step but that much more participation is needed. This links to the claims made in the African Press that NEPAD is a creation of the African elite but not of the African people.

Eurostep is the umbrella name for a group of nongovernmental development organisations (NGDO). It has 18 members in 13 European countries, 12 of which are within the EU. The NDGO has issued a paper to the EUACP Council of Ministers recommending full participation to increase effectiveness. These examples, amongst many others, show how NGOs are currently accepted as an important part of the development scene and that participation has moved from alternative to mainstream discourse.

The World Bank provides another point of view but also shows

a similar perspective. It has been historically criticised for being too top-down and authoritarian, but speeches by WB chairman James Wolfensohn during the period considered by this book indicate a change of heart. The World Bank website quotes Wolfensohn as saying 'people do not want solutions imposed from without ... they want the opportunity to build from within'. This is further evidence of the mainstream discourse changing over time, and of the adoption of participation as part of mainstream discourse. The speech given by Wolfensohn at the 2002 annual meeting of the World Bank supports local ideas and local partnership and lists the supply of clean water as one of the first tests of any partnership between the World Bank and the recipients of its aid. Wolfensohn's speech to the John Quincey Adams Society in 2002 linked development to stability and peace, and was supportive of the NEPAD regime in Africa, taking it as a sign that Africa was taking responsibility and ownership for itself. The question still remains whether African elites promote and support this regime because they genuinely feel this is the way to move forward or whether they have 'sold out' to the Western-oriented mainstream discourse where regime formation, of the type exemplified by NEPAD, is linked to liberalisation, simply to retain the favour and the aid of the First World.

Thus, in summary, the relationship that began with the Treaty of Rome has moved on from a history of colonialism and seen a change in style to a more multilateral aid relationship; this change is still taking place. An important feature of the relationship despite the changes it has undergone is the fact the dialogue is continuing. As noted previously, Stevens believed that negotiations could still take place despite the deterioration in the relationship noted by Zartman. Lomé I and II made a claim of parity between partners that did not really exist and Lomé III was seen as inadequate with no real increase in aid. Bretherton and Vogler note changes over the different agreements and draw attention to the rise of neoliberalism and conditionality of aid.

Most importantly, this chapter has identified comments made by Cosgrove-Twitchett and Cosgrove that note the differing positions, philosophies and approaches of the EU and ACP in negotiating the various different agreements. This is in line with a claim made in this book, namely that the different starting points of the two sides are contributing to the problems arising in the relationship and that if

both partners held the same view of what the partnership is about, there would be more chance of a harmonious working relationship.

The Philosophy of Partnership

The issue of partnership is one of the central points of this work and it is therefore important to examine the philosophical basis of partnership between government and peoples and to ask if it is possible to suggest that the relationship between the EU and the people who receive its aid is comparable to that which exists between a government and its people. Was a covenant, commonwealth or social contract created similar to those suggested in the works of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau when both parties agreed to sign the EUACP treaties of Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou? The arguments of Hobbes and Rousseau provide positions of contrast with the more balanced relationship that emerges from the ideas of John Locke, and thus the latter's work is examined in a little more detail in the hope that it can give some insight into the relationship existing between the EU and the ACP countries of Lesotho and to a lesser extent Mozambique. Hobbes's approach seems to reflect the position that the EU is accused of, which is a position of authority, with all the power of any agreement invested in it. This resembles the position of sovereign in Hobbes's approach. Rousseau's ideas would indicate an almost opposite position as he believes that all power is vested in the people. This would resemble a position whereby all power in the EU-ACP partnership was held by the ACP country or countries. Locke's philosophy seems to offer a starting point with a more equal or balanced distribution of power within any partnership and thus could represent an approach to the EU-ACP partnership that could offer a good starting point on a more equal footing.

Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes contributed much to the idea of partnership through social contract and saw this idea as a method of avoiding political conflict. He did, however, favour a rather one-sided contract with much of the power vested in the 'sovereign'. According to Hampsher-Monk, 'his only aim throughout was to warn against the consequences of political conflict, the only cure for which, he thought, was an absolute and undivided sovereign'.⁷⁵

Hobbes's advice is 'to conferre all their power and strength upon

one Man, or upon one Assembly of men'.⁷⁶ 'This is the Generation of that great LEVIATHAN,'⁷⁷ Hobbes asserts in Chapter xviii of *Leviathan*, 'A Commonwealth is said to be Instituted, when a multitude of men do Agree, and Covenant, every one, with every one, that to whatsoever Man, or Assembly of Men shall be given by the major part'.⁷⁸

Hobbes believed that in a 'state of nature' there were certain individual rights but believed that the best way forward was 'the device of a social contract in which these rights were granted (in whole or in part) to political ruler(s) in order to effect a transition from the 'state of nature' and establish political society'.⁷⁹ Hobbes justified this kind of partnership by saying 'only if the truths offered by Leviathan were accepted by the citizens would civil tumult be avoided'.⁸⁰ Hobbes's approach to partnership through contract can be related to the relationship that exists between the EU and the SADC countries, through agreement with the ACP. There is clearly a certain type of partnership in existence between the EU and SADC countries, but any resemblance to a contract envisaged by Hobbes that invests all the power in one half of the partnership does not bode well for a relationship that is advertised by the EU as being one of equality between equal partners.

'The making and keeping of covenants', says Hobbes, 'is the origin of, indeed is constitutive of, justice'⁸¹, and thus whilst the countries of Southern Africa may see the partnership with the EU as an attempt at gaining justice from the First World, a problem will exist in the relationship if the EU sees itself in the position of 'absolute and undivided sovereign' (see above). Hobbes believed that political society amongst humans did not come about voluntarily but needed to be constructed. The treaties of Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou, as constructed political society, seem to point towards Hobbes's theory. However, he did also suggest that 'for humans social community can only be established through the exercise of political power'⁸², and in this work one of the questions being asked is: Who is exercising an unequal share of the power in the particular relationship involved?

Hobbes suggests that there are 'two methods by which commonwealth may be formed ... either by institution – that is the mutual agreement of free individuals, or by acquisition – by conquest of a previously existing sovereign'.⁸³ He also added that 'both sovereignty by institution and by conquest or acquisition involve con-

vention or agreement'.⁸⁴ The EU has claimed that its relationship with the ACP countries works particularly well because it has no colonial past, so perhaps the question of commonwealth following conquest is not so relevant and the current relationship is based on commonwealth by institution. The previous conquest of imperial times has clearly had a bearing on the situation as evidenced by the regionalist policy adopted by the EU.

Hobbes's contract between two parties is heavily weighted in one side's favour. This weighting is based on the free choice of the other party to relinquish certain rights to what he calls 'the sovereign', which he says can be 'either a council or an individual'⁸⁵, but which, importantly for Hobbes, 'has absolute power and almost absolute authority'.⁸⁶ This may reflect the position of the EU if it believes itself to be in a position of absolute power and almost absolute authority. Hobbes further reinforces the one-sided position as he believes this partnership is a 'reciprocal relationship between obedience and protection, which underlies political obedience'.⁸⁷ He tones this argument down because the 'notion of contracts ... will enable him to distinguish political authority from mere overwhelming power'.⁸⁸ So 'consent is thus important to Hobbes's theory of obligation⁸⁹ ... enabling him to distinguish between mere "slaves" or "captives" – subject to their lord's power, but unobligated – and subjects or citizens – also subject to the sovereign's power – but who truly owe him an unfeigned obligation'.⁹⁰ If this theory of commonwealth or partnership is reflective of the EU–ACP relationship, then there is clearly an opening for a position of domination because, as far as Hobbes is concerned, 'the public persona of the citizen [the ACP country] is concentrated in the sovereign so exhaustively and irrevocably there is no political agency left'.⁹¹ This position is reflected in the working paper on the reinforcement of the NAO drawn up by the EU and presented to the ACP in 2004.⁹²

Hobbes's idea of partnership or social contract does not fully reflect the EU's published version of partnership as expressed under Cotonou. His original writing does create a debate on social contract which is developed by others including Locke and Rousseau. Under Hobbes, if one side of the partnership deems itself to be 'the sovereign', it may assume the authority that Hobbes invests in this position and thus 'the rights of the sovereign are as extensive as the rights of nature and effectively unlimited'.⁹³ Furthermore, 'the rights retained by the subject are the minimal

rights of self-preservation'.⁹⁴ Thus, 'if the subject disobeys or, more precisely, if the sovereign deems him to have disobeyed, he may be punished'.⁹⁵ This can easily be linked to the part of the Cotonou Agreement that allows the EU to withhold aid in a variety of circumstances dependent upon the behaviour or performance of the aid recipient.

John Locke

According to Parry, 'Locke was ... a political thinker ... [H]e was also deeply involved at the centre of practical politics'.⁹⁶ Wolin also comments extensively on Locke's central position in the discussion concerning the beginnings of a society when he mentions 'the pivotal figure of John Locke'⁹⁷ and notes that 'the concept of society emerged in Locke's writing'. Wolin mentions modern liberalism and goes on to say that 'Locke is admittedly one of its founders', that Locke is 'undoubtedly the leading candidate', and that liberalism in general 'leaned heavily on the political principles of Locke'.⁹⁸ Having established Locke as a political thinker, Wolin examines Locke's comments on the position of government which, according to Wolin, Locke declared existed 'for the procuring, preserving and advancing' of men's 'civil interests'. Wolin comments that 'the political could therefore be said to reside in the sum of protective arrangements which left men to 'acquire what they farther want'.⁹⁹

Wolin examines the relationship between Locke, 'the originator of the liberal tradition', and Hobbes¹⁰⁰ to show the difference between the Hobbesian version of partnership – which he believes is politically biased in favour of the particular authority – and the Lockean version, which has a more balanced and equal approach to the relationship. Wolin claims that Locke's theory reduced the influence of the political and allowed for the rise of a more balanced societal relationship and downplayed Hobbes's assertion of a natural order, so that 'the political order lost its quality of dramatic achievement'. In contrast, Wolin claims that 'for Lockean man the political order could never be an invention, only a rediscovery of the natural'.¹⁰¹ Hence, according to Wolin, 'men are impelled towards civil society because they are anxiety-ridden, "uncertain" about their rights, full of fears'. Man looks to the society created by agreement because it contains 'a common law, a method for impartial judgement, and an enforcing power'.¹⁰² The position of any

ACP country can easily be related to the position of 'man' in that a state may be 'anxiety-ridden, uncertain about their rights and full of fears' and thus they enter into an agreement such as Yaoundé, Lomé or Cotonou. The idea of partnership explicit in Lomé, seen as a genuinely new approach to development politics, can be related to Wolin's comment that 'genuinely new political elements in civil society were introduced via the explicit agreement whereby men accepted a common body of rules'.¹⁰³ Locke discounts the idea of society as being ordered from a political centre – for instance, the dictating of development policy from Brussels – and substitutes 'a conception of society as a self-activating unity capable of generating a common will'.¹⁰⁴ From this it is easy to see a supposedly equal partnership wherein all parties concerned have an equal say. Thus Locke believed that the establishment of civil society would reduce the evils of uncertainty and fear, and it is again easy to see that the poorer countries of the ACP would enter into a contract or agreement with the EU to achieve the same ends.

Sabine and Thorson (1973) also note that 'the contrast [between Locke and] Hobbes was striking'.¹⁰⁵ Sabine and Thorson believed that until the emergence and publication of Locke's work, 'of all the figures in this intervening century incomparably the most important for the development of a consistent political theory had been Thomas Hobbes'.¹⁰⁶ However, the authors recognise that Locke changed the balance in the political partnership by emphasising the responsibility of the ruling authority to the other half of the partnership. They note that Locke

held that government – the king specifically but not less parliament itself and every political agency – is responsible to the people or the community which it governs: Its power is limited both by moral law and the constitutional traditions and conventions inherent in the history of the realm.¹⁰⁷

In comparing the implications of both Hobbes's and Locke's approaches to the partnership to an analysis of EU and ACP relations, it can be noted that the EU may be taking the position of Leviathan from the Hobbesian approach but that the countries of the ACP may be trying to hold more closely to the balanced position expressed by John Locke. A further difference between Hobbes and Locke is noted by Sabine and Thorson, who claim that

Hobbes showed that the idea of community is a pure fiction and only exists if someone can exercise power – in this case perhaps the EU. However, they note two logical objections to this idea; firstly that both individuals and institutions that are doing good work for the community within the framework of the law can constitute a community, and secondly, they believe that persons looking to the law or government for security can constitute a community.¹⁰⁸ These differences can also be related to the position of Europe and the ACP countries within their agreement: The EU may believe that the community can only exist if it, the EU, is exercising power. On the other hand, it can also be appreciated that any attempt to alleviate poverty within the ACP group can be seen as doing good work and therefore a community exists; also, the ACP countries may be looking to their agreement with the EU for security and this then also constitutes a community.

According to Sabine and Thorson, ‘Locke held that the state of nature is one of “peace, good will, mutual assistance and preservation”,’ and that the only problem was that ‘it has no organisation, such as magistrates, written law, and fixed penalties, to give effect to the rules of right’.¹⁰⁹ Thus again the construction of an agreement between the two partners to protect each other’s interests; as Sabine and Thorson point out, ‘society exists to protect property and other rights’.¹¹⁰

Thus the authors see Locke’s political philosophy as ‘an effort ... to find a nucleus of agreement for reasonable men’,¹¹¹ and this approach can easily be related to the partnership between the EU and the ACP. However, they also point out that ‘the monopoly of power’ by the wealthier part of any community is an abuse of Locke’s theory of individual rights and they again refer to the enormous contribution made by Locke: ‘As a force in propagating the ideals of liberal but not violent reform, Locke probably stands before all other writers whatsoever’.¹¹² Sabine and Thorson’s interpretation of the ideas of Locke therefore can shed much light on the relationship between the EU and the ACP, past, present and future.

In *The Foundation of Modern Political Thought* (1978), Quentin Skinner examines Locke’s work and notes that Locke divides any power between two parties. In the case of disagreement, final ruling is not placed by Locke into the hands of the authorities, as their authority comes from the people. Skinner notes ‘Locke asks “who shall be judge”, the authority “lies not merely with the inferior mag-

istrates... but also with the citizens themselves".¹¹³ Thus here Locke places equal emphasis on the *authority* and the *right* to make a judgement – which under the ideal of equal partnership is what should happen in the relationship between the EU and the ACP states. In reality, and particularly at the end of the Lomé era and into the Cotonou era, this did not happen and much more authority was assumed by the European Union. Skinner goes on to say of Locke that 'his basic assumption is that anyone in authority who exceeds the power given him by the law' automatically 'ceases in that to be a magistrate'.¹¹⁴ Skinner notes Locke's awarding of the right to resist or oppose to the people or to even 'any single man'¹¹⁵ and agrees with what all other commentators on Locke say, which is that:

The main motive the people must have possessed for setting up a commonwealth must have been that of ensuring a greater security for their property and the prevention of any devastation of their territories or any other such material calamities.¹¹⁶

When related to the relationship existing between the EU and any ACP countries in the SADC region, a fair comparison can be made between the relationship that exists between government and its people, as suggested by Locke, and that of the EU and the ACP countries. All enter into a contract that they hope and believe is for their own good; Locke uses the word 'commonwealth': 'The commonwealth seems to me to be a society of men constituted only for preserving and advancing their civil goods'.¹¹⁷

The Lockean system of government through parliament can be compared with the EU–ACP parliament. Both are based on a liberal approach to government, many of the ideas of which descended from John Locke: 'Locke is generally acknowledged to be the first thinker to gather together, into a seemingly coherent whole, most of the leading themes of liberalism'.¹¹⁸ From this liberalism comes the notion of equality of all people and thus countries, states and governments, 'man being as has been said, by nature all free, equal and independent'.¹¹⁹

Parry notes that Locke realised that 'no man is naturally subordinate to another'¹²⁰ and that 'all are free and equal'.¹²¹ He extends the realisation to note that all must respect the rights of

others 'whilst respecting the equal entitlement of others to do likewise'.¹²² This supports the EU claims to equality in its partnership with the ACP states.

The notion of freedom and equality is also recognised in Yolton's work on Locke in various instances. Yolton notes that Locke suggested that no one would be 'subjected to the political power of another without his consent'.¹²³ This seems to be similar to Hobbes's idea of covenant or commonwealth through institution.

When examining the relationship between the EU and the ACP in the light of Locke's work and the suggestion of this book (that an inequality exists between the EU and ACP and is exploited by the EU), 'it cannot be supposed that they (ACP/SADC) should intend, had they a power to do so, to give to anyone, or more, an absolute arbitrary power over their persons and estates'.¹²⁴

Thus a 'commonwealth' exists in the form of the Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou treaties supposedly based on freedom and the equality of all involved, and is expressed through the wording of the agreements in terms such as 'equal partnership'. However, this work is suggesting that not only is this partnership unequal, it is also recognised as unequal by the more powerful partner – which uses this powerful position to promote its own agenda. This situation is recognised by Locke (in Yolton): '...and therefore, whatever form the commonwealth is under, the ruling power ought to govern by declared and received laws, and not by extemporary dictates and undermined resolutions'.¹²⁵

Parry makes mention of the autonomy that should be expected by the SADC countries in his examination of Locke's work when he says that we can 'identify man as an autonomous, self-directing but not self-sufficient individual'.¹²⁶ This also points to Locke's thoughts on the possibility of certain people receiving aid. 'Locke, both in theory and practice, believed in voluntary charity to the deserving'¹²⁷ and 'Locke did believe that there was a natural law obligation on government to relieve the most extreme necessity',¹²⁸ though he felt such actions should be very limited.

Thus if inequality does exist in the EU-ACP, and therefore SADC, relationship, and if unreasonable power is exerted by the EU, then Locke can also be applied as he goes on to examine the different kinds of power that he sees as exerted by government. According to Parry:

Locke establishes a distinction between three types of power in terms of the ways in which the power is exercised. The three types of power are political power, paternal power and despotic power. Political power is the kind of power a ruler exercises over a subject. Paternal power is the sort of power a father exercises over his children. Despotic power is the power a lord exercises over a slave.¹²⁹

All these distinct forms can be related to the relationship that exists between the EU and the SADC countries, through the agreements signed with ACP countries. Historically, despotic power was exercised during the colonial period, patronisation may be an ongoing problem and if the EU is misusing its influence then political power is being wielded. Locke goes so far as to suggest that someone may 'be at one and the same time a ruler, a father and a lord over slaves'.¹³⁰ This work is asking whether this may actually be current practice. Is the EU being despotic, patronising or wielding political power inappropriately?

Parry's work on Locke suggests that 'where power is employed by government other than to safeguard the subject in his care of his property it is not political but either despotic or paternal and in neither case rightful'.¹³¹ Thus, if the EU is exerting despotic or paternal power it is in the wrong. Locke, according to Parry, distinguishes political power from the other forms but also notes that 'states which do not guarantee such protection of rights are not worthy of the name "civil society"'.¹³² So, if the EU is misusing political power it again falls foul of Locke.

The EU documents examined elsewhere in this work make the claim to superior knowledge. Parry links the political power that Locke mentions to claims of superior knowledge when he states that 'there can therefore be no natural difference between men which can justify political authority or subordination'.¹³³ He says that this is because 'no government can claim any naturally superior knowledge which could permit it to decide on behalf of other men what is good for them'.¹³⁴ This again reinforces the inappropriateness of the EU dictating demands such as political or gender reform.

As the agreements of Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou all exist and both parties have contracted into them, the question as asked by Parry is, 'To what do they contract?'¹³⁵

Do the ACP countries contract in, expecting to be treated equally – as the EU official publications suggest – or are they perhaps anxious to receive any aid that is on offer and thus sign the agreements unaware or, worse still, aware of what the consequences could be? The agreements set out the rules each side is to abide by, but Smith and Grene label the abuse of the power of inequality as ‘indeed inconsistent with civil society’.¹³⁶ They go on to note that Locke says ‘wherever law ends tyranny begins’.¹³⁷ Thus the so-called equal partnership between the EU and the ACP countries has reverted to one very similar to the partnership that existed in colonial times.

Locke’s work raises other rather fundamental questions that are relevant to any agreements between the EU and ACP countries, such as the enforcement of any rules in the light of their supposed infraction. Smith and Grene point to the need for ‘a known and indifferent judge’.¹³⁸

As discussed elsewhere in this work, the African press assert that the African elites may have contracted into the commonwealth of EU–ACP agreements, but the consent for these ‘elites’ to do so only arises from the people of Africa – who, according to the press, have not been consulted. As ‘all political authority comes from the consent of the people’,¹³⁹ perhaps this is a further infraction of the Lockean philosophy of government and civil society.

Other questions relevant here are: Have African political societies historically come from this liberal approach, or is the EU imposing a system of government onto people unused to this way of thinking? Have the African ‘elites’ sold out to the West in the face of large amounts of aid money? If so, are they doing this for the good of the people of Africa or for other reasons?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

In contrast to the predominantly one-sided approach to partnership suggested by Hobbes, and the more even-handed approach of Locke, Rousseau’s version of a social contract puts more emphasis on the people or subjects of what he called a ‘covenant’. His starting point is that ‘all men possess natural liberty equally’¹⁴⁰ and he believes that the ‘form of association must be voluntary based upon the will of every individual’.¹⁴¹ Rousseau was particularly insistent that the freedoms of anyone signing up to a social contract were not diminished, let alone lost. This puts a very dif-

ferent interpretation on the theory of partnership than that expressed by Hobbes and Locke. This opinion is supported by Cranston when he says, 'Since no man has any natural authority over his fellows ... all legitimate authority amongst men must be based on covenants'.¹⁴² The earlier point about no loss of freedom is noted by Cole when he says:

The problem is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate and in which each while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before.¹⁴³

Cole's version of Rousseau also supports the relative power of the people, as expressed by the latter when he said 'the people being subject to the laws ought to be their author'.¹⁴⁴ Rousseau believed that in joining together into a single body there would be only one united will¹⁴⁵ and that this will should be expressed through the law. 'It is to the law alone ... that men owe justice and liberty, it is the law which establishes real equality among them.'¹⁴⁶ The postmodern position of the importance of locality over the imposition of macro ideas is reflected when Cobban says that what is important is 'not the constitution that is best in itself, but that which is best suited to the state for which it is destined'.¹⁴⁷ Rousseau's position perhaps more accurately reflects the ACP idea of equality of partnership in which they, the ACP countries, can rely on the legal wording of the Cotonou Agreement which discusses equality of all parties and not the dominance of one. Cobban contrasts Rousseau's position on the rights of the population with that of Locke: 'For Locke the sovereignty of the people is only operative in the last resort, for Rousseau the sovereign people is the actual legislative authority of the community'.¹⁴⁸ The importance of the power of the people is commented on in Muschamp when he says 'freedom is impossible if one is dependent upon the other person's will'.¹⁴⁹ This point is reflected elsewhere in this (my) work and in Amartya Sen's book *Freedom for Development* (2001). However, the question raised by the *Mail and Guardian* in Johannesburg (see above) still remains whether the African elites support or have sold out to the countries of the North in order to receive aid without involving the people of Africa.

Rousseau is also relevant to this discussion as he examines the condition of inequality in *Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality Among Men* of 1755. This publication includes a short essay, 'To the Republic of Geneva', in which Rousseau discusses his ideas for an ideal state. Relevant to the relationship between the EU and the ACP are his comments that 'no one from outside the state could dictate a law that the state was obliged to recognise', and 'if there was a national ruler and a foreign ruler as well, no matter how they divide up their authority it is impossible for both leaders to be obeyed'.¹⁵⁰ Thus Rousseau is very concerned about influences outside the state; this becomes even more relevant when he discusses inequality later in Parts I and II of the book. Rousseau notes that there are 'two sorts of inequality', which he calls 'natural or physical' and 'moral or political'. The moral or political, he believes, 'depends on a sort of convention and is established, or at least sanctioned, by the consent of men'.¹⁵¹ Thus we see Rousseau's belief in a contract between groups that can easily be related to the relationship between the EU and ACP. He believes that 'a distinctive characteristic of man' is 'his capacity as a free agent', with a 'faculty of self-improvement',¹⁵² and again this can easily be related to the peoples of the ACP and their attempts to improve their lot. They may hope that they are free agents, though it can equally be argued that their 'place' in the world and the relative power of the EU has reduced the amount of freedom they have.

Rousseau takes issue with Hobbes's view of man by saying, 'Let us not conclude with Hobbes that man is naturally wicked' (p. 44). Rousseau does recognise that 'Man is weak when he is dependent' (p. 45), and this may again reflect the position of the ACP countries when related to that of the EU. He does credit man with what he calls one natural virtue, namely pity, and asks, 'What are generosity, mercy and humaneness if not pity accorded to the weak, the guilty and the human race in general?' (p. 46). This if nothing else supports a call for aid in the face of the inequality in the world. Rousseau expands further on this when he says, 'it is pity that sends us unreflecting to the aid of those we see suffering' (p. 47).

Rousseau believes that as people got together the strong, the handsome, the eloquent or the most skilful came to be the most highly regarded and 'this was the first step towards inequality' (p. 60). He continues: 'From the moment one man needed help from

another and as soon as they found it useful for one man to have provisions enough for two equality evaporated, poverty was introduced' (p. 62). From this stage Rousseau moves on to claim that 'natural inequality gradually leads to inequality of rank and the differences between men ... become more conspicuous and lasting in their effects' (p. 65). This then can help to explain the relative positions of the EU and ACP, though Rousseau goes further to comment on interdependence between groups of different status when he notes: 'If he is rich he needs their services; if he is poor he needs their aid' (p. 66). Thus according to Rousseau, this gave rise to domination and servitude. He adds:

[By tracing] the march of inequality ... we find that the establishment of law and the right of property was the first stage, the institution of the magistrature the second and the transformation of legitimate into arbitrary power the third and last. Thus the status of rich and poor was sanctioned in the first age, that of strong and weak in the second, and in the third that of master and slave, the ultimate degree of inequality (p. 78).

Rousseau comments further that it is easy to 'explain how inequality of influence and authority becomes inevitable' (p. 80). He believes that inequality does not occur in the natural state and is only created by humankind and their enactment of any laws and he concludes that 'it is manifestly contrary to nature ... that a handful of men should gorge themselves with superfluities while the starving multitude goes in want of necessities' (p. 85). He thus makes a case for the rise and continued existence of inequality that is very relevant to the current relationship between the EU and the ACP countries.

Having examined the three previous versions of the contract between man and government or citizens and authority, it is worth looking further to see where the general liberal position comes together. Adam Ferguson (1723–1816) is often regarded as one of the founding fathers of sociology. In *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), he articulates a liberal view of the integration of individuals, society, economy and social values into a coherent whole, but does not go as far as the neoliberal market economics dominant within the Washington Consensus that drives the domi-

nant approach to development. His views are therefore worth a brief examination as they contain much that is relevant to the EU and ACP relationship.

Ferguson, like all liberals, believes in the agency of humankind, 'that man is susceptible of improvement'.¹⁵³ He also has property at the heart of his ideas and he notes in part one, section two of his essay, 'they give rise to his apprehensions on the subject of property'. His belief in and support for civil society and what could happen to man without the restraint it imposes is clearly demonstrated when he writes in section two, 'They would enter, if not restrained by the laws of civil society, on a scene of violence or meanness'. Ferguson's ideas reflect the principle of working together towards a desired end, so the relationship between the EU and the ACP sits well with his position. He believes that working in union is a positive thing and comments in section three of his essay: 'We have reason to consider his union with his species as the noblest part of his fortune.' Having established his support for the idea of working together he is careful to add a warning (section four) about the possibility of disagreement, noting 'how much our species is deposed to opposition, as well as to concert'.

Ferguson's ideas also have a place for aid within society. In section six of his essay he notes: '[The question] "what hast thou done with thy brother Abel?" was the first expostulation in behalf of morality; and if the first answer has been often repeated, mankind have notwithstanding, in one sense, sufficiently acknowledged the charge of their nature'. Ferguson continues in section eight of his essay to note that our actions can contribute to the good of society, namely helping our fellow man. He writes:

The dispositions of men, and consequently their occupations, are commonly divided into two principal classes; the selfish, and the social. The second incline us to live with our fellow-creatures, and to do them good; they tend to unite the members of society together.

Ferguson thus establishes the idea of a relationship between groups of people and of particular relevance to the EU-ACP relationship is his position on 'equality'. In section nine he notes that 'a cluster of states ... find the exercise of their reason ... in the affairs they transact, upon a foot of equality'. He adds that 'where

a number of states are contiguous, they should be near an equality'. Here Ferguson is presumably referring to states that are physically next to each other, but in declaring their interest in working together through the various agreements between them, the EU and ACP are surely putting themselves 'together' and thus the hope, desire or need for equality is still as important.

Ferguson thus believes in the agency of humankind and the integration of a variety of liberal values into a society that allows for the constraining of market economics by the political pressures within civil society. He supports the idea of partnerships and community between peoples and is clear that equality is an important part of this relationship.

Recent African Ideas

In order to support the call for a more equal partnership, it is highly relevant to examine some examples of African thought related to partnership of any kind within African society to avoid the charge of a Eurocentric philosophy and to see if the perspective of African states or the ACP can in any way run parallel with the ideas of First World thinkers. If both sides have a comparable approach to the idea of partnership, then a closer relationship should theoretically be possible, political will and hegemony notwithstanding. An initial problem in comparing or contrasting European and African approaches to their own societies is identified in *Developments. The International Development Magazine* (Issue 30 Second Quarter 2005). In this issue Bob Geldof has a piece extracted from his book, designed to accompany a BBC TV series, in which he points to a basic difference between the two cultures. He notes that the First World tends to see development as being about increasing individual choice just as Locke's work identified the relationship between individual and the authority within their commonwealth. However, Geldof claims that the materialistic individualism of the European cannot fully appreciate the perspective of the African which he, Geldof, explains through the use of a word from the Nguni language family. 'The word is *ubuntu*. African philosophers [he does not say which ones] define it in this way: A human being is a human being through the otherness of other human beings.'¹⁵⁴ Geldof therefore states that *ubuntu* is about interdependence and extends the argument from the individual and society when he says 'in Africa as well as "me and them" there is an "us"'.¹⁵⁵

This same approach to the relative position of everyone in society was noted by Kenneth Kaunda, first president of Zambia. When formulating his philosophy, which he called Humanism, Kaunda commented 'in our original societies we operated by consensus'.¹⁵⁶ This consensus in society was recognised by other leaders of newly independent states in Africa who were producing practical philosophies in order to help forge a sense of community in their respective new states. At the time, the memories of colonialism and the prospects of neocolonialism were, amongst other things, foremost in the minds of these leaders. Kwame Nkrumah, the first prime minister and later President of Ghana, in his book *Neocolonialism: The last stage of Imperialism* (1965) commented on the relationship between his new country, Ghana, and its European ex-colonists when he said that his country and 'its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside'.¹⁵⁷ Nkrumah realised that under colonialism and neocolonialism, 'foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of less developed parts of the world'.¹⁵⁸ Thus he believed that 'neocolonialism is the worst form of imperialism'.¹⁵⁹ These experiences clearly affected Nkrumah's relationship with Europe, which he saw as a dominant neocolonial power. He noted that the 'limited neocolonialism of the French period is now being merged in the collective neocolonialism of the European Common Market'.¹⁶⁰ The solution to the inequality in the relationship, he suggested, was the coming together of the new states because 'unless small states combine' (p. xiv) they would be dominated by the more powerful Europeans. He also seemed to believe that any development of his country (and presumably others) would be limited if attempted alone. He noted that 'while Africa remains divided progress is bound to be painfully slow'.¹⁶¹ Nkrumah also attempted to explain the failure of aid programmes as part of a package of neocolonialist domination. He believed that for neocolonialism to be seen to work it must be seen as capable of raising living standards wherever it was employed, but the problem with this idea – according to Nkrumah – is that the economic objective of neocolonialism is to keep the colony economically depressed and in a position of subservience to the (neo)colonial master (p.xv). The solution to the contradiction in neocolonial aid packages he saw as multilateral aid, 'which is the only effective form of aid' (p.xv). Thus for Nkrumah, the relationship with Europe was dominated by imperialism, and there was

a need for the African states to come together under pan-Africanism to combat the dominance of European neocolonialism. He suggested that multilateral aid should be used to break down the dominant influence of the unilateral aid donor.

Julius Nyerere, leader of the newly independent Tanzania, was also attempting to produce a working philosophy in the 1960s. In *Freedom and Socialism: Uhuru na Ujamaa* (1968), he claimed that Tanzania under his leadership stood for the same values espoused by the European Union: 'We stand for democracy now ... we stand for equality now'.¹⁶² Nyerere claimed his foreign policy would be based on the principles of non-alignment and that Tanzania would be 'friends with all nations on the basis of national equality and sovereignty and of mutual respect'.¹⁶³ To this list he added qualities that he wanted to emphasise in the new Tanzania by building a 'society based on human dignity and equality'.¹⁶⁴ Noticeable here is the number of times that Nyerere uses the word 'equality'; clearly this is related to the period of colonisation when Africans were treated as a lower class of person and has created the desire in Nyerere to demand equality which he believes should come now that his country is an independent state.

In constructing a socialist state Nyerere is quick to criticise the Western economic method of capitalism. In *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (1968), he discusses his ideas of socialism as opposed to the approach of the First World and, just as Geldof noted and Kaunda commented (see above), Nyerere also suggests that a cultural difference exists within African society as opposed to European society. He claims that 'acquisitiveness for the purpose of gaining power and prestige is unsocialist'.¹⁶⁵ Nyerere saw European society as acquisitive and intent on using its acquisitions to enhance its own power and prestige, but he claimed that African society was not the same. He pointed towards the interdependence mentioned above and noted that whereas European society was about the individual, African society was about the whole of the society. Furthermore, Nyerere claimed that 'traditional African society succeeded [in looking after society]'.¹⁶⁶ Thus he goes on to say that 'a capitalist attitude of mind which was introduced into Africa with the coming of colonialism' is 'totally foreign to our own way of thinking'.¹⁶⁷ Nyerere also rejects any dictating of methods from the First World because in rejecting capitalist attitudes, he believes that he should reject the capitalist methods that accompany the atti-

tudes (p. 7). He seems to resent being 'taught' about democracy by the First World and claims that, just as African society does not need to be taught the socialism he is promoting, it does not need to be taught democracy.¹⁶⁸ The unity that Nkrumah offers as a solution to the dominance of one group, namely Europe, is also identified in Nyerere's work when he says that in the struggle to escape colonialism 'we learned the need for unity'; however, he extends this unity 'to embrace the whole society of mankind'.¹⁶⁹ This reflects the position adopted by today's politicians who also claim that it is in the interests of the First World to help the Third World.

Ojo, Orwa and Utete examine the place of the African state and its relationship with external influences in *African International Relations* (1985) and they acknowledge that the small size of some of the African countries may contribute to the position they are in: 'Where its own power is inadequate it might find it necessary to enter into alliances with any one or more states with which cooperation would be more beneficial'.¹⁷⁰ Thus partnership is not outside the African experience. The authors note that 'political independence was not in itself sufficient to achieve development', and that this was perhaps a result of a 'historical role as a supplier of raw materials for the expansion of metropolitan industries and as a consumer of metropolitan manufactured goods'.¹⁷¹ As a general comment on African international relations the authors note a lack of relevant texts on the subject, an opinion backed up by Professor Stephen Chan at the School of Oriental and African Studies, in relation to African states' relationship with the EU.¹⁷²

Ojo, Orwa and Utete realise that 'African states have found it useful to work in close collaboration with other developing countries because the institutions they then form 'are designed to enhance the bargaining power of the developing countries visàvis their developed interlocutors'. However, despite these efforts the authors also note that the 'divergent aims of the developing states themselves render effective cooperation amongst them difficult'.¹⁷³ Thus the authors claim that African states realise the power of partnership and its benefits when bargaining with external institutions; however, it is clear from the approach of the African states that these external institutions are seen as bigger, more powerful and dominant, and not really in equal partnership. The authors go so far as to say that any 'Third World multilateral cooperation has to contend with the divisive tactics of the great powers' and the divi-

sive tactics are explained as obvious when it is realised that 'it is inevitable that those powers that benefit from the current lopsided distribution of these resources would resist the effort to change it'. The authors note a definite tactic of 'divide and rule'¹⁷⁴ and thus see no equality of partnership with any exogenous authority.

The three authors note a certain kind of 'catch 22' situation within whatever type of relationship exists between the developing countries and the institutions of the developed world and quote Smith from 1979, who said that 'they cannot exist without their dependence and they cannot exist with it'. This they explain by saying that 'they cannot do without their dependent status because the national bourgeoisie is sustained by it'.¹⁷⁵ They support this claim with evidence from Ake (1978), who said 'the ruling classes in Africa are part of the structure of imperialism and of the syndrome of imperialist exploitation'.¹⁷⁶ Thus the authors again agree with Ake and claim that 'both sides have elevated the concept of development into an ideology with the slogan "partnership in development"'. This ideology creates the illusion of an identity of interest in change which masks their objective interests in the status quo.¹⁷⁷ The use of the words 'both sides' seems to indicate that the partnership is a wary and reluctant one.

Ojo, Orwa and Utete quote Tom Mboya from 1963, who stated that 'Africa cannot continue to trade with other nations without trying to put herself in a position to compete effectively with the highly industrialised world today', and they seem to agree with Colin Legum (1979), who contributed to the debate by claiming that 'African states today as in 1963 believe that political cooperation through the OAU is best for development efforts'.¹⁷⁸ Thus it seems that, according to these authors, most African states realise that some form of partnership with one another will help them in their dealings with development partners. They express a little surprise in commenting on the relationship between Europe and its ex-colonies when they say, 'relations between newly independent African states and the former European colonial powers have remained remarkably close', and go on to add that 'their links with their former colonial overlords continue to reflect a special character'.¹⁷⁹ The three authors question why 'the newly independent African states have preserved something of the umbilical cord tying them to the former "mother" states'¹⁸⁰ and go on to suggest, as Ake did in 1978, that African elites are bound up in this process. They

give the example of President Senghor of Senegal calling 'for the establishment of a unity between Europe and Africa'.¹⁸¹ Whilst the authors recognise that for various reasons, such as the socialisation of the African elites, a certain sort of working relationship may exist between Europe and Africa, they are not slow to point out that problems exist because each side has different requirements of the relationship: 'Relations between African states and former colonial powers reflect calculations of national interests on the part of both sets.'¹⁸² They believe that African states have been more successful in negotiating with Europe through the concept of partnership as portrayed by the ACP group and thus have a certain positive approach to the concept itself; they do, however, go on to state that 'relations between African states and the former colonial powers reflect, at a sub-global level, the asymmetry that characterises North-South relations at the global level'.¹⁸³ Thus despite this ambivalence to the idea of partnership the authors believe that 'the progress so far achieved in the evolution of such cooperative arrangements as those between the ACP and EEC states constitutes an important milestone towards the realisation of a more equitable international socio-economic and political order'.¹⁸⁴

Speaking with the advantage of hindsight, in that he could see the results of the philosophies, Kwasi Wiredu in 1996 compared the practical philosophies of the new African leaders of the 1960s. He states that 'Nyerere's theory of *Ujamaa* (familyhood) socialism was more refreshingly intellectual, and certainly more relevant to African traditional society than the thinly Africanised varieties of Marxist socialism that were offered by Nkrumah and Sekou Touré'.¹⁸⁵ Wiredu seems to be somewhat critical of 'proposed varieties of socialist philosophy and ideology', when they were 'sometimes called "African socialism" to signify their indigenous orientation or inspiration'.¹⁸⁶ He is quick to point out that 'it does not follow that there was anything wrong *in principle* in a contemporary African leader adopting a Western theory of social reconstruction'¹⁸⁷ and suggests this may be because of the domination of African philosophical minds by Western thought. He believes that this may continue until the time that Africa has a 'lingua franca'. He sees the link between socialist philosophies mentioned above and the consensus approach mentioned earlier by Kenneth Kaunda and notes 'there is considerable evidence that decision by consensus was often the order of the day in African deliberations'.¹⁸⁸ Wiredu

believes that this consensus approach was based on 'the belief that ultimately the interests of all members of society are the same'.¹⁸⁹ This observation on earlier African society again emerges as a cultural difference when compared with the European individual, capitalist society and is thus a potential source of friction between the two groups, though if Wiredu believes the statement made above, he can extend the 'sameness of all members of society' to Europeans as well as Africans.

In Richard Wright's edited book entitled *African Philosophy. An Introduction* (1984), Kwasi Wiredu, in his chapter entitled 'How not to Compare African thought With Western Thought', suggests that as traditional, or what he calls pre-scientific (African) 'thought is inferior to modern science-oriented thought',¹⁹⁰ some Europeans or 'Western liberals had to think hard in order to protect themselves against conceptions of the intellectual inferiority of Africans as people'.¹⁹¹ This may be the case with certain parts of the European Union as demonstrated in the patronising attitudes sometimes displayed. Wiredu goes on to say that as technological development in the West is merely an aspect, not the core, of development, then development as an idea is something that all humankind is engaged upon: 'The quest for development then should be viewed as a continuing world-historical process on which all peoples, Western and non-Western alike, are engaged.'¹⁹² Wiredu claims that this linear process of development can allow us to see 'the movement towards modernisation in Africa not as essentially a process in which Africans are unthinkingly jettisoning their own heritage', but in a more positive light as one in which 'Africans seek to attain a specifically human destiny'.¹⁹³ This may contrast somewhat with a European perspective which grew out of an acceptance of European superiority and the desire to 'civilise' the Third World.

In a chapter of Wright's book entitled 'Philosophical Justifications for Contemporary African Social and Political Values and Strategies', Diana Axelsen briefly notes the work of Amilcar Cabral, founder of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde and Guinea (PAIGC) and a major figure in the struggle against Portuguese colonial rule in Africa, who gave careful attention to the role and position of women in a liberated society and went on to elaborate on the need for an international perspective¹⁹⁴ on class struggle, thus in effect supporting a worldwide position within humanity. She notes that the philosophy of Frantz Fanon¹⁹⁵ also

adds to the approach that seems to be emerging from Nkrumah, Nyerere and Cabral, which is an attempt 'to ground their strategies for social change in a world view'.¹⁹⁶ In the chapter by Benjamin Neuberger, 'A Comparative Analysis of Pan-Africanism', the idea of partnership between African states is reinforced and thus a common theme occurs in the thoughts of Nkrumah, Nyerere, Toure, Telli and Keita, amongst others, which Neuberger claims is 'representative of the radical leaders of Africa's first independent decade'.¹⁹⁷ He further backs this up by claiming support in the ideas of Mboya and Jomo Kenyatta. Thus there seems to be a common idea in the humanity approach perhaps identified by the Nguni word *ubuntu* mentioned earlier. However, this seems to almost preclude the idea of partnership, which has to be between two sides, whereas *ubuntu* suggests a 'oneness' that is missing from the European view. A closer approximation of the kind of partnership espoused by the EU is perhaps achieved through the pan-Africanism of the African leaders and writers mentioned above, though this seems to be occurring out of expediency in dealing with the dominance of Europe, and others, rather than from a real belief in the concept itself. This view is supported in Chazan et al. (1999) when the authors note that 'many ACP countries have concluded that the Lomé Convention is an expedient for preserving traditional North–South trade relations'.¹⁹⁸

Practical philosophies of development are also a contemporary reflection of the partnership between the EU and the ACP countries. An article in the African National Congress magazine¹⁹⁹ entitled 'The ACP and the Philosophy of Development' looks at the very recent position. The content of this article suggests that the ACP are merely responding to the EU rather than actually expressing their own particular philosophy. The position of the EU is explained with a quote from the *Green Paper on relations between the European Union and the ACP countries* published by the EU in 1996 and which claims:

Apart from the need to improve results (of aid), development thinking itself has moved on. Global economic changes (liberalisation, technological progress, emerging economies) and the lessons from the success stories of Asia, Latin America, or Africa, have radically modified the philosophy of development.

The impression that the ACP is merely responding to the EU is explained as being due to 'the strength of the EU and the relative weakness of the ACP countries'. To this explanation is added the comment that 'it was inevitable that these countries (ACP) would have no choice but to accept the new "philosophy of development" to which the EU Green paper referred'. The ACP position is that 'the Cotonou Agreement was concluded within the context of a negative climate towards aid or foreign development assistance in the EU and other developed countries'. At the signing ceremony for Cotonou, Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said 'our partnership works' and 'we have a shared vision of the future of this relationship'. Despite this, the article claims that the economic partnership agreements 'are intended to oblige the ACP countries to conform to a "free market" model of development that was never imposed on both Western Europe and the Asian Far East after the Second World War'. The article claims that this is because the United States knew that this would 'negate the possibility for those regions to overcome their condition of underdevelopment'. This is clearly evidence of the ACP being forced to do something that was not forced onto Europe and thus they, the ACP, feel dictated to and not a part of an equal partnership. Despite these differences of opinion within the partnership and the feelings of the ACP Commissioner, Nielson was still saying in a meeting in Windhoek in July 2004, that the EU wanted to leave behind the 'long hangover of colonial economic relationships' and wanted 'to become fully equal partners'.

The idea of partnership itself is accepted amongst the African nations, as is evidenced in a communiqué issued at the end of the Fourth Meeting of Africa Partnership Forum held in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2005.²⁰⁰ The meeting itself shows that African states have adopted the partnership idea, certainly with respect to the more federal approach of Nkrumah. The communiqué states that 'the meeting agreed that the partnership is very strong' amongst the African nations in attendance, but in the opening remarks by (Nigerian) President Obasanjo, concern was expressed 'about the unfulfilled pledges made to Africa by its development partners in the past'. Obasanjo also felt the need to emphasise 'that partnership is based on mutual accountability and clearly defined obligations'.

In April 2000, the inaugural session of the Africa–Europe summit was held in Egypt and a report from the *Al-Ahram* weekly online

quotes President Hosni Mubarak discussing the 'historical meeting between Africa and Europe' and Egypt's 'complete conviction of the importance of establishing strategic partnership, that reflects both parties' political will and joint determination'. Further evidence that Africa has adopted the idea of partnership, or returned to its roots of operating by consensus, comes from the Ivory Coast.²⁰¹ The paper from the West African Organisation for the Development of Traditional Fishing in Abidjan discusses their philosophy of development and states that it rests on the participatory method. This paper also makes the point that it is better to know the people that one is 'intervening on' so that the action undertaken might have a 'better impact'.

Thus African states and thinkers are aware of and have adopted the idea of partnership, certainly amongst themselves and maybe only reluctantly with the EU, perhaps because of the changing view of the 'partnership' within the European Commission. First World academics have also noted the changing approach to the EU-ACP partnership. Raffer (2001) commented on the 'Partnership Agreement'²⁰² and noted that 'the idea of real partnership is now largely absent'. Raffer suggests that the EU has waited throughout the intervening years since Lomé I until it, the EU, could force onto the ACP countries the situation it had always wanted. He continues by noting that the EU has expressed strong doubts about the further viability of the principle of partnership in its Green Paper of 1996, though he qualifies this by adding that 'diplomatic lip service was paid' to the concept when he quotes from the Green Paper: 'Partnership is still the ideal form of cooperation relations and any future agreement between the EU and the ACP States must endeavour to restore it'. Raffer finishes by stating that the EU has overcome its objections to the idea of partnership by embracing the 'word partnership fully – although not necessarily the underlying concept of equality'.

Lister²⁰³ is also aware of the position of the ACP countries and notes that they 'have been disappointed with the mixed results of the partnership'. She examines the word 'partnership' and suggests that its meaning 'has long been a subject of some perplexity'. She notes the use of such adjectives as 'uneven', 'unequal' or 'asymmetrical' and the Orwellian model of partnership with the stronger party making decisions and goes on to say that 'relations of equality seem much rarer in the contemporary interstate partnership

arena than those of inequality'. She immediately qualifies this view of partnership with the comment that the word partnership itself does 'express for many people an ideal of equality, equity, and harmonious cooperation', but perhaps supports the view of Sebegnou (1999), who she quotes as saying that it was 'known by everybody never to have existed but to be necessary to create'. Lister concludes by noting the almost ubiquitous nature of partnership rhetoric in today's world, matched only by the complete lack of its realisation in practice.

Thus there seem to be differences of approach to the idea of partnership. The EU has followed a European philosophical version based around the ideas of Locke, as far as rhetoric is concerned, and Hobbes as far as the Orwellian, or Leviathanesque, model displays in practice, which is in opposition to the culturally different African idea expressed in the Nguni word *ubuntu*. The adoption of the idea of working together through the African Union or the NEPAD regime shows that African states have acquiesced to First World suggestions of how to run their affairs but have done so in the face of a huge power imbalance.

In the face of differing concepts of partnership, the implementation of any practical attempt at partnership could conceivably experience problems of implementation, thus a brief examination of the related theory is appropriate.

Implementation Theory

This book will examine several EU documents in detail to note the position of the EU, which seems to be fully supportive of the idea of full and equal partnership with the recipients of EU aid. This examination will take place in the light of the fact that the same time the EU links development aid very closely to a particular style of government and a specific approach to the running of economies. ACP recipients of EU aid are, however, rather critical of the EU, and in the cases of Lesotho and Mozambique, suggest quite openly that the partnership envisaged by the EU and promoted as equal and fully participatory is falling short of the initial EU publications and thus the EU's image and aspirations. These criticisms of the partnership between the EU and certain ACP countries prompted, in this work, a brief examination of several approaches to partnership as envisioned through the ideas of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. These three authors all focus on the relationship

between two parties, namely governments and citizens, and this work asks the question: Could the Hobbesian, Lockean and Rousseauian versions of partnership be used to examine the relationship that currently exists between the EU and the ACP recipients of development aid? The problems that exist within the EU–ACP partnership may reflect whichever idea of partnership has been adopted by the EU and the ACP recipient respectively. Clearly if one half of the partnership adopts a Hobbesian approach, the ‘Leviathanesque’ position or attitude is perhaps not going to suit the approach of the other partner, who may have adopted a position more reminiscent of the Rousseauian version of partnership. Thus the original ideal as envisaged by the EU is at odds with the Lesothan or Mozambican version of the relationship. Practically this means that the vision of the EU and the large sums of money it provides in the form of developmental aid are not completely achieving the results hoped for. Issues similar to this, where reality does not match vision, are examined in various foreign policy publications that look at the external relations of states. Whilst the EU is not a state in itself, it does distribute aid outside of its own borders to other states and thus some sort of foreign policy is in evidence. However, the literature that examines foreign policy is somewhat biased and deals ‘predominantly with the foreign policy of Western developed states’, thus it is ‘culture bound’ and may be slightly less appropriate for examining the ‘foreign policy behaviour of non-Western, less developed states’.²⁰⁴ In the absence of any other tools to examine the relationship between the organisation that is the EU and the less developed Third World states scattered around the globe that comprise the ACP, this literature does make certain useful points. In the edited volume of Clarke and White, the above points are made and then expanded to say that we are ‘predisposed to view man as a rational creature’ and that ‘we assume ... that foreign policy is the product of rational behaviour’²⁰⁵ despite there being underlying assumptions in foreign policy which ‘should be made explicit’.²⁰⁶ This literature is revealed as relevant in another chapter which notes that ‘the environment within which policy is made and implemented provides the motives and context for action’ and that we need to see ‘the relationship between policy-making, policy management and the environment as an interactive process which continually moulds and remoulds the behaviour of all actors concerned’.²⁰⁷

That there is a difference between the initial plan and the subsequent outcome is commented on by Clarke and White, who refer to this phenomenon as 'slippage'. They note the 1980 helicopter rescue plan of American hostages from Iran as an example of how an outcome can differ dramatically from the original plan.²⁰⁸ They also comment that 'foreign aid is a classic case'²⁰⁹ of slippage and note that 'the slippage between intentions and reality is normally quite considerable'.²¹⁰ The editors go on to suggest that the reason for the slippage can be identified in 'Implementation', which may limit the 'level of performance [which] can be achieved'²¹¹ and note that 'bureaucratic structures may limit what is possible'.²¹² Clarke and White note other features of the problem as 'bureaucratic ethos' and 'political control'.²¹³ The level of bureaucracy, the internal ethos and the political control of the EU over the development aid may go some of the way to indicating and understanding where some of the problems lie in the EU-ACP relationship.

This chapter has examined the philosophical basis of partnership, looking briefly at Hobbes and Rousseau and in a little greater depth at Locke, and has tried to suggest that if both the EU and the ACP adopted a similar starting point in their negotiations and working relationship, then less friction might occur between them. Rousseau's ideas on the origins of inequality are also examined as they are relevant to the relationship between the EU and ACP. These early philosophical ideas are added to in a short examination of the work of Adam Ferguson, who brings together a liberal view of the integration of civil society, social values and economy into a whole approach that does not go so far as the neoliberal market economy demanded by the Washington Consensus.

The writings of a variety of African leaders emerged and became much more relevant after the colonial period and with the coming of independence for many African countries. Some of these views have been examined in order to give a more balanced perspective and to weigh the European philosophies with those coming out of Africa.

This unique approach to the philosophy of partnership when related to the EU-ACP partnership adds considerably to the originality of this work, particularly when combined with the empirical evidence shown in later chapters.

DEVELOPMENT OR DICTATORSHIP?

This work examines the concept of partnership between the EU and the ACP by looking at the effectiveness of European Union aid to water development projects in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. It will examine the concept for donor and recipient through interviews with water managers and politicians in Lesotho and use as an illustration part of a small-scale water project in Lesotho. Any evidence will be reinforced or confirmed by a similar process in Mozambique and will look for evidence of a balanced partnership or of any situations of domination and subordination.

The EU has for a long time spoken of partnership and equality. The first Lomé Convention of 1975 introduced and agreed to 'partnership between equals'.¹ The current EU website mentions 'mutual interest' in article 55 of the Cotonou Agreement, article 56 talks of 'a partnership based on mutual rights' and article 57 states: 'The concept of equality between partners [is] recognised'.² The EU council and commission talk of 'cooperation and partnership' and 'participatory development', and the EU sectoral policy on water resources notes EU-ACP partnership. The EU paper on regional cooperation with the Southern African region mentions cooperation throughout and specifically talks about infrastructure and water supply.

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) supports the EU statements when it says 'the Cotonou Agreement builds on twenty five years of ACP-EU cooperation under 4 successive Lomé Conventions. This provides a model of development cooperation based on the principles of partnership'.

Thus at first examination it seems that the EU believes in partnership between equals (equality here refers to mutual respect rather than equality of resources and capabilities) and can show a history of support for this idea. If this is the case, then examination of two case studies should support this premise; however, there is also the opportunity for inequality and a relationship of domination and subordination to be brought to light. The ideology of neoliberal globalisation with its associated Western, industrial management economics is set up alongside the idea of partnership and it is possible to suggest a link or conflict between the two points of view. This leads to the question of what would happen to the one (development in SADC) without the other (a willingness to 'sign up' for the liberalisation)?

Robert Chambers believes that 'economically, power relations have polarised. The North is no longer inhibited by postcolonial guilt; the countries of the South have become weaker; and the North now more freely imposes its latest economic ideologies on the countries of the South.'³

Amartya Sen comments that 'the world is invited to join the club of "Western democracy" and to admire and endorse traditional "Western values"'.⁴

Pablo Gutman (Senior Policy Advisor at WWF macroeconomic Policy Office), writing in the EU-ACP *Courier*, March/April 2002, suggested that a motto for the European Union could be: 'We are willing to give more money to those developing countries that follow our advice.' Thus does he hint at the inequality in the relationship between the EU and Southern Africa, in this case.

Dr Paul Goodison of the European Research Office⁴ argues that the European Commission 'must try harder to ensure that the high aspirations of the Cotonou Agreement are translated into practice'. He goes on to say that the EU has 'a particularly long way to go in this regard.'⁵

This work will examine the EU literature related to water projects in two specific countries in the SADC region and will also collect evidence from the recipients of the aid, at all levels, to support or deny the claim of equal partnership. Any evidence of inequality can then be used in an attempt at improving the EU aid system.

Thus EU aid should be provided and is provided – supposedly through a historical relationship of partnership and equality. However, during the history of developmental aid there have been

instances and ideas that have been centred on the 'First World' and have either knowingly or unknowingly created and supported a relationship of domination and subordination: 'us and them', or 'uppers and lowers', as noted by Chambers (1997)⁶ when he comments on the relevant positions of donors and recipients in an aid relationship.

Here, information will be gathered by looking at the literature associated with two projects (proved or disproved later via field-work in Brussels and Africa) as produced by the EU. The specific documents were chosen as they begin on a general level with a *mission statement* from the EU's development directorate. The second document selected narrows the field to the ACP regions with which the EU claims to have a special relationship. The third document is related to the Cotonou Agreement, the latest manifestation of the partnership between the EU and the 'Third World'. The fourth and fifth documents relate specifically to the chosen areas of SADC, namely Lesotho and Mozambique, and the sixth publication is about the EU's water policy. I believe these papers from the general to the specific can all be read in the light of the contradictory and dichotomous positions suggested above. The first three documents are all relatively short but can all be analysed in a similar fashion to produce a consistent result.

These six pieces of official EU literature, which were procured from the europa website or from EU publications, or which were sent out by EU officials, are as follows:

1. Development Directorate-General EC. Development cooperation mission statement. (www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/development/mission_en.htm)⁷
2. African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) Introduction. (www.europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12100.htm)
3. African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). Cotonou Agreement. <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12101.htm>
4. National Indicative Programme for Cooperation under the Second Financial Protocol of the Fourth Lomé Convention between the Kingdom of Lesotho and the European Community.
5. National Indicative Programme for Cooperation between Mozambique and the European Community (NIP 8th EDF).

6. Guidelines for water resources development cooperation. Towards sustainable water resources management. A strategic approach. (Published by European Commission, 1998)

David Howarth⁸ comments on the use of discourse theory to analyse the relationship between the EU and the countries of Southern Africa when he says 'discourse theory is concerned with understanding and interpreting socially produced meanings'.⁹ He traces the history of discourse theory through 'a long tradition of thought stretching back to the writings of Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Kuhn and Foucault'. Howarth believes there are two areas within discourse theory that are particularly relevant to the relationship between the EU and SADC countries: 'the formation and dissolution of political identities and the analysis of hegemonic practices'.¹⁰ Thus this method is appropriate to examine the existence of the development versus Western business management approach and to look at the question of equal partnership versus domination or subordination. Howarth comments supportively on the methods chosen in this work to collect information:¹¹

Discourse analysts thus gather primary information from a range of possible sources, which include surveys of newspapers, official reports, and 'unofficial documents' ... They also supplement these more narrowly textual modes of investigation by making use of in-depth interviews and ethnographic forms of investigation such as participant observation.

This categorisation of the two ideas of neoliberal globalisation versus development partnership has been recognised in discourse analysis by Van Dijk¹² (2001): 'Categorisation is one of the elementary mental aspects of actor and group description'. Van Dijk also comments on textual analysis¹³ when he says 'ideological analysis in its most straightforward guise involves detecting in text and talk the expression of such ideologically based opinions'. He then tells us that we must 'first find evidence of professional ideologies, controlling attitudes'. Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983)¹⁴ suggest that the parties should strive for 'the establishment of meaningful connections between successive sentences in a discourse'. They follow this by stating that 'macro-propositions may again, in a similar way, be connected into sentences'. Thus, if the words and sentences of

a particular discourse are consistently repeated and reinforced, they can create an ideology that gains credibility and validity. This leads to particular actions being seen as the only acceptable ones. As Van Dijk says, 'Political discourse and political action ... may derive part of their coherence and hence their credibility and legitimacy when based on consistent ideological principles'. The division that exists between a few governments, elites, countries of the North and the Bretton Woods Institutions, and Africa and its people (*Mail and Guardian*, Johannesburg 24 May 2002, see below) is recognised by Van Dijk when he states that 'political groups are thus defined not only socio-politically in terms of sets of interacting actors or collectivities but also socio-cognitively in terms of their shared knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms and values'. Perhaps a very small part of the African population subscribes to the current theory of partnership, but it cannot be said to be a true partnership, as the EU claims, if – as the newspaper report states – 'Africa and her people have not been involved'.

This collection of documents does at first reading seem outwardly to support ideas currently in vogue in development thinking, namely those of partnership and participation. Document No. 1, the Mission Statement of the EU's Development Directorate, begins with the admirable statement: 'The objective of community development cooperation policy is to foster sustainable development designed to eradicate poverty', thus giving us the first half of a binary. The sentence finishes by stating that the goal is to 'integrate them into the world economy', thus hinting at the other face of the binary opposition that exists in the EU documents – that of neoliberal globalisation with its associated neoliberal economic management. This 'other side' of the statement supports the Washington Consensus and the Bretton Woods Institutions with their market economy ideals.

If this paper is examined for evidence of political identity, as identified by Howarth, the opening three short paragraphs list the Development Directorate-General and 'all developing countries and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)', thus giving us the two viewpoints to be considered. Van Dijk's categories are also seen here as the DG for Development in the 'First World', and the 'Third World' of '78 African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP) and the 20 OCTs'.

Section 1 of the Mission Statment, 'Overall Objectives and Values', can be examined in the same way. A political identity of the Community, world economy, democracy, the rule of law, good

governance and a respect for human rights can be seen as a unit, opposed by one of poverty, the most disadvantaged developing countries and countries, regions or areas that do not believe in democracy and the other values listed above. Howarth's identification of hegemonic practice is noticed when the EU states that sustainable development can ONLY (my emphasis) be achieved by pursuing policies that promote the said values. Van Dijk's categorisation can be recognised in the creation of the two camps which put the EU, world economy, democracy, rule of law, good governance and human rights opposite poverty and the developing countries. The second paragraph of Section 1 shows Howarth's political identity of the community and major international donors such as the IMF, World Bank, the United States, Japan, Canada and Australia: These organisations and countries are all linked to neoliberal globalisation and 'the West', thus creating a hegemonic group that can donate aid. The listing of these bodies in one category implies clearly that another category exists and is constituted of 'other' countries or regions. The connections between sentences identified by Van Dijk is evidenced in the second paragraph of the document's overall objectives and values and links the EU's development policy 'as far as possible, with major international donors (such as, for instance, the IMF and World Bank)'. These references, with language taken from a business dictionary, show the counterpoint to the high ideal of equal partnership.

The 'mission' has as its starting point the claim that the Directorate-General for Development possesses 'state of the art knowledge on developing countries'. This clearly suggests a higher level of knowledge than that of others, but which others? Is this reducing the value of any locally produced knowledge? Can a claim to a superior level of knowledge lead to a working relationship between equal partners? Howarth's political identity group is here, the claim to state of the art knowledge suggests that a level of hegemony is present and Van Dijk's connection between sentences can be identified when links are made between developing countries and poverty eradication. Further on in this section is the comment that EU citizens 'have expressed concern' for human rights, democratisation and support for civil society, but no reference is made as to whether any African citizens have these concerns. Perhaps this does not matter as long as the EU citizens of the 'First World' with their 'correct values' and 'state of the art knowledge'

have expressed the concern first. This suggestion of patronisation occurs in the second document also.

The second EU document, 'African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) Introduction', related specifically to the ACP countries, has as its first word 'cooperation'. The paper relates the history and growth of the partnership between the EU and the ACP. The Treaty of Rome, 1957, begins the process, then Yaoundé I and II of 1963 and 1969 respectively 'constitute[d] the first step in the creation of the partnership'. The paper goes on to say that 'since 1975 relations between the ACP countries and the EC have been governed by the Lomé Conventions, which have established a close, far reaching and complex partnership.'¹⁵

The document mentions two key elements, the first being economic and commercial and the second being development. Again, there is a link or binary of economics and development, with one political group perhaps putting more emphasis on the economic side of the discussion than the other political group. This differing way of seeing development must cause problems when both political groups are trying to achieve an equal partnership. The paper continues through the history of the partnership to Lomé IV and comments on the new ideas that were incorporated, such as human rights and democracy, which are integral parts of the neoliberal ideology. The Cotonou Agreement (Benin, June 2000) is discussed next when it is said to 'represent ... a new stage in the partnership'. The paper goes on to state that 'new trade agreements compatible with WTO rules will be negotiated. Trade between the two parties will thus be liberalised.' When the text is examined for evidence of Howarth's political identities, many examples can be seen. The title of the paper creates one political identity of African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP) that is immediately set opposite that of the European Community in the first two lines. The paper then mentions that the ACP countries were 'for the most part, colonies of certain members', thus creating a historic sense of hegemony.

Further on a group is established in the EU, comprising the Council of Ministers, the Committee of Ambassadors and the Joint Assembly. This group, as part of the EU, has 'genuine political dialogue' and is linked immediately with the financial power it possesses by mention of the European Development Fund.

The last few paragraphs reinforce the political and economic identities of the various states (as identified by Howarth) by nam-

ing them under titles such as 'ACP States (excluding the least-developed ACP States)' then, 'Least-developed ACP States (LDC) (as listed in annex 6 of the Cotonou Agreement)'. Further political identification occurs under the title 'Landlocked ACP States'.

Howarth's identification of hegemonic practices can be seen in comments on the Lomé conventions. The system of trade preferences is discussed and it is noted that 'there is no reciprocal clause for the ACP countries', which are 'merely obliged to apply the most favoured nation clause to the Union'. The group of people in the EU who have the 'genuine political dialogue' are seen to contribute to the Cotonou Agreement, in which they retain the 'main instruments of the partnership' (which are institutions and financial instruments). They then go on to strengthen the political dimension of the agreement by 'entrusting the ACP countries with additional responsibilities'. This suggestion of patronisation harks back to the first document discussed, the Mission Statement, with its claim to superior knowledge. There seems to be the suggestion that because of the history of 'growing up' in partnership with the EU, the ACP states can now be allowed to manage some more of their own affairs and perhaps take some more responsibility for the future – and also take the blame if anything goes wrong.

Van Dijk's categories are in evidence when the paper goes on to say that 'cooperation focuses on two key elements: economic and commercial cooperation, and development cooperation'. The differing categories of 'third worldness' are reinforced as the paper segregates Least Developed States from ACP states and the landlocked states.

There is ample evidence that the link or connection between liberalised, Western business language and development has made its way into more commonplace, frequently used and read media.

The *allafrica.com* news agency has comments from throughout the continent that mention Western or First World development aid but couch it in terms more reminiscent of business economics. One example, from *BuaNews*, Pretoria, dating from 27 May 2002, noted that 'South Africa and the US are unanimous in their belief that sustainable economic growth is a critical prerequisite for the development of the economics of developing countries'. The political identity of Howarth and the categorisation of Van Dijk are in evidence here. The story links the two countries together in partnership but also links development with neoliberal business economics through-

out the piece and thus helps create the premise of 'partnership development economics'; this is the connection between sentences as identified by Van Dijk. The story brings in neoliberal regime formation (New Partnership for Africa's Development; NEPAD) and its unspoken link with good governance and economics and a 'sound climate for productive investment and enterprise.' Business-style language is used throughout. The fourth paragraph links the regime with development and then links partnership together with aid effectiveness and integration into the regional and global economy.

Civil society is not so certain about the link between neoliberal globalisation and development. On the same day, the *Mail and Guardian* in Johannesburg suggested that 'NEPAD has been imposed on the continent by the few governments and elites, supported by the countries of the North and the Bretton Woods Institutions. Africa and her people have not been involved in devising this path of development'.¹⁶ This comment and others that follow are a clear indication that Africa outside of the elites in government have noticed and care about the whole process. The adoption of regime formation which is associated closely with liberalisation shows that several governments in Africa have taken on the same political ideas and identity (Howarth) as those of the 'First World', but there is clearly another group of disaffected Africans who feel they have not been involved in the decision.

The civil society group called Indaba (claiming to include rural and urban communities, youth, women, First Nations Indigenous People and some NGOs) criticises NEPAD because it 'embraces the forces of neoliberal globalisation and promotes these forces as a cure for Africa's ills, while at the same time embracing the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation'. Indaba claims NEPAD will 'push Africa and her people further into poverty, ill health, hunger and marginalisation'¹⁷ and sees the policies of NEPAD as private sector development, privatisation, free trade and promoting market orientated agriculture. Have some governments in the SADC region acquiesced to the 'Western' and EU point of view to remain in favour and in receipt of aid? If so, it seems obvious that these particular governments have not consulted the people they represent.

The EU is also linking free trade with development. *Business Day* in Johannesburg ran a story entitled 'EU Touts Increased SA Exports as a Sign of Trade Areas Success'. It goes on to say:

The European Union (EU) has pounced on figures showing a 50% surge in SA exports to the EU in the past two years as a sign that the free trade area (FTA) between Europe and SA, which began in January 2000, is beginning to bring benefits.¹⁸

Deloitte and Touche, however, think that the value of the South African rand may have had a lot to do with it and that 'it wasn't just because the FTA was launched at the beginning of 2000'.¹⁹

In a previous story in the *Mail and Guardian* (Johannesburg, May 2002) Lorentzen, an associate professor of international business in Denmark, writes, 'Lenny Elliot writes in "Global rules fit the rich", April 19th, that the rich countries are interested in free trade only when it suits themselves'. Lorentzen goes on to say that 'preaching the gospel of liberalisation, the European Union, the United States and the other usual suspects effectively run the global economy like a racket'.²⁰

Thus there is a variety of evidence from a variety of sources to show the very direct link between the partnership idea claimed by the EU and that of the neoliberal globalisation process with its links to economic development. There is also evidence to suggest that many people in Africa do not like this approach to development and thus a problem and imbalance exists in what is supposed to be an equal partnership.

Kiely and Marfleet²¹ assert that 'development since 1945 (or earlier) has in many respects failed'. Abrahamsen²² also says that development is 'widely perceived to have failed'. He comments that general explanations for this 'maintain a strict internal/external dichotomy that is no longer an accurate or useful description'.²³ He follows this immediately by stating that conventional explanations ignore the power of discourse' and 'neglect ... the knowledge/power nexus'. The claim to 'state of the art knowledge' and the use of economic power to bring neoliberal globalisation to developing regions is directly paralleled by Edward Said in *Orientalism*,²⁴ when he notes a 'systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage and even produce the orient'. Abrahamsen goes on to note that 'over the years development discourse has achieved the status of "truth"' and 'the identities of development have instilled a degree of inferiority'.²⁵ Is the continual reinforcement of the binary opposition between equal partnership and domination and that of development versus neoliberal

globalisation, promoted by the EU, achieving the status of truth and is it truly an equal partnership or is it inflicting a degree of subordination?

Gilbert Rist²⁶ comments on development discourse and says its strength is 'to charm, to please, to fascinate, to set dreaming but also to abuse, to turn away from the truth'. Is this what the EU is doing with its claim to equal partnership and participation? Foucault²⁷ asks, 'Whom does discourse serve?' In this case it can be argued that the EU has constructed a discourse to charm and please the SADC countries but in reality to serve itself. According to Rabinow,²⁸ 'Foucault is highly suspicious of claims to universal truths', which is what the EU appears to be promoting when the same sort of policy is applied to all areas.

The third paper from among the official EU literature to be analysed here, 'African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP). Cotonou Agreement'²⁹ refers to the ACP and the Cotonou Agreement, the latest convention between the EU and the particular part of the developing world that it claims to have a special historic relationship with. The first objective of the paper is 'to create a new framework for cooperation'. Again, the ideal of working together is put forward but quickly tempered with 'adapted to the new global situation', with economic development coming before social or cultural. In part three, the summary, the main objectives are stated as first 'reduction and eventual eradication of poverty' and then 'gradual integration of ACP countries into the global economy'. This again links development and reduction of poverty to the process of globalisation. It suggests that development is inherently about cash and not about well-being. The paper claims that the Cotonou Agreement has three main dimensions: first, politics, second, trade and third, development. If development of the people is most important, why is it last in the list? The 'Pillars of the partnership' can be examined to see that 'politics' comes before 'participatory' and 'poverty reduction' and that the other two pillars of partnership are 'economic and trade cooperation' and 'reform of financial cooperation'. When examined in more detail, it is seen that pillars like 'participatory' are broken down into the 'private sector' and 'economic partnerships'. The next paragraph employs language similar to that used in business management.

The section on themes and 'crosscutting issues' again uses terms

such as 'management' and 'institutional', and continues in a similar manner. Section 9 talks about bringing the financial agreements 'into line with WTO rules', despite the weakness of many relatively small African economies. The weakness is suggested and reinforced by the reminder that the EU is dealing with 'the least developed ACP states'.

The idea of payment for results or achievement also appears in the Cotonou Agreement, again couched in terms that sound as if they come from a business dictionary.

The system for programming aid is centred on results. Financial assistance of a set amount is no longer an automatic right. Grants are allocated on the basis of an assessment of requirements and performance according to criteria negotiated between the EU and the ACP countries. This appears to be a case of two political camps agreeing to move forward in the same direction, but the question that must be asked is whether the aid would have been forthcoming if the ACP had not agreed to the said criteria. This sounds more like the relationship that exists between an employer and an employee rather than between equal partners in a development process. The national indicative programmes of Lesotho and Mozambique both manifest this link between cooperation, partnership and participation and neoliberal, globalising, Western business-style free market management. The underlying suggestion seems to be that 'we know best', so do it our way – and the performance-related statements seem to provide the 'or else' part of this statement. This sounds very much like the comment from Pablo Gutman at the WWF mentioned above.

THE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN LESOTHO AND BRUSSELS AND MOZAMBIQUE AND BRUSSELS

This chapter examines the partnership relationship that is supposed to exist between the European Union and the relevant authorities in Lesotho. The position in Mozambique is then used to confirm or refute any problems or issues within the relationship in general. Issues that come to light during interviews conducted in Lesotho should be replicated by the experience in Mozambique. In order to look at the relationship between Lesotho and the EU, it is appropriate to examine their positions relative to each other: thus a short review of Lesotho, its economy and its aid and trade relationship with the EU is apposite.

Lesotho: Background

Within sub-Saharan Africa, Lesotho's position is unique. Small in population with about 2.2 million people and about 30,344 square kilometres in area, it is landlocked, mountainous and surrounded by South Africa – the region's largest economy. Lesotho ranks 132 out of 174 countries on the UNDP's Human Development Index and belongs to the group of Least Developed Countries (LDC). HIV/AIDS prevalence is estimated to be around 31 per cent of the population aged 15–49 and spreading fast. Lesotho has few exploitable resources, strictly limited agricultural potential and people who have developed a strong culture of wage employment.

It is one of the world's poorest countries with a GDP of US\$746.5 million (2002), a real GDP growth estimated at 3.8 per cent in 2002

and a GDP per capita estimated at \$328. Estimates indicate that GDP originates at 44.4 per cent from industry (construction 22.7 per cent and manufacturing 15.8 per cent), 38.6 per cent from services and 16.9 per cent from agriculture. The strong GDP growth has been led by expansion in the manufacturing sector and related construction activity. Inflation decreased from 11.1 per cent in 2002 to 6.5 per cent in 2003, despite the introduction of VAT in July 2003 and the balance of payment has improved significantly in the early 2000s. A rapid increase in manufacturing exports has more than compensated for the decline in miners' remittances from South Africa. Exports to the European Union represented 1.2 per cent of total exports in 2003.

Lesotho has diplomatic relations with over 70 countries and is an active member of SADC. Lesotho has been a signatory of Lomé and Cotonou conventions between the EU and ACP countries. Relations between Lesotho and the EU are good. The Lesotho/EU Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme for the 9th EDF¹ was signed on 16 September 2002 and proposed the road and water/sanitation supply sectors and macro-economic support as focal sectors. The overall indicative allocation for the 9th EDF amounts to €110 million with the focal areas of water/sanitation and road transport each receiving up to 20 per cent of the total. Within the water and sanitation section the objective was to improve the standard of living of the rapidly urbanising population, through the provision of domestic and industrial water in the urban and periurban areas of the country. Specific interventions included capacity building and education activities in public and private sectors in respect of water supply and waste water treatment and the augmentation of water supply and sanitation facilities in six towns in the Lesotho lowlands.

The relative importance of Lesotho to the European Union's trade with the rest of the world is demonstrated in the two tables below, with all figures obtained from the EU desk officer for Lesotho.²

European Union trade with the world (million euro)

Year	Imports	Yearly % change	Exports	Yearly % change	Balance	Imports + Exports
2000	995.649		856.728		-138.921	1.852.377
2001	983.439	-1.2	892.716	4.2	-90.724	1.876.155
2002	941.570	-4.3	900.389	0.9	-41.181	1.841.959
2003	940.405	-0.1	878.646	-2.4	-61.759	1.819.050
2004	1.029.326	9.5	963.709	9.7	-65.617	1.993.035
Average annual growth		0.8		3.0		1.8

This table of figures can be compared with the one below to demonstrate the relative importance of Lesotho to the EU and therefore the asymmetrical partnership between them based on economic importance.

Year	Imports Million euro	Yearly % change	Exports Million euro	Yearly % change	Balance Million euro	Imports + Exports
2000	23		7		-15	30
2001	18	-22.6	12	61.9	-6	30
2002	10	-42.0	11	-7.7	1	22
2003	6	-44.6	20	77.1	14	26
2004	24	318.8	16	-21.5	-8	40
Average annual growth		1.0		20.1		6.7

With the statistical relative weakness of Lesotho established, it is appropriate to include evidence gathered during elite interviews.

This research was carried out in February 2003. The nationality and position of each interviewee will be noted, as this may reflect a particular point of view.

Over the previous months, contact had been made with the EU delegation in Maseru, Lesotho, and appointments made for interviews. All the people in this delegation were very welcoming and extremely helpful and a series of interviews were arranged with various officials throughout the town. The EU officers made many suggestions of useful people to see after being made aware of my areas of interest and the telephone receptionist at the EU delegation made

all the introductory phone calls to the offices of these officials. I believe this to have been particularly beneficial in securing meetings at relatively short notice with politicians, opposition members and officers of government departments. The relative power and influence of the EU delegation in Lesotho was clearly displayed (particularly when compared with the same procedure which was carried out in Maputo, Mozambique, at a later date), and was used initially to my advantage in the interviews, which were very quickly secured. This did lead to several interviewees thinking I was from the EU and led to them making an immediate comment that the relationship with the EU was good. When I informed the interviewee of my actual position, the interviews became much more candid.

There was a consistent format to all the interviews (except when talking to 'villagers'). I always began by explaining exactly who I was, to clear up any misunderstanding, and began the interviews with a general open-ended question, as suggested by Anderson and Jack (see methodology section), along the lines of: 'What do you think of the relationship between yourself/your department, etc., and the EU?'

Notes were taken during the interview, direct quotes written down immediately and verified with the interviewee, recapitulated fully at the conclusion of the meeting and then checked and written out immediately afterwards, following the advice of Kvale discussed in the methodology section.

This following section contains evidence from interviews conducted in Lesotho and later Mozambique (see Appendix 1). In these interviews the previous style of prose is put to one side in favour of a style of notetaking. This style is more appropriate to the interview situation as it emphasises the 'stop and start' nature of an interview, the change in direction of the conversation, allows for the highlighting of direct quotes and brings to the fore any specific points made. Interviewees were selected by the author and in consultation with the EU officials at the delegations in Lesotho and Mozambique. We discussed appropriate departments and ministries, and the relevant officials to interview. The purpose of these interviews was to gain insight into the working relationship between the EU and the officials on the ground in Lesotho (rather than simply with politicians at a political level) and later in Mozambique. Interview one represented a person working for the EU but sympathetic to the local situation and who was clearly

somewhat disillusioned with the asymmetrical nature of the relationship, hence his desire to remain anonymous. The next four interviews were with officials who interact regularly with the EU in their capacities as officials in the Water and Sewerage Authority, the Water Sector Coordinating Unit of SADC, the Rural Water Supply and as an expert in the Micro Projects scheme. These gave their versions of the day-to-day working relationship with the EU both practically within Lesotho and in their dealings with 'officialdom' in Brussels. The next section of interviews provides evidence of the relationship with the EU at a different level. It includes an interview with a minister from the office of the Prime Minister and also with other politicians who were members of opposition parties, one of whom had been minister of finance and had direct dealings with the EU. The ninth interview was with the National Authorising Officer, a position created by the EU to facilitate its relationship with aid recipients. This was in an attempt to gain a different perspective – that of a native of Lesotho but with some affiliation, attachment or obligation to the EU. Finally, in Lesotho a local officer of the Water and Sewerage Authority provided a tour of a particular project and allowed for limited translated conversations with water users, who gave their opinions of their experience of the project within their town.

Every interview began with an explanation of my position, primarily to make clear to the interviewee that I was not from the EU and that they could speak freely about the EU and their relationship with it. Immediately after this I asked a question along the lines of: 'So, what do you think of the relationship, the working relationship with the EU, the officials and the paper work or the system you have to deal with?' The actual words varied according to the level of English displayed by the interviewee. Conclusions from interviews conducted in Lesotho were reinforced by evidence gathered in Mozambique.

Lesotho Interviews

Interview 1: EU technical advisor

The first interview conducted was with an EU official of European origin, also a technical advisor, in the EU delegation in Lesotho. He wished to remain anonymous, as some of his comments contradicted standard EU statements.

In discussing any problems that he knew of he mentioned nepotism, and then said the country had no middle class and thus no civil service. He linked this suggestion of nepotism to the EU position on good governance. Many commentators noted the lack of human capacity in certain countries. The political identities that Howarth identifies are here and the categorisation of Van Dijk in the suggestions of an 'us and them'. Here the implication is that this nepotism could not possibly happen in the First World, and that the First World possesses good governance but Lesotho lacks it. He extended his argument to what he called 'the brain drain' and said that many educated people from Lesotho go to work in South Africa because the salaries there are so much better. The problem of appropriate salaries for officials in Lesotho and Mozambique, when compared with 'First World' technical advisors, is mentioned in other interviews, especially in Mozambique.

The discussion moved on to the negotiations that had taken place between Lesotho and South Africa over the Lesotho Highlands Water Project in which Lesotho, according to the interviewee, had done very well. He noted these negotiations because of the inequality in the power relationship, which was weighted in favour of South Africa as it is the more powerful of the two states. At this point he said, 'The negotiations are similar with the EU'. Thus a well-informed source in the EU had confirmed that the muchvaunted equal partnership was at the very least open to question.

This official said that all the power was concentrated in Brussels and that the power of the delegates had been taken away (returned to Brussels). This is perhaps evidence of Howarth's 'political identities', with the EU dividing itself into two groups, one in Brussels and one in the delegations. He talked about the devolvement of power to the delegations – as a more postmodern approach to development would suggest – but went on to say that it would cost about 50 per cent more. He suggested that the EU should be supporting local industries and creating jobs so that the local government could raise tax revenues.

On the question of macro policies versus the more postmodern idea of locality, he was in favour of the general rules being adapted to fit each locality: 'It's not breaking or bending the rules, its applying them to each country.' He went on to suggest that the EU is 'doing what makes the system work – that's not a country', implying that the EU system was more important than the recipient country.

The official favoured greater power being given to EU officers in delegations as he believed their greater knowledge of the local situation would be beneficial, thus supporting a more postmodern development point of view.

When discussing the point that the EU tried to dictate certain policies or a more neoliberal approach, he said, 'We can't change these countries', thus again presenting evidence of Van Dijk's political groupings and evidence relating to Howarth's hegemonic practices.

The argument of inequality again reared its head when talking about the Ministry of Finance in its negotiations over EDF 9.

The Western or First World point of view of neoliberal regime formation was commented on in a favourable way. The interviewee believed that NEPAD and AGOA were both good things, but he had no comment on whether the African elites were 'selling out' as opposed to really believing this was the way to go.

To examine the effectiveness of the relationship between the EU and the SADC countries through the case studies of Lesotho and Mozambique, it is valuable to examine the comments of interviewees in both countries, as well as those in Brussels, to search for areas of agreement and disagreement, to look for evidence whether the much-vaunted partnership claimed by the EU is working or not working. Has this partnership approach strengthened or improved the relationship, or is it causing disagreement and conflict? Is it reinforcing the position of the EU as a powerful First World entity and the positions of Lesotho and Mozambique as poor Third World countries reliant on the goodwill of the wealthier, more powerful partner? Or is the EU genuinely seeking, creating and perfecting the best system of dealing with aid dispersal in a partnership where each 'side' respects the other in equal measure?

In order to examine this relationship, there are various positions to consider. Firstly, there is the position of the EU as set out in the selected published documents; these put the argument that has run through development thinking, of true partnership between donor and recipient within the bounds of an equal relationship. These papers were examined previously in this work and set up the binary position suggested earlier. The second position is that of the EU officers living and working in Lesotho and Mozambique, who can see the position proposed by the EU and also the responses of the African countries. Their unique position provided insight into the situations in their specific countries and perhaps by extension in

other SADC countries. Then there is the position of the various African officials who are on the 'receiving end' of the 'equal partnership'.

Interview 2: Lesothan engineer (WASA)

The second interview was with Mr Kulam, a native of Lesotho, the deputy to the director of engineering at the Water and Sewage Authority (WASA). This official was very knowledgeable about the Six Towns Project (see below) and said that initially at least he saw his department's negotiations with the EU as favourable. He said, 'We get to say what projects to do'. This seemed to suit the officials in Lesotho as it made them feel like equal participants in the partnership; perhaps this giving of choice contributes to the feeling of partnership. He did add that the EU 'push environmentalism', which he resented, and said he felt he was being dictated to. Depending on the point of view taken, this is either the EU being concerned for its partners in this venture or a project leader using the power he has to push his own agenda. Mr Kulam followed this by saying that his department had to adapt its principles, rules and regulations to fit what the EU wanted. He appreciated that some of this may be to ensure that any work is a technical match, but sometimes he clearly felt that the powerful 'boss' (his word) was having the final say. He also said, 'They don't like it when we do things our own way. They only like it if you do it their way.' This seems to point to a relationship of 'us and them' or 'uppers and lowers', as Chambers would put it, and Howarth would point to this as evidence of hegemonic practice.

At this point Mr Kulam clearly said, 'If you don't do what they want, they wouldn't finance you ... if you don't follow their rules, it is taken away'. This again calls into question a partnership that is supposed to be between equal partners. The EU maintains that the recipients of aid should feel that they 'own' any development within their country – but this is clearly very difficult to achieve if ownership is so closely tied to the finances involved. From the point of view of the EU, this is merely asking a recipient to follow procedures, but Mr Kulam clearly saw it as a threat used to keep him and his department in line. The respective perceptions of partners in a partnership must surely be considered for the said partnership to be considered a success; thus perhaps more work needs to be done in initially explaining the EU rules and why they exist, so that

recipients of aid do not feel threatened or dictated to. Mr Kulam's position clearly demonstrates Van Dijk's political groupings and the categorisation, political identities and hegemonic practices identified by Howarth.

Mr Kulam commented that the EU generally respected his department's expertise, but he did add, 'They try to run things for you'. Here Mr Kulam did not see this as the EU being helpful but rather as them interfering (his word). He felt he was not trusted to do the job at hand. Surely, if a partnership is to be equal, all the participants should feel equally respected?

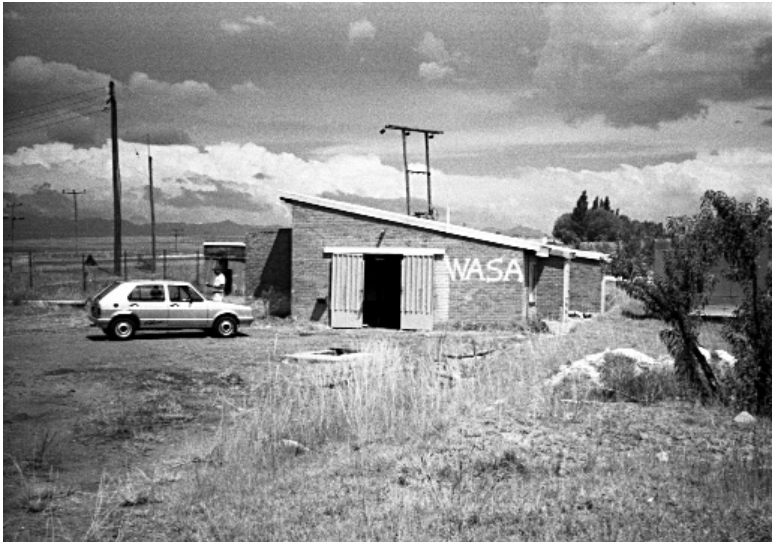
Mr Kulam gave an example from his experience of dealing with the EU on phase one of the Six Towns Project. His department wanted to proceed with a particular design, but the EU pushed for a different design, even though the local people knew there were problems with the EU design. Mr Kulam said that his department expressed their opinion and 'pushed them to agree', but the EU was not interested. He believed the problem was rooted in the costs of each design (the WASA department design was the more expensive of the two) and that eventually intervention from Brussels made the local EU engineer come round to the same point of view as his department.

Mr Kulam was very helpful in enabling me to see a working project at the town of Teyateyaneng (TY). He contacted the local WASA official in TY and arranged for him to give me a guided tour of the water project.

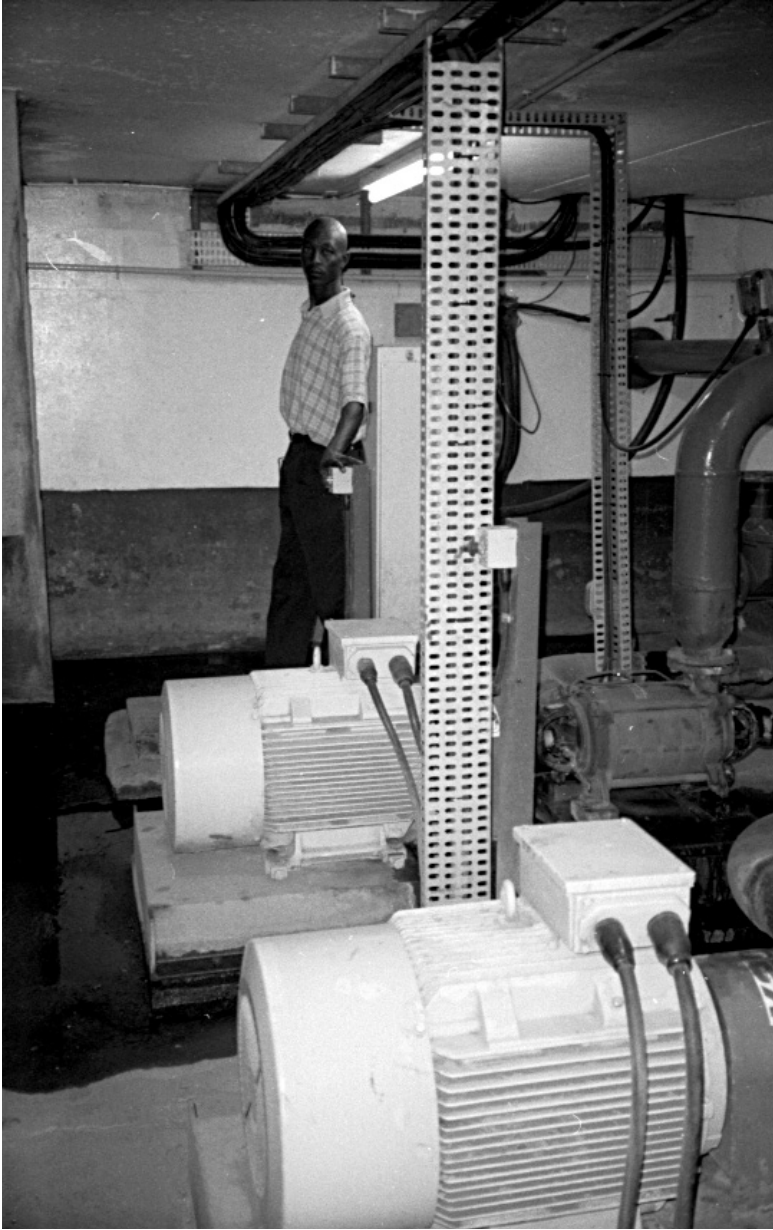
Mr Kulam seemed initially to be fully supportive of the claim of equal partnership between his organisation and the EU, and of a good working relationship between the two parties. His statement about Lesothans choosing which projects to do seems to support the idea of local ownership of projects and again allows for a feeling of respect between partners. However, he immediately went on to make several statements indicating what he saw as the 'bullying' and 'high handed' tactics of a hegemonic authority that clearly does not support equal partnership. Mr Kulam suggested that the EU respected their technical expertise – an opinion reflected by other interviewees – thus the suggestion of equal partnership with respect for each other at this technical level, but evidence of problems at a higher, more political, level. This interviewee also clearly stated several times that he felt the EU was using its financial power to push a weaker partner around.



Original method of extraction: small pipe from bridge into river (in centre of picture), with local WASA officer



Pumping station beside river that supplies water to Teyateyaneng, Lesotho, with local WASA officer



Pumps inside pumping station Teyateyaneng, Lesotho, with local WASA officer

Interview 3: Head of SADC Water Sector Coordinating Unit

The Southern African Development Community Water Sector Coordinating Unit (SADC WSCU) is run by a native African, Phera Ramoeli, the third interviewee. As its name suggests, this is a department within the SADC organisation to coordinate water policy across the whole of Southern Africa. Mr Ramoeli commented that his organisation's policy was to encourage countries to share water for peace and integration. This reflects closely the new security accepted at the Second World Water Forum, which is: 'At any level from the household to the global, means that every person has access to enough water at affordable cost to lead a clean, healthy and productive life, whilst ensuring the natural environment is protected and enhanced.' This definition is used, and therefore presumably accepted, by the EU in a *Commissioned Staff Working Paper*, Annex to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament (com [2002] 132 final).³ This common approach is evidence of a good relationship that works between equal partners.

With reference to this relationship with the EU, Mr Ramoeli noted that 'previously it was poor, but it is improving a lot'. He suggested that this was because 'perhaps [having a] definite water sector has made it better'; 'having a 'clear programme has made it better ... their attitude has changed, probably because of the improved infrastructure'. This is clear evidence that the regime formation as suggested by the neoliberalism pushed by the EU and the Washington Consensus has been adopted by certain areas of the African bureaucracy. Again the question remains as to whether SADC formed the WSCU because they truly believed it was the best thing to do or whether it was because of external pressure from the EU.

Mr Ramoeli noted that the EU had said that water must be a priority but that some countries were not so sure, and then he extended this point to say, 'You have to agree with them to get the support'. This seems to be evidence of an unequal relationship and of an unspoken threat.

Thus, while Mr Ramoeli made several references to the improved quality of the partnership – thus supporting the EU claims – he still qualified his comments with some evidence of the hegemonic power of the EU. So his comments both supported and refuted the EU claim to the working partnership between equals.

Interview 4: Director of Rural Water Supply, Lesotho

Mr Khabo, the Director of Rural Water Supply and a native African, said his department had had dealings with the EU in the past and suggested that it would happen again with more European Development Funding projects coming in the near future. In contrast to many others interviewed, he said he felt that the EU 'don't have strict rules'. He added that, as far as general procedure is concerned, his office prepares projects and if it is within the value of the agreement, 'then it is OK'. Mr Khabo suggested that any problems that existed tended to be on a technical level and were related to 'little differences in choices of system'. He gave an example of the attitude of the people in the EU. His department had discussed with the EU a water supply system and the relative merits of water catchment systems (favoured by the EU at the time) in contrast to boreholes and pumps (favoured by his department). Mr Khabo said he thought the EU was against his department's ideas because they were too expensive. Initially the EU forced the issue and water catchment systems were tried. When it became evident that his department's system would work better in a particular area, the EU accepted it, but 'not with a very good smile on their face'. This suggests that the EU did not really take any notice of local knowledge or expertise and that they tried to dictate a course of action and were embarrassed when proved wrong. This is further evidence of the 'us and them' syndrome, indicative of how at least some people in the EU treat the recipients of aid. It is not indicative of two equal partners working together in a friendly relationship. Mr Khabo placed things in context by saying that other aid donors are worse than the EU.

Mr Khabo revealed interesting insights into the relationship between his department and the EU. He was pleased that his department could choose and prepare projects and he saw this as evidence of respect and equality between the partners. His example of agreement or disagreement over the choice of system to be used in a particular project seemed for him to sum up the historical relationship between the EU and his department. Mr Khabo suggested that in this case (cited above) the EU did not like the African solution to the problem, perhaps because it was more expensive, and tried to push forward their own solution. This tendency to make a decision on financial grounds, regardless of whether it is actually the best decision, is mentioned below by

another interviewee in Mozambique. The EU had to be shown that the African solution was better before they would accept it, and according to Mr Khabo, it was not accepted with good grace. This seems to indicate several points. One, that money is the driving force in the partnership – and that as the EU has the money they believe they can dictate on projects. Secondly, it suggests that the EU does not really respect and listen to local knowledge and expertise – evidence of hegemonic practice and even a colonial attitude; this attitude was later refuted in an interview with Glenys Kinnock in Brussels. The inability to accept the local solution when it was proved to be best does not support a claim to a respectful relationship between equal partners but seems more like the response of a humiliated bully who has been ‘caught out’. Thus again this interview yielded a mixed bag of evidence that both supports and refutes the EU claim to equality.

Interview 5: Technical assistant, Micro Projects office

Mr Monteforte, a European, was the technical assistant at the EDF-Funded Micro Projects office in Lesotho. He said that the local community puts in requests for micro projects and that he works with local partners to bring them to fruition. He said that some work was contracted to the government and paid for by the EDF and that he was 100 per cent in favour of complete empowerment and capacity building in local communities, noting that ‘my aim is to make myself redundant’. Mr Monteforte noted that the EU was good at delivering the financial help needed but not good at the process involved. He suggested that the system should give more decision-making power to the EU delegations in the country itself, and that he had heard from colleagues in other African countries (he said Nigeria, South Africa and either Kenya or Ethiopia but could not be sure) that this was beginning to happen. He ended by saying that the EU should try to improve the efficiency of the implementation and improve the relationship with government and civil society. Here it seems that a greater feeling of a working partnership is in place with all partners feeling respected; perhaps it is simply because of the much smaller amounts of money involved that the EU is less inclined to oversee. So in reality, even this instance of seeming equality is not actually proof of a good relationship overall because it is only relevant to smaller, perhaps less significant projects. I believe that it could be a good starting point

for the expansion of the equal working relationship into other, larger and more important areas.

Political interviewees

The next series of interviews were with officials from various political parties in Lesotho. Their focus was slightly different from the previous interviews because of their positions of authority, in some cases, and their position of opposition to the government, in other cases. There was much more concentration on the issue of good governance, particularly from the opposition parties.

Interview 6: Senior Lesotho government official

Mr Motanyane, a native African, was a minister in the Prime Minister's office and a senior member of government. He suggested he would like party-to-party negotiations with the EU, because 'the parties are not very well organised and this affects the relationship with the EU'. He thought that the EU should help with the party infrastructure to help modernise the party system and the political parties themselves, which he suggested were still somewhat stuck in the old 'freedom fight against colonialism'. Howarth's political parties can be identified; there is the EU, the Lesotho government and Mr Motanyane's addition of 'the other parties'. Van Dijk's political groups are in evidence, together with a look into the past to historical political groupings in the colonial era. Does the minister mean to suggest that the EU still has a debt to repay; if so, it changes somewhat the weightings of the dominant and subservient relationship with the EU.

Mr Motanyane said that his government had inherited the negotiated position with the EU wherein water and road transport were the basics on which the EU focused most of their attention. He would like help from the EU to search for minerals and suggested that diamonds had been found in Lesotho for decades, even hundreds of years.

When discussing the relationship with the EU, Mr Motanyane said, 'The relationship is excellent but needs to be deepened'. A good politician's answer, which he then qualified by adding 'ample space for improvement, to get to know our culture, systems and so on, our way of doing things'. Is this a comment on the EU's lack of cultural sensitivity or a vague hint that the EU still dominates the relationship and ignores the 'local'? Mr Motanyane ended by saying

there was 'not sufficient interaction' with the EU.

Mr Motanyane's suggestion that the EU should be more involved at the party political level perhaps links closely to the EU's demands for good governance, which springs from the neoliberalism preached by the Washington Consensus. This desire for the EU to help 'modernise the party infrastructure' perhaps comes from the working knowledge of a politician in government; however, the EU would have to be especially cautious to avoid being accused of interference in the internal politics of an independent state. This must be contrasted with what can be seen as the desire to impose Western neoliberal values and democracy onto the states the EU deals with.

***Interview 7: Opposition politician and former
finance minister***

The relative importance of the EU is perhaps evidenced by the fact that both the following interviewees came to the EU building for the interview at my suggestion.

Mr Maope (native African) left the government to form the relatively small Lesotho People's Congress Party. He was the former minister of finance in the party of government. He left the government to form his own party because he said the government administration had collapsed and there was a problem with dishonesty; he gave an example of fixing the results of votes. I believe this was a reference to good governance, which the EU is consistently mentioning, and a criticism of the party he left.

In discussing the relationship between the EU and Lesotho, he used the phrase 'political demands from the EU'. He then tempered the word 'demands' by saying 'political changes suggested by the EU'. He went on to say that they (the EU) are 'well intentioned ... but it can't happen the way they want'. He gave two examples where problems had arisen. On the issue of gender, Mr Maope said the EU demands reform, but he suggested that 'the debate is unjust'. He suggested that the EU presumed Lesotho (and other countries?) to be sexist in favour of males, but he pointed out that more women than men are educated in Lesotho. He said it was cultural and historical as boys traditionally were sent to the countryside to look after cattle and in their late teens went to South Africa to work in the mines. Thus more girls attend school than boys; according to him, the university has more women than men, and

in the civil service, women have at least an equal share of the positions. Mr Maope contends that the EU's 'debate is unjust ... It should be justice not just feminism'. I believe that Mr Maope saw the EU making a macro-position statement and attempting to enforce it unilaterally and hegemonically without regard to the local situation (Howarth's hegemonic practices.)

His second example related to land reform. He believed it was needed and it was coming. He agreed with this but said that the initial elements were not in place and suggested that financial assistance should be provided to make compensation available to people who lose land because, as he noted, 'land is part of our culture'. In both these examples he noted the 'unreasonable demands by the EU' and mentioned a lack of local awareness on the part of the EU.

Mr Maope suggested that the procedures of the EU were difficult to understand and said that he believed aid was difficult to get because of Brussels' bureaucratic approach. However, he noted that as the former Minister of Finance his opinion was sought; he appreciated this and this feeling of well-being demonstrates that this was the right way to proceed. He suggested that educated Basotho who had been influenced by the West were beginning to change the legal system. He believed, however, that the traditional system should not be abandoned yet because there is 'value in our culture which should be preserved, but you fear the demands of the EU may cause them to be forgotten'.

Mr Maope said 'the EU is valued', but he went on to suggest that they should try to work through persuasion. The point he is making here is similar to his initial point referring to the 'demands' of the EU. This is evidence of Van Dijk and Kintsch's connections between sentences and paragraphs commented on in the previous chapter.

Mr Maope gave an example of a bad working relationship when he was the Minister of Finance, relating to a visit from an official from Brussels who was there to present a report or contract. Mr Maope said, 'It's supposed to be a negotiation, but it's not – just sign it ... When you question the content, there is the implied threat that you will lose out.' He suggested that the visiting official gave him the impression that since the EU lawyers had written it, it must be acceptable. Mr Maope was clearly making a point about an unequal partnership, a feeling of being dictated to, and was per-

haps looking over his shoulder to the colonial era. He finished this point by saying, 'It's the position of poor countries; it's an unequal partnership'.

Mr Maope concluded by giving suggestions for the future of Lesotho's relationship with the EU. He spoke about traditional African lack of centralised democracy but noted that the EU deals with government. He suggested the EU could do more and be more effective if it dealt more extensively with NGOs and civil society, which he said already existed in the villages and local cooperatives. He also reinforced the issue of gender being linked to the implied threat of aid withdrawal.

Interview 8: Opposition leaders

The next meeting was with Mr Lekhanya, leader of the Basotho National Party (BNP), the main opposition to government, and Mr Sekonyana, deputy leader of the party. During a previous military coup against the elected government, Mr Lekhanya had been the general who became the military leader.

Both BNP officials suggested that the relationship between the EU and Lesotho was quite healthy. They agreed that water and road transport were good priorities but suggested health should be considered.

These two officials from the main opposition party clearly had 'an axe to grind', or points to make with reference to the current party in power. They suggested that the relationship with the EU is 'lacking in the good governance area'. They said the EU gives aid to the government, but they suggested the government uses the aid to influence the people in order to get their votes. Did they just say this because they are in opposition, or is it precisely because they are in opposition that they are more aware of good governance issues? They are saying that the aid is not evenly distributed and therefore discrimination is occurring. They believe the EU should be aware of this and should address it. They continued by saying that district-level and constituent-level positions are overwhelmingly dominated by the ruling party's people and believed that these positions should be inclusive of all parties. So they again asked the question of the aid: 'Does it reach every Basotho?' They linked this to civil society by saying, 'All aid projects should include the participation of all parties and sectors of the community, but they don't'.

They offered a second example relating to good governance.

Apparently, clothing donated to the Roman Catholic Church in Lesotho was stopped at the border. The Catholic Church was told to pay an import tax and then sales tax was added of approximately another ten per cent, which the local Catholic Church could not pay. Therefore, the government confiscated the clothing and gave it to its own people. They also suggested that in the Lesotho government, aid is lost because it is not used in time. 'The government would rather lose it than give it someone who is equally competent but of a different political party.' They added that a variety of things had been donated, but that the government and its party always had first choice. They gave the example of wheelchairs from the Aid 2 Africa charity (they showed a report from November 2002 as an item of proof.) They added a further example of the theft of cooking oil from Irish Aid. These officials were clearly attacking the government of the day but suggested that the EU should find out from the government the way things are distributed. 'Is it inclusive of all or distributed along party lines?' They compared the corruption in Lesotho to that of Mugabe in Zimbabwe, supporting his own party by rewarding his own people and denying others. The interview moved on to a discussion relating to traditional African nepotism as opposed to the EU's request for good governance. They noted this but added: 'You have to blend modernity with custom, tradition and heritage. A gradual merging not an immediate demand.' The main opposition party had managed to make several points relating to good governance but had also managed to attack the party in government at the same time. They moved the argument on by saying: 'The lack of good governance is creating disillusionment in the political system. The people have no faith in the political process.' The discussion continued and made the argument that the next step, after having no faith in the political process, could be civil unrest, internal security problems and perhaps external security problems. These were interesting comments coming from an ex-general who led a military coup; however, they do relate closely to EU ideals of democracy and civil society. The two men ended by suggesting there could be some sort of forum where these issues were discussed by NGOs, civil society, the EU and the government. They wanted 'more monitoring around the issues of good governance'.

Mr Lekhanya and Mr Sekonyana made several comments relating to good governance issues which they linked to the EU. Initially they said the relationship with the EU was quite healthy, further

supporting the EU claim of a good working partnership. They further agreed that water and roads were good priorities. However, after this promising start, they became critical of issues they linked to the topic of good governance. It should be noted that the party these men represent was in opposition and hence it was their job to criticise the current government. Whilst they gave several examples of good or poor governance, it must be remembered that they may simply have a 'personal, party political axe to grind'. Furthermore, the question arises of whether they would be involved in similar issues if they were in government.

These people wanted greater involvement from the EU in the political processes of Lesotho and claimed this was because the current government was not living up to the ideals of good governance. They suggested the EU aid given to the government was used by the government and distributed unfairly to influence the people of Lesotho and to gain their votes. They claimed that officialdom at various levels was controlled by the ruling party and that this affected the distribution of aid, which they believed should be organised with the participation of all parties and communities. The two men suggested that the EU should more closely monitor aid distribution, perhaps with the involvement of civil society, and that as the EU does not do this, the relationship was not really working well enough.

The two interviewees mentioned the confiscation and redistribution on party lines of aid donations by the Catholic Church; they said that the government would rather lose aid than have it go to someone of a different party. They alleged that a variety of things had been donated, but that the ruling party and its people had first choice. They gave further examples of wheelchairs and cooking oil. They said they thought the EU should carry out much more monitoring of good governance than it does at present. Thus, from their point of view, the partnership definitely had at least one major area of weakness and was not working as well as it could.

The interview moved on to compare the EU idea of good governance with the traditional African 'nepotism' often in evidence. Their suggestion to counter this was that there should be a gradual blending of modernity with custom, tradition and heritage; they suggested that the EU 'demand' is too immediate. Again the use of the word 'demand' points to a relationship with a more powerful partner who does not respect the other and uses its leverage to

dominate them. The two men rounded off this section by saying that the lack of good governance is creating disillusionment in the political system and suggesting that the people of Lesotho have no faith in the political process. This led the discussion on to civil unrest, internal security problems and then external security issues.

The two men finished by again stating that for the EU–Lesotho partnership to work there was a need for more monitoring of good governance issues. Considering that the two men were in opposition to the government, it is interesting to speculate whether, if they gained power, they would claim that any EU monitoring of good governance was evidence of neocolonial interference and therefore evidence of an unequal working relationship.

Interview 9: Deputy National Authorising Officer

The office of National Authorising Officer was set up through negotiation under the Lomé Treaty and was seen to be a forward-looking step in North–South relations. Accordingly, it was appropriate to meet Mr Khosie Letsie, the deputy national authorising officer, a native African. The interview began with a general open-ended question about the relationship between the EU, Lesotho and his office in particular. Mr Letsie commented that, on the whole, it was a good relationship. Does this mean that he believes that sometimes it is not? He complimented the local EU delegation and said they had been very helpful on how to access the EU resources. He believed that the relationship was ‘almost Lesotho and the delegation against Brussels’. This is evidence of Howarth’s political identities and Van Dijk’s political groupings taken from another angle. Many people saw the EU as the ‘them’ in the ‘us and them’ or the ‘upper’ in the ‘uppers and lowers’ (Chambers), but Mr Letsie moved the position of the local delegation away from Brussels and nearer to the local government. In doing so, his office gained valuable insight into how to access EU aid and altered what some saw as a situation of confrontation. He was grateful for this help because, he said, ‘The government side starts off in a weak position’. This was a reference to the government not knowing the system, but also to the fact that Lesotho is a ‘small, weak’ country. It is interesting that Mr Letsie sees the issue as being one side against another, rather than members of the same team or partnership working equally together.

He indicated that ‘our problem here is not this delegation’,

despite occasional technical clashes over quality that were ameliorated with more frequent meetings. Rather, the difficulties his office faced were related to the bureaucracy. He said, 'The rules are aimed at many different countries; they need to be more specific for each locality'. This points towards previous comments referring to local delegations being given more power to make decisions, but also towards a more postmodern approach in general where the local is favoured over the international.

Mr Letsie spoke well of the negotiation procedure for the National Indicative Programme (NIP). He explained that that Lesotho wanted both transport and water to be main components of the NIP, but Brussels only wanted one area or sector. Through negotiation, Lesotho managed to prioritise both sectors. If the negotiations had not turned out so well for 'his side', would Mr Letsie have been so complimentary about the EU? He finished this section by saying that 'at implementation level all is good', but that at 'political level people may say the EU could be heavy-handed'. On the issue of good governance, he said he had hoped that 'the EU might have participated more in the general election'. This is a similar comment to those made in previous interviews by members of the opposition; it was made by people from both inside and outside government. Was this because of a genuine fear of manipulation of results, or just a desire to have someone else run the election for them?

Mr Letsie offered a few suggestions for the future. He hoped for two, or a few more, people in the local delegation and that they would stay a little longer, allowing them to get to know the local people and customs better. He said that at the international political level, Brussels had different approaches to similar issues but that 'there is no case for Europe dictating'. He took issue with the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU, complaining that 'they' can still subsidise but 'we' cannot do the same thing, as we (Lesotho) are a weak economy. Again he sees the positions of 'us' and 'them' and sees the EU as strong and his country as weak. He commented that Lesotho is generally moving in the direction suggested by neoliberal economics. As a finishing point we discussed a hypothetical situation of disagreement between the EU and Lesotho. He hoped that discussions would solve any problems and sort out any differences, but he did believe that if issues could not be resolved, then no finance would be forthcoming.

While Mr Letsie had many positive things to say about the EU,

his evidence indicates that the relationship between his organisation and the EU could be better, and that it does not reflect the glowing picture of partnership projected by official EU literature.

Interview 10: WASA official and villagers

The final part of the research and investigation in Lesotho was to visit a water project which was a part of the 'Six Towns Project'. I met the WASA official, a native African, at the village of Teyateyaneng (TY) and he took me in a WASA vehicle to see the various areas of the site. (See further details of interview, Appendix 2). The WASA official noted that 'the water supply is much better with this system'. The townspeople also added comments such as: 'It's much better'; 'Nowadays it is a lot better'; 'Before we get water only one or two hours, now we get it all the time.'

Regardless of any political differences between the EU and the government of Lesotho, the lives of some people have been improved, so in this respect the EU aid has been effective.

The WASA officer pointed out that the EU has paid for water extraction points from a river, pumps, chlorine tanks and 9 km of 200 mm pipeline, while it contributes towards a pumping station half way between river and town. Conversations with local beneficiaries proved that, despite any disagreements at political or technical levels the improvement in water supply was greatly appreciated. Consequently, at the 'on the ground' recipient level the partnership definitely works and the quality of life has improved, at least in regard to the improved water supply, as a result of EU aid to a water project in Lesotho.

The interview evidence: Conclusions

Empirical evidence gathered from fieldwork in Lesotho points to areas where the partnership between the EU and the recipient country has worked. However, there is ample evidence that the partnership is not as equal and mutually respectful as the EU's published documents claim. The interviews mentioned above cover a wide spectrum of local society, with representation from the highest level of government through management and technical levels to recipient villagers. Although most interviewees believed that the EU-Lesotho relationship was working reasonably well, they expressed concerns from their own positions and offered specific examples of where the relationship had not worked.

The evidence obtained from interviews throws up several points of concern about the relationship between the EU and Lesotho. These are issues of the lack of human capacity, inequality in the partnership, the macro versus micro approach of the EU system, the abuse by the EU of its hegemonic position and issues of good governance, which consistently come to the fore.

If the situation in Lesotho is typical of the relationship between the EU and the recipients of aid to water projects, it would be fair to expect the same concerns to arise in a different locality. Thus further empirical data were obtained in Mozambique to compare with the situation in Lesotho.

Mozambique Interviews

Very similar results were recorded in Maputo, Mozambique. The same points were made again at the different levels of government, in an NGO and in the EU.

Interview 1: EU official

Mr Iosu Arizkorreta (European) was the EU official for small projects in Mozambique and in talking about the relationship between the EU and the people of Mozambique, he said 'for sure it could be better'. He passed comment on the position and relative influence of the EU in Mozambique and explained that because of the country's history, many years of war and floods has meant that there are lots of donors willing to help. He also suggested that there had been a lack of coordination between the donors, but that this was now being addressed and the situation was improving. Regarding negotiating power, he said 'the DNA (National Directorate for Water [Portuguese]) will never say no as it has no money'. Presumably the EU knows this, but whether it uses this knowledge to its advantage remains open to question. In this conversation, the DNA is set up as a binary opposed by the EU and thus Howarth's political identities are in evidence. The relative wealth of the EU and the poverty of the DNA fit the 'uppers and lowers' of Chambers and the categorisation identified by Van Dijk. Mr Arizkorreta's observations above are similar to the direct quote from Mr Maope in Lesotho, who said 'it's the position of poor countries, it's an unequal partnership'.

The issue of lack of capacity in recipient countries was raised when Mr Arizkorreta noted that the EU rules and procedures were

often too difficult for the local people to deal with. He also suggested that the salary differential causes a problem when working with people in Mozambican government departments. The issue of good governance came to the fore because Mr Arizkorreta said he thought there was a high level of corruption in the upper echelons of power, but he was generally happy with people further down the scale. The issues surrounding good governance are very similar to those that were raised in Lesotho.

He suggested that he was not happy with local working conditions in the DNA as it directly affected the projects. He explained this by saying that the local staff needed better salaries and more responsibility and the ability and power to make more decisions. He said that because of the salary differences, the government officials were frequently missing from their offices attending seminars in order to collect expenses payments. As they are the only ones with the power to make decisions, things came to a halt while they were away.

Postmodern thinking in development suggests that localism should be promoted rather than the imposition of macro solutions, and Mr Arizkorreta commented that the Mozambicans 'think we can change EU rules to fit each different situation'. This also mirrors comments made in Lesotho.

Interview 2: Technical assistant at National Water Authority (DNA)

Mr Bruno Duffau (European) was a technical assistant at the DNA and his first big issue was the lack of local capacity. 'The infrastructure is poor, there are no people in places', he said. He commented on the lack of capable people and a general lack of staff in local government. He said one person tries to do two jobs and is ineffective and confused. He commented that 'people are not identified in each department' and because no one knows who is in charge and of what, communication on some contracts is bad. He went on to admit that 'by our standards, it is not working'. The use of the word 'our' presumably means 'European' or 'First World' and thus suggests a higher level of competence and knowledge and possibly a superior and patronising attitude. This conforms with Howarth's hegemonic practices and Van Dijk's political groupings and categorisation. Mr Duffau's suggestion that communication and delegation of power is bad echoes the comments in the previous interview with Mr Arizkorreta about officials being out of their

office. Mr Duffau said there was a 'need to decentralise the power to heads of department'. He went on to comment that bosses were often absent and no decisions could be made. This was the situation in Maputo, the capital, but according to Mr Duffau, it was even worse in the Mozambican provinces. He said that they were trying to improve the situation, but that again there was no capacity, no people. He suggested that the DNA would not decentralise because of this, but he also hinted that they were not devolving power because they wanted to hold on to power.

Mr Duffau said the overall relationship with the EU was good. However, he added to the general complaints, voiced in Lesotho as well as in Mozambique, about the complexity of rules. As an example of the complexity and hypocrisy in some EU rules, he cited the so-called 'car issue'. He wished to order cars, was told this was okay and so went ahead and recruited staff to deal with the vehicles. He was then told that there was a problem because any equipment bought with EU money should have (according to him) 60 per cent of their component parts from an EU country. He said this rule was not applied to other items such as computers.

Mr Duffau complained about delays in implementation. He spoke about reports going from desk to desk in Brussels, where small comments or changes that did not really matter, but that nevertheless mean the report needed to be rewritten, were made. His answer to this situation was to give more power to the local delegation because, at the moment, 'they are just a mail box'. He also suggested that there was a level of paranoia or fear of mistakes at each stage.

Mr Duffau made a comment regarding a problem related to the size of 'lists of contractors' (see Interview 3, below, for further clarification), but suggested this was slowly changing and it should improve. He said the bidding system for consultancies was not fair and that the EU was 'making decisions based just on money but not taking account of the quality of the proposal'. He admitted that 'the best proposal does not always win' and said he felt that the EU should 'balance the technical with the financial'. Is this a fair observation based on his position within the infrastructure, or a case of sour grapes? Mr Duffau did suggest that other agencies do balance both sides of any argument or proposal but that the EU doesn't do this in ACP countries. He did say, however, that they are doing it in Eastern Europe and he hoped this flexibility would be extended.

Interview 3: Head of sanitation department, National Water Authority

Mr Emelio Muchanga (native African) was the head of the sanitation department at the DNA and when discussing the EU, he noted that all organisations have to have rules. He countered this point by saying that all involved should understand the rules and that there is an 'inequality of understanding'. He seemed to think that 'the rules are not constant', and referred to the 'car issue' mentioned above – observing that 'some procedures are restrictive and should be opened'. He suggested that 'we' should be 'allowed to negotiate this issue and say why', but he did qualify this by admitting that too many negotiations would take too long. He also added, when talking about discussions or negotiating with the EU, 'They are polite, but...' This is again evidence of an official who sees the EU as a different political identity (Howarth), not an equal partner in a working relationship, and also points to a level of hegemonic practice.

Mr Muchanga suggested there was a problem of inequality in the information held by his department and the EU. He went on to give an example of this. He said it was his job to draw up 'lists of contractors', which he submitted to the EU; they then changed the list and sent it back. 'They change your list. It's no problem if you put in the people they say.' He asked why they were doing this – are they not sharing information? Do they have some information that he doesn't have? He suggested they were taking over his job, or doing his job for him. He suggested that this was indicative of a level of hypocrisy in the partnership, or of inequality, and added that if he had this 'unknown' EU list, he could use it to do his job and save lots of time. This is evidence of the political identities and hegemonic practices noted by Howarth, and the 'uppers and lowers' of Chambers and Van Dijk's political groupings.

Mr Muchanga suggested that, in some contracts, the EU have used their power to gain control. For example, they used their power to control meetings by involving more people. Mr Muchanga noted that this 'could be a problem if used incorrectly'. If the EU has used its greater power to gain control, this is further evidence of the hegemonic practices mentioned by Howarth.

Mr Muchanga commented that it took a long time to get anything done. He said there were too many steps involved and that even if each step proceeded with no objections, things still took too long.

He suggested that Brussels should delegate power down to local delegations. He commented favourably on the EU in comparison with the World Bank, however, because the EU allowed them to manage their own budget.

Interview 4: CARE (humanitarian NGO) officials

The position of NGOs is illustrated in the following comments made by officials of CARE. The postmodern position of 'localism' over 'macroism' was commented on by Mr Fernando Pililao, CARE official (native African), when he said 'previously the local community was not involved but now we are working through local distributors and it is working much better'. He noted that the EU 'recognised the value of this approach', provided they were kept informed.

In discussing the sector-wide approach (SWAP) currently espoused by the EU, Mr Pililao noted this has changed the way to access funding and 'made it much more difficult' because the EU had 'changed the system ... but no one knows how to work the system'. He added there had been 'no real clarification'. Is this lack of local capacity or evidence of a hegemonic practice?

Mr Pililao noted the problem of lack of capacity in Mozambican government departments. He said that they have 'no capacity to deal with the budgets' and that they are 'taking the money but not doing anything with it'. This comment perhaps relates to previous comments made in Mozambique on the same issue when Mr Duffau noted that the DNA may be holding on to power in order to retain control. This raises the question of good governance and also relates to comments made in Lesotho by members of the Lesotho opposition party, which suggested that the EU should follow more closely the route taken by any donated aid.

Comments made by the Lesotho interviewees concerning local salaries, capacity and the EU position on good government were echoed by Mr Pililao when he discussed field assessment, particularly in relation to the change in the system of EU funding. Under the new system, the EU has put money into the national budget to pay for government salaries; however, government officers will not go out into the field unless they are paid allowances and expenses by CARE.

Mr Mark Wentling, white North American, was the CARE country representative, and in his opening statement, he agreed with every-

thing that Mr Pililao had said. He commented that the EU relationship changes every time the EU changes and he added that 'the EU changes people too often'. He said the projects were good but second fundings were hard to get, and added 'we like the EU as a donor but not the system'. He qualified this by adding that 'time taken to get the money is bad, but once you have it, there is freedom to do what is wanted'. Mr Wentling hoped for more decentralisation of EU power to the delegations, as a more postmodern approach would demand. He commented on the bureaucracy of the EU and complained that CARE, although a charity, had to support an office in Brussels simply to keep up with EU meetings, publications and press releases. Mr Wentling has identified Howarth's political parties (being the EU, the recipient and CARE) and Van Dijk's categorisation of rich and poor. He continued to say that NGOs do not like the sector-wide assistance and commented on the weak capacity, corruption and incompetence, presumably of the local government. He added he would prefer deals that were a mixture of part government and part NGO and quite firmly believed that the Mozambican government needed to fit into the idea of a new liberalised economy in order to raise tax revenues and pay its own way. Is this an instance of a hegemonic position as identified by Howarth being promoted by an official of a Western agency?

***Interview 5: Manager, Mozambique National
Authorising Office (GON)***

The final interviewee was Isabel Paulino, native African, Development Project Manager at the GON (the Portuguese version of the NAO) and deputy to the national authorising officer. Several comments have previously been made about the absence of senior officials from their offices – this was why this interviewee was made available.

On the relationship with the EU, she said, 'It's not bad, but could be better'. She did, however complain about the length of time taken to approve documents. When discussing the decision-making and negotiating process, she initially said, 'They like to guide us! ... We make decisions half-half. In a problem situation, we say one way, they say another, we just have to do it.' This is a clear indication of Howarth's political identities and hegemonic practices, together with Van Dijk's political groups and categorisation. This is also evidence of a Hobbesian approach to the partnership, which

was demonstrated throughout this interview and is not conducive to a good working relationship between equal partners.

In discussing the National Indicative Plan, Ms Paulino said, 'They wrote it and told us to approve it', and of the Strategic Document she said they (EU) chose the sectors. She noted that 'the boss had to sign it in order to get the help', and added that civil society wanted education included but 'no changes could be made'. She said her boss 'was very, very cross ... he was not happy'. Again, this is evidence of hegemonic practice.

Miss Paulino commented that the improving relationship with the EU could be related to the contrasting attitude of current and previous delegates. 'The old delegate just imposed the papers ... It was very difficult to cooperate and have agreements that made both parties happy.' She said that the current delegate holds more frequent meetings that include the Mozambicans and that, as a result, 'the relationship has got better'. She added that the old delegate's approach was bad or rude; I suggested the word 'insensitive' and she agreed.

In her particular position, she said, 'The technical level is very flexible and it works'. She suggested the problems only occur 'when it's the politics', adding that 'in Brussels, they make a lot of problems'. She commented on Brussels' detraction from the local problems and she explained this by saying: 'They don't understand. In the implementation, it's affected by the change from one convention to another.' She gave the following example: Under phase 1 of a project (approximately April 2002 – December 2002) to provide water, investigations and boreholes were drilled. Ms Paulino said 'the people saw the tests, saw the water and they were very happy ... Then we had to stop everything to change the financial convention. We are still waiting.'

The position in Mozambique was similar to that discovered in Lesotho. The 'feeling on the ground' was generally of a less organised, more chaotic situation. Lesotho produced the 'feeling' of slow but steady progress being made, whereas Mozambique created the 'feeling' of working hard to repair a dam simply to keep the floodwaters at bay. The relative size of Mozambique and its recent history of war and natural disaster surely add to the general development problems. The presence of other large donor organisations also meant that more coordinating work needs to be done. Thus the position and influence of the EU is somewhat different to that

of the EU in Lesotho. However, if the relationship is seen in a similar fashion, it is fair to expect the same issues to arise. Interviews with EU officials, technical advisors in government water departments, government appointees in the same department, local and national NGO officials and a senior official in the GON (the Mozambican version of the NAO) threw up many similar points.

Summary and conclusions

One of the most common issues raised in Lesotho was the lack of human capacity, and that this was a problem in Mozambique as well is amply supported with evidence gained through the interviews.

The second issue that was consistently commented on in Lesotho was the partnership between the EU and the recipient itself – the equality or inequality that exists within the relationship and that it could be improved. Mr Arizkorreta, the EU official in Mozambique, commented that the relationship between the EU and Mozambique was also lacking and ‘for sure it could be better’. He noted the inequality in the relationship when he referred to negotiations with the DNA. He said that they never say no because they have no money. This directly parallels the comments made in Lesotho by Mr Maope when he said, ‘It’s the position of poor countries, it’s an unequal partnership’.

Mr Muchanga, the Mozambican water authority official, said that not only was there an ‘inequality of understanding’, but that inequality existed in the amounts of information held by the EU and shared with his department. He added that this situation implied a lack of trust or respect between partners, again damaging a good working relationship between equals. He noted a patronising attitude on the part of the EU when discussing or negotiating, again contributing to a feeling of superiority and/or inferiority.

The macro versus micro issue reared its head during the interviews in both Lesotho and Mozambique. Mr Arizkorreta, the EU official in Mozambique, noted that the rules and procedures drawn up in Brussels and applied to the whole of the ACP were often ‘too difficult for the local people’. The system created by Brussels has to be applicable to every situation around the world and is applied on a grand scale, as the EU has to look at the whole picture. The view from within a particular country seems to be one of unnecessary complexity which, when combined with a lack of human capacity in recipient countries, creates an inequality that is harmful

to the relationship. Later in the interview, Mr Arizkorreta commented that recipient countries believe the EU can and should change the rules to fit each situation, as a more postmodern approach demands. Furthermore, recipients that do not see the EU changing the rules to fit their specific situation merely see the EU as dictating to them, thus again damaging a working relationship between what the EU claims to be equals.

Several interviewees suggested that the solution to this would be to devolve more power to the local delegation as a more postmodern approach would suggest.

The hegemonic approach of the EU to the partnership was raised in Lesotho and again in Mozambique. Mr Arizkorreta's comment that the DNA never says no to the EU because it does not have any money highlights the position of power held by the EU. Other interviews contained many references to a dominant or even dictatorial attitude on the part of the EU. Isabel Paulino, the Development Project Manager at the GON said of the decision making and negotiating process, 'They [the EU] like to guide us', indicating an inequality in the partnership. This was reinforced by her comment that 'in a problem situation we say one way, they say another; we just have to do it'. Referring to the National Indicative Plan, she commented, 'They wrote it and told us to approve it', and of the strategic document, she said that they (the EU) chose the sectors. This is further evidence of a hegemonic, dictatorial attitude displayed by the EU. This is perhaps particularly relevant in this department, as the GON is the Mozambican version of the National Authorising Office, a position originally envisioned and set up by the EU.

The issue of good governance was discussed fairly frequently during the interviews in Lesotho and several references were made along the same lines in Mozambique

If issues of lack of human capacity, inequality in partnership, the macro versus micro system, hegemony and good governance are in evidence in Lesotho and reinforced by evidence from Mozambique, it is reasonable to ask whether the same set of issues is encountered in other SADC countries that have a relationship with the EU. Is it therefore unreasonable to extend this argument to other countries within the ACP group and to any other recipients of EU aid?

These interviews seem to highlight several points; firstly, at the very highest level, the partnership between the EU and local organ-

isations/officials worked well with negotiations between the parties allowing for consensus on what should be provided by the EU within, for instance, Lesotho: here it was water and roads. The villagers of Teyateyaneng were simply very pleased to have water available on a continuous basis, which was clearly an improvement on their past experiences. However, there are a series of issues or complaints which suggest that the partnership as extolled by the EU is not running as smoothly as might be hoped for. Constant themes throughout the interviews include:

- Concentration of power in Brussels
- Time delays in making payments and problems with the ‘system’
- The EU position always prevailing
- A feeling of being dictated to
- Neoliberal regime formation and the Washington Consensus being made to dominate
- ‘Heavy-handed’ approach by EU making ‘demands’, not persuading or working with a partner
- The macro versus micro issue and the modern or postmodern approach
- Lack of capacity in recipient countries
- Issues around good governance
- The inequality of the relationship exemplified by the quotes, ‘It’s the position of poor countries’, ‘It’s an unequal partnership’ and ‘The DNA (National Directorate for Water) will never say no as it has no money’.

Brussels Interviews

After I had seen the printed EU documents claiming full and equal participation with aid recipients and having acquired empirical evidence from Lesotho and Mozambique which question the validity of these claims, I decided it was necessary to obtain further evidence of the EU’s position from officers in Brussels responsible for EU development policy and its monitoring and implementation.

A series of interviews with different officials in different offices and departments were therefore conducted. These interviews can be examined in four different ways. First, to see if they support the view of a working relationship between equal partners; second, to see if the working experience of officials in Brussels matches the experience of officials in Lesotho and Mozambique, supporting

their claim of a problem in the relationship. Third, if there is a problem, to determine whether the EU recognises it, and fourth, to find out if the EU is attempting to do anything to improve the situation. Do they promote what Gilbert Rist has called the 'postmodern illusion', or are they seeking the improvements that others such as Pieterse are looking for?

Glennys Kinnock (Co-President of ACP–EU Parliament) commented that the relationship between the EU and the ACP is unique and that nowhere else in the world do they have an organisation like this. She did note, however, that 'by definition there are inequalities' and said that EU capacity is better and that many ACP countries are disadvantaged as they do not have funds, expertise or capacity. She commented on the historical relationship between the EU and ACP countries when she said 'the EU is not an ex-colonial power'. She believed that the ACP countries thought the EU had no colonial baggage and that consequently the ACP countries preferred the EU over bilateral aid relationships. She commented that the relationship 'should not be a donor–recipient relationship in a patronising sense', but went on to say that 'that is what it is in reality'. Thus Mrs Kinnock provided clear evidence of inequality in the relationship, despite the statements to the contrary published by the EU. Mrs Kinnock refuted an utterly hegemonic attitude when she said that she expected to listen and learn from people when she visited recipient countries. Mrs Kinnock made several comments that both supported and contradicted the official published claims of the EU. She noted first of all that the current system 'is a unique setup' and further claimed that 'nowhere else in the world do they (the ACP) have this organisation'. This seems, to this author, to be strong support for the printed position of the EU; however, Mrs Kinnock immediately qualified this initial statement by adding, 'by definition there are inequalities' – thus quickly denting the official EU claims. Mrs Kinnock next identified one of the problems that had been noted in both Lesotho and Mozambique, that of capacity, when she said, 'In the EU the capacity is better. Lots of ACP countries are disadvantaged – they don't have the funds, the expertise or the capacity.' Thus she has noted inequalities in several areas that were recognised in Africa. The macro versus micro question was alluded to when Mrs Kinnock noted that they, the ACP countries, are very separate countries in very separate parts of the world. I believe that this implies that the EU should

treat each country differently, as was suggested in both Lesotho and Mozambique. The EU will surely claim that the National Indicative Programmes are evidence of individuality, but the imposition of rules created at the macro level in Brussels and applied worldwide do not support the feeling of a special individual relationship between donor and recipient country, as evidence from Lesotho and Mozambique has shown.

Mrs Kinnock noted that the EU demands higher standards than other ACP countries when it comes to sanitary and phytosanitary issues. She commented that the EU helped other countries to achieve these standards but that the 'others' became impatient. This is surely bound to create a feeling of superiority and inferiority in the relationship and a sense of patronisation of one partner by the other.

Mrs Kinnock's claim that the countries of the ACP prefer to work with the EU because it is not an ex-colonial power is a point in favour of the good working relationship between equal partners. According to her, the history of colonial domination is absent and the parties are able to negotiate from a theoretical position of equality in a world where all states are treated with equal respect. This must surely support the claim to a good relationship between equal partners. Mrs Kinnock's position as co-President of the EU-ACP Parliament obviously demands this approach. However, other opinions of the colonial relationship of domination would suggest that it is at least evolving and changing, rather than absent, as she claims.

The issue of good governance was linked to the 'accountability to national and universal values' defined by Mrs Kinnock as 'human rights and so on'. She was prepared to acknowledge that different countries could have different views on this issue and noted the positions of Robert Mugabe and (opposition leader) Morgan Tsvangirai in Zimbabwe. However, the mention of 'universal values' suggests a point of disagreement or a point at which leverage could be applied by one party to move another. She did state that she was prepared to listen and learn from people when visiting their countries. This can therefore indicate both a position of control and an unequal relationship, but also a position of respect for others' views and thus a more equal partnership.

Mrs Kinnock finished by noting that the existing relationship should not be a donor and recipient relationship in a patronising sense but that 'that is what it is in reality'. This is clear evidence that the partnership is not as equal as is claimed in the published EU

documents. It supports some of the claims made by officials in Africa and it would also seem to indicate that the EU is aware of the problems.

The next interviewee wished to be known as an 'informed source within the EU' who worked from the office of Poul Neilson. On discussing the relationship between the EU and certain ACP countries, the source said, 'It isn't perfect, but it's the best relationship they have going', and noted that they can talk to each other. The source categorically said that the ACP lacks coordination and added that the EU must be more forceful because of this lack of capacity. The source said that Neilson gets on well with them all and that the relationship does work, 'but sometimes we have to cajole and bully. We get exasperated with them' – clear proof of the EU using its hegemonic position and financial muscle. In discussing the various agreements (Lomé, Cotonou), the source used the phrase 'rich arrogant North' linked to the old colonial system and suggested that this phrase of complaint is often used as a negotiating ploy. The source noted that the relationship had become more mature and changed from a pseudo-colonial agreement to one of equality and participation, but complained that certain issues of political correctness associated with the First World are forced on the implementers of policy by the EU parliament. The source noted a responsibility to the European taxpayer but did acknowledge that the EU is the 'one with the money'. This is perhaps an indication that business considerations may on occasion overshadow human development considerations.

The second interview with the anonymous official began with an open-ended question about the relationship between the EU and the ACP, to which the official replied, 'It isn't perfect, but it is the best relationship they have going'. This statement can be viewed from two perspectives. While it damages the EU claim to an equal partnership, it does suggest that the EU treats aid recipients in a better fashion than other donors; this opinion reinforces a similar point of view expressed by others in Africa. The official commented that via the relationship established over the years, through the Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou agreements, 'we can talk to each other' and this suggests a relationship of negotiating rather than dictating and of respect for equals.

The lack of capacity issue raised in both African countries was noted by the official, who said that because of this lack, the EU

'must be a bit more forceful'. This does not support the view that both parties in the relationship are equal partners; it supports the view proposed in Africa of a dictating, more powerful partner in an unequal relationship. While the EU may have found this stance to be an effective way to deal with the situation in its recipient countries, it is in direct opposition to the published EU claims of an equal working relationship. This official further noted that the EU sometimes has to 'cajole and bully', but that the relationship works and that the ACP are happy with the Cotonou Agreement. Thus it may be that the EU thinks the relationship is working, but at least two ACP countries are not so sure, or that when the relationship does not work the EU believes it must force the ACP countries to do as the EU wants. So the EU has recognised a problem, but further questions arise about its response to it.

This official noted that the changes from Yaoundé, through Lomé to Cotonou are generally an improvement and display a 'more mature relationship'. He added that development policy had gone from a pseudo-colonial agreement to one of participation and equality, but suggested that this was associated with the political correctness of the First World. This perhaps suggests that certain parts of the EU believe that participation and equality are suitable for dealings within the First World. However, other parts of the EU, for instance this official or his office, do not fully support this view when dealing with aid recipients in the Third World. He believed that politically correct ideas are 'forced on' offices of the EU by the EU parliament, which needs or wants to be seen as politically correct, but that the whole process should be 'looked at in the longer term'. This seems to suggest that the politically correct approach of equality may be a passing fancy of the moment that sooner or later will fade away, or will have to be revised in the light of recent and current practice that is failing to achieve the hoped for results, so that a more pragmatic approach may be taken.

The next point made by the official in the interview was that 'we are the ones with the money' and that the EU has a responsibility to the EU taxpayer to achieve certain results in return for the financial aid dispensed to recipient countries. From these two points it is possible to suggest that the 'political correctness' of full participation between equal partners may give way to the financial expediency of achieving desired results. So here I recognise the unequal power relations within the EU-ACP partnership noted by interview-

wees in Africa and make a hypothetical suggestion of what could transpire in the future.

The source ended by suggesting that Cotonou encourages the spirit of partnership and suggested that I get in contact with Paul Malin (Head of Unit Relations for EU and ACP Institutions) who has had personal experience in Mozambique.

Mr Malin saw the EU and ACP as blocks that respect each other but added that he was not sure about equality and stated that the EU and the ACP are not equal and therefore there are unequal power relationships. He noted that the agreements set out a way of working together but, in contrast to Kinnock, suggested there was 'lots of historical baggage'. He noted that the relationship has changed over the years and is generally improving. He noted the shift from individual projects to policy change then to political dialogue, but noted the defensiveness of certain countries over certain issues such as good governance. He said the EU doesn't impose ideas but talks about them, hinting at parity in the relationship, but then talked about unequal power relationships. His use of the phrase 'still a donor/beneficiary relationship' suggested an inequality perhaps similar to that of a parent and child or employer and employee. Again, this is a clear indication of the inequality of the relationship despite the EU claims.

Mr Malin believed that the agreements in place allowed each group to deal respectfully with the other group. However, he noted that the two parties were not equal, that there were unequal power relations. This denies the published version of the relationship, supports the African version, and recognises that the problem exists. Mr Malin noted that dialogue between the EU and ACP countries is generally improving. He was, however, clearly concerned about the issue of good governance and suggested that Mozambique was very defensive regarding this point. He also commented on the lack of capacity that has been mentioned in previous interviews in Africa and Brussels and linked this issue to aid conditionality and policy framework. Is this again a pointer towards a change in the way that aid will be offered and a suggestion that the EU is frustrated with the attempts to disperse aid through an equal relationship that is not seen to be working? His other comments referring to unequal power relations and the responsibility to EU taxpayers, as noted by other interviewees, suggests that the published idea of a relationship – imposed out of political correct-

ness – between equal partners may be seen by the EU not to be working. His comment that the relationship is ‘still a donor and beneficiary relationship’ recognises the imbalance in the partnership and may provide a clue as to the way the EU would like to see the relationship evolving.

Mr Malin suggested I contact Bernard Petit, who was involved in the negotiations between the EU and the ACP. This man was not available but put me onto his deputy Françoise Moreau.

When discussing partnership and equality, Ms Moreau asked: ‘What is equality?’ She said that the key word was ‘partnership’ rather than ‘equality’, but then talked of the ‘equality of rights’. She said the EU does not impose issues as imposition does not work and that the partnership principle is applied to all concerned. She summed up by saying partnership means equality. She noted that, to be more effective, power to make decisions is moving to the EU delegations, thereby addressing one issue raised earlier. She also suggested that the EU needs to find another way to make payments. This comment reflects very closely comments made in the interview with Mikael Barfod (see below). She believed that NEPAD is a positive initiative and that the EU favoured it. She finished by suggesting that the EU has a vested interest in African development security and in seeing Africa develop the ‘right’ way: She did not say what ‘right’ was; – ‘right’ according to whom?

Ms Moreau spoke in a complimentary fashion about the quality of the negotiations between the two parties and quoted an example concerning good governance, which was one of the issues raised in both Lesotho and Mozambique. She said the EU had wanted good governance as an essential element of Cotonou, but that the ACP countered that there was a problem with the definition of good governance. The ACP said governance could be weak, rather than simply bad, and that problems of interpreting what were good, bad or weak policies could occur. So at the end of the negotiation, good governance was ‘negotiated down’ to a fundamental element rather than an essential element and both sides now support the idea of good governance. This, according to Ms Moreau, was evidence of good rapport between partners who respected each other and could therefore find some common ground.

Adolf Riehm (desk officer at AIDCO) saw his position as that of liaison between EU delegates and headquarters services. He believed

he was a watchdog overseeing whether agreements are being followed or not. He added, 'Their governments often seem to deviate from country finance agreements'. He said they sign finance agreements blindly to get access to the money, they don't read the agreement and then they can't do it, so there is a problem when they can't keep their side of the bargain. This clearly supports the claims from Africa of lack of capacity, but there is also a suggestion of EU superiority, patronisation and the idea that some ACP countries simply renege on any agreement once they have access to funding. Mr Riehm noted complaints about EU procedures (links to varying comments made in Africa) and noted that the EU is not very flexible during projects but that their role is merely administrative control. He said that locals sometimes cannot communicate with technical consultants and that 'in many countries they used to deal with white people, now it is locals who are not competent.' At best this is a comment on lack of capacity in certain ACP countries. He used this as a reason for saying that there is still a case for the EU pushing the ACP countries. Is this hegemonic use of power or simply the EU trying to make progress on what has already been agreed?

Mr Riehm also commented on arguments raised in Africa about 'the system' when he noted that people complain about the (EU) procedures being 'too heavy' or 'too much'. He followed this by admitting that the EU is not very flexible during projects. This seems to reflect the desire often expressed in Africa for the EU to be more individually responsive and micro sensitive rather than simply imposing rules in a macro fashion from Brussels. He added to this the comment that the role of the EU is one of administrative control, and so here again is the idea of the EU being the 'boss' mentioned by African officials, rather than being in an equal partnership, as the published statements maintain.

Here again this is evidence to support the positions taken by African officials, and evidence that the EU is aware of the inequality of the relationship.

Passadeos Panayiotis (DG desk officer, Mozambique) discussed the inequality of the relationship between the EU and ACP countries and agreed that this was the case. He suggested that all ACP countries recognise this inequality. He believed that Cotonou was a positive step forward as the country strategy papers can give up to 80 per cent ownership of development to local governments. He com-

mented favourably on the Mozambique government, saying they were very dynamic and that all money was identified and all money was in place for several years to come. He believed there was a great deal of work to do on the issue of good governance and added: 'By African standards, they are quite transparent'. He clearly thinks there are differing standards. Is Europe imposing external criteria onto a recipient's culture? How much right does the EU have to do this? Is this because of EU responsibility to the European taxpayer?

He commented on the historical relationship when he said, 'They are sensitive as a new country'. He believed that it was a matter of their (Mozambique) perception of their position in the world after independence; Cotonou allows them 'the chance to be in the driving seat'. He noted that for the first few years after independence, there was a problem in the relationship as independence is about freedom, self-governing, being self-reliant and getting rid of Europeans, but then having to have them back and still able to 'dictate' terms as they control aid budgets. He was, however, complimentary on Mozambique maturing as a country. He noted that the country has a role in the Zimbabwe crisis and has had the presidency of the Organisation of African Unity. He suggested a benchmark to check on the level of newly independent country's maturity was its willingness to discuss human rights and compared Angola, where this discussion is not liked, with Mozambique, where the situation is much better.

Mr Panayiotis mentioned economic partnership agreements within Africa and suggested that the African nations followed this route when they feared 'falling behind' other parts of the world after the fall of communism, the rise of China and the emergence of Eastern Europe. This evidence provides support for a good working relationship as African nations have embraced the neoliberal regime formation promoted by the Washington Consensus. The comments in the previous interview, however, suggest that African nations do not wholeheartedly embrace neoliberal regime formation but simply go along with it to gain access to funding.

This book examines the balance of power within the relationship between the EU and the ACP countries and suggest that a problem exists because the relationship is not as equal as EU publications claim. Empirical evidence from Africa supports this suggestion. Further evidence from Brussels also suggests a growing awareness of problems within the relationship. The interview with Mikael

Barfod (Unit Head at AIDCO) identifies the problem and moves on to suggest that the EU is aware of this and is prepared to develop the relationship further. Mr Barfod believed that at Lomé, the reciprocal relationship was the most advanced in the world. He noted that the concept of National Authorising Officer (NAO) was created, but added that as various paradigms have come and gone and EU agreements have become more complex, the NAO position has become more tenuous until we arrive at the position today when 'the NAO concept is in tatters, the EU sophistication too great' and 'we prop up the NAO'. He went on to say that the present system is not viable and that 'the NAO position is going to be redefined', which is clear evidence of the awareness of the lack of capacity and the difficulties it is causing. However, not only is the EU aware of this issue, they are actively preparing a possible solution. Mr Barfod said there were internal working groups looking at the position of the NAO and a position is beginning to emerge which he referred to as a 'post-participation paradigm'. If this happens, this could clearly have an effect on the whole theoretical perspective of participation and also any academic comment on it. Mr Barfod suggested that the current sector-wide approach is partially successful in dealing with the current situation, but that 'we [EU] need to be tougher with countries that cannot make it'. The position the EU internal working groups were arriving at was explained by Mr Barfod and accounted for because 'the majority of ACP countries will not be able to cope outright with the new budget support instruments.' So, he suggested, 'Those that can, will continue as they are'. He said this was a very small percentage of countries. His second comment was that 'those few that can be brought up to the required standard could be helped to achieve it'. He added, 'Those that can't, will have a change in system.' He noted that this was more than half the countries eligible and suggested that different methods of direct aid will have to emerge. He hoped that by 2007 the NAO concept would be redefined. He said that the 'Africans will give in eventually ... They'll have to.' Thus it seems that for the majority of ACP countries – and particularly in the case of this work, the countries of Southern Africa – the idea of participation in their own development will be dramatically altered with or without their agreement. Mr Barfod questioned whether the participation and partnership paradigm could change and went so far as to say that 'the best thing to happen is some sort of crisis'. Clearly he hoped that the NAO position

might be renegotiated, but if this does not happen, it seems the EU is prepared to use its financial muscle to force the issue.

Mr Barfod's remarks indicate that the issue of lack of capacity raised in both Africa and Brussels has been noted and is being addressed. However, he indicated that measures devised by the EU to overcome these issues would be implemented regardless of whether ACP countries perceived them as a loss of their equality. This supports the statement made in Africa by Mr Maope relating to the 'position of poor countries – it's an unequal partnership'. Is this the EU reacting to the issue of lack of capacity, which it sees as contributing to the failure of development, or is it hegemonic imposition of an idea based on financial and political expediency and the need to provide the European taxpayer and the EU Parliament with evidence of successes so that they continue to provide the revenue necessary for further development?

Mr Barfod believed that Africans were fed up with EU procedures that were too slow, that financial regulation was too strict and that the political atmosphere was especially highlighted. He believed they still saw the relationship with the EU as a partial erosion of their independence. However, the proposed new paradigm will not promote participation or even the semblance of equality at any level and may well be seen as a return to the colonial imposition of First World authority.

Georges Eliopulous (DG Development, Information and Communication Unit) added to the ongoing discussions and suggested that there was a gap between the will of the member states and the practical situations that exist. This relates closely to the implementation theory discussed above; however, Mr Eliopulous's closing comment was: 'Something is wrong somewhere; it's this institution'.

Mr Eliopulous supported the opinion expressed in Africa that the EU systems were at fault. He observed a difference between the will of the member states in the EU and the practical situations encountered when dispensing aid. This supports the 'slippage' mentioned in implementation theory noted above. This is further evidence of a failure in the partnership between the EU and ACP countries and evidence that at least some within the EU have recognised that a problem exists. If the above is true, part of the solution lies within both a reorganisation of the EU system and further education of the members to provide a heightened awareness of the situation and to create realistic expectations.



EU Delegation Building, Maseru, Lesotho

EU–ACP PARTNERSHIP: DOES THE RHETORIC MATCH THE REALITY?

In the light of the extensive field research carried out for this study, it is appropriate to re-examine contemporary development literature previously noted, to reflect upon the relationship between the EU and the ACP countries within the boundaries of that writing and with particular reference to the idea of partnership – and to do this in conjunction with the originally selected EU documents.

The idea of partnership mentioned in the listed EU documents does at least suggest the involvement of more than one party, and with the EU and the ACP, there is the minimum requirement for a partnership, namely two partners. The next step is to consider the amount of participation of each partner within the partnership. This is informed by the equality or inequality of the power dynamic within the relationship and the definition of partnership that each partner holds. The approach of the EU, which is necessarily much more global than that of the ACP and in particular of specific countries within the ACP, also differs from the approach looked for by various officials within the two particular countries as the presented empirical evidence shows. The fact that certain agreements have been signed between the EU and the governments of the two countries suggests that, at least superficially, the African elites have a similar position to the EU in that they have agreed to the neoliberalisation of their particular country along the lines suggested by the Washington Consensus. However, as evidence from Brussels shows, some ACP countries sign agreements simply to get access

to available finance. This does not mean that the African people are supportive of this approach to their development, as has been pointed out in an article from the African press.¹

Pieterse² notes the conflict in what he called the human development approach versus the number crunching approach and this seems to reflect the position taken by many officials in Africa when asked about the relationship which they felt existed with the EU; it also seems to mirror the binary conflict evident in the EU publications. The EU papers themselves use business language and then follow this with the use of such terms as 'cooperation', 'sustainable development' and 'partnership' – perhaps in an attempt to create or promote a dominant discourse which links any development to the idea of neoliberalisation. The empirical evidence collected in Africa supports the written evidence of such documents as 'The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation', which emerged from the Arusha Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa (1990). This conference was a collaborative effort between African people's organisations, African governments and United Nations agencies and the published paper was based on suggestions made by nongovernment organisations, thus clearly involving the 'non-elites' of Africa. The text is full of terms such as 'effective participation', 'popular support', 'full and effective contribution', 'popular enthusiasm', 'human centred' and the 'overwhelming majority' of the people. It criticises the overcentralisation of power as displayed by the EU and then by the elites in government and calls them 'impediments to the effective participation of the overwhelming majority of the people'.³

Thus there seem to be differing starting points in the partnership, namely differing philosophical views of what constitutes 'partnership' itself. The literature previously reviewed on Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau by Hampsher-Monk, Parry, Germino, Yolton, Smith and Grene, Muschamp, Cobban and others clearly indicate several versions of the idea of a contract that can or could exist between partners. The EU seems to be adopting a Hobbesian approach, somewhat Leviathanesque, with all the power resting within itself. The evidence from Africa supports this when certain officials note the hegemonic position and dictatorial attitude of the EU and the apparent threat of the confiscation of financial aid. The ACP, and particularly the two countries involved, seem to be much closer to

a Rousseauian position in which there is a contract between people and authority in which any authority only comes from the will of the people. This may reflect the past history of the European state and the more decentralised democratic approach of the African people as noted by John Rapley in *Understanding Development*.⁴

With these two differing positions it seems inevitable that some level of conflict should exist, as Pieterse notes.⁵ He comments on a multiplicity of actors leading to a diversity of meanings of development, but – as Pieterse also notes – in order for any meaningful development to occur, a ‘balance or accommodation’ must take place between different actors, perspectives and interests in their ‘specific historical, political and ecological settings’.

The importance of local knowledge and the value of local culture were commented on several times in the interviews, with African officials fearing the eradication of their own customs and traditions in the face of the dominance of EU and Western or First World ideas. Pieterse referred to this when he said that many positions have something to offer, and he noted the link between local culture and the emergence of participatory development.⁶ If the EU and ACP can find the balance between their position and that of the indigenous population that Pieterse looks for, then true development (as he sees it) can take place. However, published EU documents make little reference to local cultures. This is perhaps because the EU is stressing its own ideas and the positions of its various departments rather than deliberately ignoring any possibility of a local contribution; moreover, there is a sense throughout the documents of a hegemonic presence ensuring that what was published and even agreed in the National Indicative Programmes was more or less exactly what was wanted by the dominant partner of the two. This feeling of a dominant presence was commented on in the empirical evidence: Mr Kulam felt as though the EU was ‘checking up on him’ and said ‘it felt like a boss’. This is not an equal partnership between respected partners, though a relationship of some sort clearly exists with two groups working together in a certain fashion to achieve certain goals. Again there is the issue of what idea of partnership each partner is looking for.

Contemporary development literature stresses the involvement of local people to create a sense of ownership of any projects that are ongoing and the published EU documents make reference to part-

nership. The countries of Southern Africa have accepted the idea of regime formation as neoliberalism suggests and formed the SADC regime. They have extended their acceptance of this approach into the field of water issues by forming the Water Sector Coordinating Unit, thus doing what was asked of them by the First World, yet when I examined the partnership between the EU and two African countries and discussed this partnership with an African official at WSCU, one of his opening comments was that WSCU was not really involved and that he 'felt left out a bit'. This seems to be an indication of a Western hegemony that is also hinted at in one of the EU documents where the DG for development claims to possess 'state-of-the-art knowledge on developing countries'. This would perhaps have been the ideal place to acknowledge the contribution of any local expertise, knowledge or cultural specificity and to contribute towards the building of a working partnership between equals. Pieterse notes the clash that occurs between local knowledge and Western hegemony and goes on to mention the imposition of ideas and values as noted in other literature.⁷

The connection between good governance issues, freedom and empowerment seems to run through contemporary literature, the EU documents and the empirical evidence to greater or lesser degrees. Transparency in government and the withdrawal of the state⁸ to allow for greater involvement of the people is also advocated in development literature, and in this area the relationship between the EU and Lesotho and Mozambique has much that is noteworthy. Such authors as Majid Rahnema⁹ discuss the need for partnership to be properly participatory in order for it to be true and empowering and similar ideals are espoused by Amartya Sen and Ivan Illich – both of whom call for greater agency on the part of the Third World in opposition to the dominance of the First World. The definition proposed by Julius Nyerere in the South Commission runs along similar lines and calls for development to be 'enabling'. This desire for freedom, to be able to take part in their own processes and to 'do their jobs', was reflected in several conversations in both Lesotho and Mozambique. Mr Kulam suggested that the continual oversight of the EU was intimidating, that he felt 'checked up on' and that being left to do his job, by the IMF and the World Bank, was better for him. He believed that if a partnership is to work, then one partner has to have some faith in the other partner. Mr Khabo at Lesotho Rural Water Supply said that he

wanted more freedom to do his job and he believed he was getting more freedom. Mr Monteforte, technical assistant at micro projects in Lesotho, believed it was his job to make himself redundant and empower as many local people as possible, as soon as possible. Mr Muchanga, at the DNA in Mozambique, complained that he simply wanted to do his job but felt that he was being undermined by the EU. So there seems to be some relationship between freedom for development and freedom to develop. This also relates to the frequent complaint of a lack of capacity in recipient countries. Perhaps in some cases, there is not a lack of capacity on the part of the Africans, but merely a lack of trust on the part of the Europeans.

The listed EU documents recognise the ACP countries as independent states and note the colonial past, thus again acknowledging their freedom. They expand this to include such ideas as democracy, human rights and the promotion of civil society via NGOs. Issues relating to freedom were referred to in later evidence taken from Mr Panayiotis in Brussels, who made the link between colonial times, the fight for a free country and the desire to expel Europeans but the necessity to have them back and seemingly still able to dictate policy by threatening to withhold aid.

The ability to impose certain values comes from two sources: the dominant discourse within development and the fact that the First World holds the purse strings. Gilbert Rist, in *The History of Development* (1997),¹⁰ examines the history of the dominant discourse in development, building the case through the enlightenment period, the colonial era, the Truman speech of 1949 and up to his disillusionment with the level of dominance the discourse has achieved. He claims that not only does the Third World seem dominated by it, but that the First World is, too. This dominance is displayed in the selected EU papers in several ways. There is the assumption that the only way to make any progress is the way of the EU states. The opening paragraph of the Mission Statement tells the developing countries what is going to happen to them and nowhere does it mention cooperation, let alone partnership or participation. This same paper then decides what policies it will pursue, notes that it (DGVIII) will provide leadership, has state-of-the-art knowledge on developing countries (thus more knowledge than the countries themselves) and that it will focus its work on areas of concern to EU citizens. Any ideas, values, concerns and even the recipients of any aid are simply notable by their absence

or omission. The second published paper, referring to the ACP, has an air of superiority running throughout. Examples of this occur when the EU discusses the lack of reciprocity in the system of trade preferences. The paper seems to read that the EU is going out of its way to accommodate the ACP but notes that the ACP are 'merely obliged to apply the most favoured nation clause' and 'to refrain from discriminating between countries of the Union'. A further instance of this patronisation occurs when noting that now, after Yaoundé and Lomé and after being guided by the EU to an acceptable (to the EU) level of maturity, that the EU will 'entrust the ACP countries with additional responsibilities'. Based on the categorisation of Van Dijk and the political identity recognised by Howarth, a position of hegemonic patronisation is assumed despite the several references to partnership.

The third paper referring to the Cotonou Agreement, whilst mentioning 'partnership', uses the wording 'cooperation' much more and we are left wondering if a different word and therefore definition is used to introduce a differing dynamic to the relationship. This is reinforced by mentioning half-way through the paper that aid is simply 'no longer an automatic right', but that it is now contingent upon performance. This financial threat is reinforced for instance in the National Indicative Programme for Lesotho. This idea that development is a system of domination is noted by such writers as Rist, Rahnema and Abrahamsen and further empirical evidence from Lesotho and Mozambique clearly shows a system where one partner feels the imposition of the other. This position is also mentioned by Sachs in *Planet Dialectics*¹¹, when he notes that country after country is being drawn into the sphere of the West.

The control of the purse strings is pointed to in several of the EU papers: The categorisation of Van Dijk and the political identities of Howarth are used to link the EU to the World Bank and the IMF, both financial institutions, thereby claiming the same position for the EU. This is further reinforced by grouping the ACP into categories according to their level of poverty, to provide a stark contrast. The creation of two 'sides' or two different positions is noted in contemporary literature and is generally thought to have come, at least within recent hegemonic discourse, from the Truman speech of 1949, which divided the world into two camps: developed and undeveloped.

This division of the partnership was reflected in many interviews in Lesotho and Mozambique, as discussed above. Thus in the EU papers, in the current literature and in the empirical evidence, it can be seen that control of the purse strings rests firmly with the EU and whilst this may be unavoidable, it is clearly not helping to create a genuine working partnership where both sides feel valued and respected.

The effective functioning of the partnership as a contributing factor to local, national, regional or even international security can be related to development literature, particularly in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the World Trade Centre in New York. Mr Ramoeli at SADC WSCU in Lesotho noted that both SADC and the WSCU were trying to share water for peace and integration based on the model of regimes promoted by neoliberalism. Contemporary literature notes the change from state-centric security to an expanded definition moving beyond a military agenda. For instance, Buzan et al.¹² note that security is about survival and is applicable at the local level and relevant to all of humankind. So the security of water has found a place on the political agenda. Truman noted the security connection between the developed and underdeveloped world in his speech of 1949 and this position is extended into the published EU documents. In the opening paragraph, entitled 'Objective', of the third paper referring to the Cotonou Agreement, the same concern is noted. Here the EU mentions 'contributing to peace and security' and their attempt to promote stability. Section five, entitled 'Pillar I', mentions peace building and conflict prevention. This EU paper, and the others, does of course link security to their gospel of neoliberal reforms to reinforce the dominant discourse promoted by the Washington Consensus. British prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown have also linked development to security and this link is commented on by Sachs¹³ in his claim that the North must maintain its hegemonic dominance over the South to maintain world peace and stability.

This problem is still ongoing, as is evidenced in various press reports from around the world. Robert Gehrke, writing in the *Arizona Daily Sun* on 10 March 2004, notes the problems of conflict over water scarcity in the western states of America and various stories previously noted (see above) in the Australian press comment on the breakdown of society for the same reason. Thus

the Africans and Europeans seem to share a concern for this issue. This piece of work itself, the existence of SADC WSCU and the provision for water in the National Indicative Programmes of Lesotho and Mozambique, provide evidence of the desire for both parts of the partnership to cooperate in this area.

Having examined the literature in conjunction with the evidence from Africa, it seems appropriate to do the same with the evidence obtained from officials in Brussels. Areas of total agreement (linked to working water projects) between EU officials, Africans on the ground, published papers and contemporary literature should suggest very strongly that the EU-ACP partnership is working particularly well; however, any indications of disagreement, or of conflict, should indicate that the partnership is not working as well as the published papers hoped it should. If this is the case, it is surely incumbent on the two partners to improve the system to make it more effective.

Initially, Mrs Kinnock, as Co-president of the ACP-EU Joint Parliament, gave a positive impression of the partnership when she commented that 'we deliberate on issues'. This suggests a functioning level of partnership and the participation of both partners and contradicts the idea of EU hegemony raised by some people in Africa. It supports the EU published papers which mention a 'close, far-reaching and complex partnership', and seems to support the general idea of partnership in literature. Kinnock continues this impression by noting that the EU-ACP agreement 'is a unique setup'. However, this position of support for the published papers and the idea of equal partnership was contradicted when Mrs Kinnock noted that 'by definition there are inequalities' and gave examples of capacity, expertise and perhaps most telling, funds. She also noted the disadvantaged position of 'lots of ACP countries' and thus implicitly the position of advantage that the EU holds: This seems to support much of the evidence that came from Lesotho and Mozambique that mentions the superiority of the EU, the power it holds and uses and the positions of authority it adopts.

The practical issue of achieving certain standards of sanitation in food production, storage and transportation that Mrs Kinnock mentioned are indicative of the differences between the EU countries and some of the ACP countries. Mrs Kinnock noted that some of the ACP countries had problems meeting the standards required by the EU, thus putting the EU on a higher level. Here is the underly-

ing assumption that EU standards are the only acceptable standards, that First World standards must be progressed towards and the unspoken threat that failure to achieve these standards will result in trade being suspended or ended. The idea that everyone can move continually forward is similar to Rostow's ideas¹⁴ of stages of economic development and whilst in reference to food standards it may be reasonable, the assumption of a superior position that others must try to match or catch up to is symptomatic of the problems of hegemonic positioning to which various people in Africa made reference. The published EU documents continue this theme and extend the need to move forward to certain First World standards into the areas of human rights, democracy, gender equality and environmentalism. The assumption is that because the EU, in the First World, wants these areas to be noteworthy, then the ACP must accept a similar position.

Mrs Kinnock's comment that 'the EU is not an ex-colonial power', and that therefore 'the countries prefer the EU' to most bilateral donor-recipient relationships, reflects the information published by the EU which notes the historical relationship between Europe and the ACP (and prior to this as colonial masters and colonies) since the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community. Similar comments were made by other EU officials (e.g. Mr Barfod), again linking the EU to its ex-colonies. Van Dijk's categorisation and Howarth's political identities, which reinforce this relationship, are in evidence throughout the EU published papers. It does seem, however, that despite Mrs Kinnock's belief that the EU is not an ex-colonial power, the joint historical relationship cannot be ignored. Mr Motanyane in Lesotho made reference to it as did the EU official in Brussels who did not wish to be identified. References to the colonial relationship and the way it has changed over the years run throughout development literature. Mrs Kinnock's position was disputed by Mr Malin (Head of Unit Relations for EU and ACP institutions), who acknowledged 'lots of historical baggage'.

Europe's position of historical dominance over its colonies has been maintained, prolonged and further promoted by the dominant discourse within development. This allows for the promotion of neoliberalism and its associated values. Mrs Kinnock commented on what she called national and 'universal values', which she related to human rights. She made passing reference to different ver-

sions of human rights which may be experienced within the ACP, but she did indicate that – contrary to the view of some development writers – she was prepared to ‘listen and learn from people’ whilst visiting their countries. This suggests more of an equal relationship and less of the hegemonic domination associated with the Washington Consensus. The published EU papers make several references to the values promoted by the Western world, such as ‘the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights’, as mentioned for instance in Papers 1 and 2. The dominance of Western values to the detriment of local values and culture is commented on in development literature by such authors as Rapley,¹⁵ Rist,¹⁶ Sachs¹⁷ Chambers¹⁸ and particularly by Said in *Orientalism*.¹⁹ Further references were made by Mr Motanyane and Mr Maope, who expressed their concern for the destruction of their local heritage and culture. Thus the imposition of values by the First World and their acceptance by the recipients of any aid, in order to continue receiving the aforementioned aid, can reinforce the dominant discourse and the position of the hegemon within it. Mrs Kinnock further commented that ‘it should not be a donor–recipient relationship in a patronising sense’, but she went on to add that ‘that is what it is in reality’. This is clear proof, particularly coming from the Co-president of the ACP–EU Joint Parliament, of the inequality, dominance and subservience that exists within the EU–ACP relationship. Evidence from Lesotho and Mozambique supports this position.

Mrs Kinnock, and perhaps the EU as a whole, has recognised the inequality that exists and so they are faced with several choices. They could do nothing and leave the donor–recipient aid system untouched, but as indicated above, this is not working satisfactorily enough. More work could be done to come to a definition of partnership that is acceptable and workable for all. However, the third choice is to change the current system of aid donation as mentioned by Mr Barfod (see interview above). Again, here is the chance for the EU to propose changes to the EU–ACP aid system and to have these suggestions put before the ACP as a consultation document to be discussed and negotiated, or the proposals can be presented to the ACP as a *fait accompli* and then imposed on the recipients from the hegemonic position of the dominant discourse and the financial controller of the relationship.

This chapter has attempted to bring the separate strands of the book together. It has firmly established the relative positions of power, wealth and influence of the EU and Lesotho, displaying the positions from which dominance and subservience could occur. It has shown that empirical evidence has been gathered, via interview, from a variety of sources within Lesotho and Mozambique. It has shown that the EU has a specific agenda containing political issues such as good governance and that this issue has been promoted by the EU from its position of controller of the 'purse-strings'. It has also provided links to issues raised in general development literature, such as the 'macro versus micro' issue referred to earlier.

This chapter has shown that issues raised in Lesotho are duplicated in Mozambique and that these concerns are therefore reinforced in their repetition. Admissions from Brussels have shown that EU officials do not fully respect the concept of equality, that the concept of equality is changing and that therefore the idea of partnership is changing. It follows that differing concepts of partnership too must exist. In the ongoing relationship between the EU and ACP there must therefore be two differing philosophical ideas of partnership, and this idea relates to the ideas expressed earlier by Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.

The next chapter brings this differing position to the fore.

THE NEXT STEP

The Working Paper on the NAO position

This working paper, titled 'Orientation note on the reinforcement of the National Authorising Officer system', is reproduced in full in Appendix 2.

This paper, and the response it elicits, goes a long way towards demonstrating the asymmetrical relationship that currently exists between the EU and those countries that receive its aid via the NAO system. The changing balance between the two sides and the relative power available to one side rather than the other are clear to see.

For several reasons mentioned previously, the relationship that exists between the EU and the ACP, and thus Lesotho and Mozambique, has proved not to work as well as it might. Developmental literature points to historical problems that impact on the current situation, and empirical evidence collected in Southern Africa and Brussels also raises some concerns. However, while some people are content merely to criticise, as was illustrated in the examination of certain authors' works, others are attempting to move the partnership forward. Pieterse notes that development is a 'moving target' and that 'actual development thinking and action is about finding a balance or accommodation between different actors, perspectives, interests and dimensions within specific historical, political and ecological settings'.¹ This desire to 'hit a moving target' is reflected in the desire of the European Union to come up with a 'post-participation paradigm', as suggested by Mr Mikael Barfod in his interview (see Chapter 4): Clearly the EU does not think that the current practice is effective. Pieterse was very critical of post-developmental literature that only passed negative comments on the current developmental situation and suggested that 'a

book with just criticisms and goodbyes to paradigms would be too easy'. It seems that the EU is not content to merely criticise but is attempting to advance the somewhat stagnant status quo in the relationship between it and the ACP. To achieve a greater return on each Euro in order to satisfy the European electorate and the European Parliament, to address the constantly recurring issue of lack of capacity in certain ACP countries and perhaps to be seen to be dealing with each locality as a specific unto itself, as a more postmodern approach would demand, the European Commission through the Europe Aid Office of cooperation produced the *Orientation note on the reinforcement of the National Authorising Officer system*. Drawn up in Brussels and dated 15 February 2004, this paper was presented at the 29th session of the ACP–EU joint Council of Ministers that took place in Gaborone, Botswana on 6 and 7 May 2004.

A press release from the European Union noted: 'The first day of discussions will be dedicated to issues linked to EU–ACP trade and development cooperation.'² This release noted the new water facility set up by the European Commission and the Council of Ministers to promote access to clean water and sanitation for ACP countries and noted a first phase of finance worth up to 500 million euros. Further on in the press release it was noted that:

In accordance with provisions of the Cotonou Agreement the EC has this year initiated a mid-term review of all strategies to allow for adjustments ... and to take into account new policy priorities that may have arisen since the finalisation of the strategies.

The press release adds:

A revision clause was introduced to allow for 'reality checks' every five years. Negotiations between the EU and ACP on a first revision of the agreement will be opened at the joint ACPEU council and were due to have been completed by the end of February 2005. EU foreign ministers met in Luxembourg on 27th April 2004 and decided the issues to be raised. They include 'increasing flexibility in the allocation of resources to better adapt to new needs and challenges' and also 'redefining and decentralising management of develop-

ment aid funds in ACP countries in order to simplify implementation and strengthen local ownership’.

The two phrases in inverted commas allow for a change in the system despite the claim in the press release that:

the Commission considers the planned revision of the Cotonou Agreement as a good opportunity to assess and adjust the mechanics of EU–ACP cooperation in order to further improve the capacity to deliver efficient and high quality development aid. It is not the intention to challenge the modern and solid foundation that is provided by the core principles of the Cotonou Agreement.

On 24 February 2005, the EU released a press statement entitled ‘Conclusion of the EUACP Negotiations on the Revision of the Cotonou Agreement’.³ This press release discusses the revisions in glowing terms and phrases such as ‘concluded successfully’, though it does not specifically say for whom. European Commission President Barroso welcomed the agreement, saying: ‘Poverty reduction is at the heart of these Agreements with countries from Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific; they are a vital spur to development.’ The comment from the Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, can be read as positive when he said, ‘This agreement represents a substantial breakthrough. It ensures the continuation of our cooperation with ACP countries with financial support...’ This statement can, however, be seen as suggesting that without the agreement the continued cooperation between the EU and ACP would be in jeopardy and thus the financial power of the EU is again there for all to see.

Analysis of the paper presented to the ACP at the aforementioned meeting, especially when related to the comments made by Mr Barfod (see Chapter 4), are particularly relevant when examining the relationship between the EU and the ACP.

The paper begins by talking about ‘co-management’ and an ‘efficient sharing of responsibilities’. The use of ‘co’ and ‘sharing’ suggest equal partnership and the same ideals espoused in the EU documents analysed earlier. The EU seems to accept some responsibility for the system not working as well as it might by mentioning its plans to ‘deconcentrate’ [*sic*] the aid ‘process from EC headquarters

services to the EC delegations' and goes on to say that measures 'can be taken on both sides'.

The paper takes great pains to note the amount of dialogue and consultations that took place with the NAOs over the last semester of 2003 on ways and means to improve EDF implementation through the strengthening of the NAO system, presumably in an attempt to dispel any idea that they imposed anything new onto the ACP. It notes that a meeting of the NAOs in Brussels on 12 May 2003 on 'the timely and effective implementation of the EDF and the EPRD' adopted the findings and recommendations of thematic evaluations of projects of support to NAOs completed at the end of 2002. The fourth paragraph begins by noting that the 'proposals' contained in the paper are only meant to serve 'as a guide in the dialogue between the delegations and the NAOs'. It is also careful to say 'they do not constitute a "Blueprint" of measures'.

This all sounds very positive, but it is in stark contrast with the interview comments made in Brussels, such as 'the NAO concept is in tatters' and 'we prop up the NAO'.

The question must be asked, again, whether is this a genuine attempt at empowering the ACP countries through equal participation in a review of the procedures, or merely the power of the hegemonic partner being exerted again to achieve what may be seen as a suitable result but for its own ends. Perhaps with the experience and capacity of personnel available to it, the EU is moving the process forward to provide better support for the African countries and thus more efficient delivery of its aid to the recipients. A more cynical reading of this situation might reveal a fear that the European taxpayer is becoming 'aid weary' and that there is an urgent need to be able to show a positive return on any aid donated.

Paragraph four notes that 'local context may vary considerably' and thus the postmodern fear of the macro imposition of rules or systems is addressed. The paper goes on to say that the 'NAO system must be adapted to the realities of the country concerned', thus reinforcing the new 'micro-awareness' – though the use of 'must' rather than 'needs' still sounds like one partner's insistence. This document goes on to note that the aim is to produce both 'short-term results in terms of improved EDF implementation but also long-term impact on institutional capacity and sustainability in the management of public resources in ACP countries'. I believe that this again displays the two reasons for the change in system; first-

ly, the need to achieve a good return on money spent, and secondly, the desire to improve local institutional capacity, thus showing a genuine desire to empower the aid recipients.

The paper claims to base its findings on 'a representative sample of the main situations' with data being collected from 62 EC delegations and 'reports received from some of them'. It then states that the relationship of the NAO with certain ministries has an influence on how the NAO does the job required of it. It also notes the generalised creation of support units and the 'significant' (around 52 per cent) presence of 'expatriate technical assistance'. The report recognises the value of these support units in improving performance but also suggests that they do not help 'develop pertinent strategies towards institutional support and interface with line ministries'. Furthermore, 'the "ownership" and sustainability issues are not properly addressed in the projects of support to the NAOs'.

Thus the paper lists 'three main categories of difficulties ... identified in the exercise of the functions of the NAO'.

Institutional difficulties occur when the NAO structure is 'not sufficiently integrated in the normal administrative structure established for the development process of the country'. When the NAO structure is positioned favourably within the system of management for the country's resources, 'it appears that the implementation of the EU cooperation is much more effective'.

The *functional difficulties* occur because the mandate of the NAO is 'limited to the contractual and financial management of EDF projects'. Thus there can be 'significant weaknesses in the areas of strategic planning and the monitoring of implementation of EU resources', which leads to weaknesses in the impact of EU assistance to the development process.

Structural difficulties are also identified: 'The structure of the NAO services, and of the support which Community aid provides, does not encourage responsibility and ownership of functions and of tasks by the partner country.'

Thus various problems or issues are noted, but proposals are made of measures to be taken to rectify these problems, in the manner recommended by Pieterse. These proposals are linked to the specifics of each country, thus addressing the postmodern demand for local action and specificity. These proposals deal with the reorganising of the NAO system and also improvements in the support mechanisms for the NAO, which it is hoped will lead to better posi-

tioning of the NAO in any national administration, progressive sub-delegation by the NAO of certain NAO functions, and the setting up of effective monitoring systems. Support projects to the NAO must not only review the role and mandate of the unit itself but also examine the role of technical assistance and the use of local personnel. The paper is careful to note that 'some of the proposed measures may be already partially or totally implemented' and also suggests that particular countries may be at different stages on the path towards efficient delivery of aid, so that the measures suggested simply point to a 'path that can be followed through different stages, modalities and time frames'. Furthermore, the EU insists that 'a certain degree of flexibility should characterise their implementation'.

The paper moves on to reassess the current organisation of the NAO system. It points out that the NAO technical functions 'are described in detail' in Article 35, Annex IV of Cotonou Agreement, but adds that 'the more political ones are less explicit'. Great care must be taken during this reassessment for the EU to be seen as simply attempting to make the delivery of aid more efficient rather than wanting to have more political influence in any specific country through its financial power and the repositioning of an official position that was created by it. It is not difficult to see this reorganisation as European imperialism and to envisage a level of resentment in certain countries whose receipt of aid is changed in the near future. Clearly officials in Brussels see the possibility of this happening, as reflected in comments such as 'those that can't, will have a change in the system' and 'Africans will give in eventually, they'll have to'. Mr Barfod commented that lots of recipient countries saw outside involvement 'as a percentage loss of independence', but at the same time, he realised that the EU needed 'to be tougher with countries that cannot make it'. This may well be 'for their own good' or could be seen more cynically as being for the EU's own good in its search for better value for the donated euros. The desire to improve the system for its own sake is, however, reflected in Mr Barfod's anxious yet hopeful rhetorical question, 'Can we change our paradigm without a crisis?'

The working paper divides the ACP countries into three groups, as did Mr Barfod's comments in his previous interview: those that can manage, those that can be helped to manage and those that cannot manage. The paper deals with the first position when it refers to what it calls 'the principal question relating to the position

of the National Authorising Officer'. This 'improved positioning' of the NAO 'should allow Community interventions to be better integrated into the national system for management of public resources'. If this is merely a desire to achieve greater efficiency and a more immediately visible return on their euros, then this repositioning is surely to be welcomed. However, the EU must be careful not to be seen as attempting to gain further influence within a particular country by requiring the office it created, and which is responsible to it for the implementation of policies, to be pushed further into the power structure of a particular government.

The second position which Mr Barfod referred to as 'those few that can be brought up to the required standard' is dealt with in the working paper when it asks for 'a strengthened role of the NAO as interface and support to line ministries or agencies which are the main responsible for project implementation'. The EU believes that this 'strengthening' would be beneficial to the country concerned and would help it achieve the 'required standard' mentioned above. Again, the desire to improve efficiency must be seen as paramount, not the seizing of more political power or influence. The above would be accomplished by the NAO system 'being directed by a strong political entity, the NAO in its full capacity' that would then be able to delegate some of his technical functions to 'various competent and well-equipped services (Ministries or Public Agencies)'.

The EU is concerned to distinguish between one country and another. They note that 'delegation of functions should not be promoted systematically regardless of the institutional context of ACP countries'. They go on to suggest that 'different solutions will have to be adopted' because of the 'differing management capacities of the ACP states'. This seems to address the academic critique of always applying macro solutions to what are essentially micro problems and allows the EU to pick and choose which ACP country or countries it sees as capable of achieving the 'required standard'. It also recognises the oft-stated claim of a lack of capacity in certain countries, which was made several times in both Lesotho and Mozambique. The EU also suggests that:

for every EDF project or programme to be decided a review/assessment of the concerned Ministry's capacity to manage mobilized EDF resources should be undertaken in

order to decide whether it is possible and beneficial to delegate part of the NAO management functions towards the concerned Ministry.

This raises two points. Firstly, in more recent telephone conversations Mr Barfod has noted a reluctance on the part of some NAOs to relinquish any control for fear of losing power. Secondly, who is going to make the decision concerning the appropriate capacity of the particular ministry? Will it be the ministry itself, the NAO, the local EU delegation or will a decision be made in Brussels?

The third group of ACP countries referred to in the interview with Mr Barfod, as 'those that can't', are dealt with in the working paper in the section that re-examines 'the role and the mandate' of the units that support the NAO. According to the EU, these units must 'when appropriate ... reduce their function of direct management of projects and programmes'. This is justified in conjunction with a repositioning of the NAO support units with generally 'greater integration into the local institutional context' to 'promote the ownership of the cooperation process by the national administration'. The EU realises that this would entail not only support for project implementation but must also 'include capacity building in the overall coordination/management of public resources'. It is acknowledged that 'this integration into the national framework may create difficulties in some countries due to serious weaknesses in the national system'. Thus the issue of the lack of local capacity is noted and addressed; however, in the meantime the EU states that 'the approach to be adopted needs to find an acceptable balance between long-term ownership by addressing progressively important structural weaknesses and short-term effectiveness in terms of project implementation'. This means that whilst help will be given to improve local capacity, until it is seen to be able to deal effectively with EU funding instruments, the short-term consideration of effective project implementation will be paramount and thus funding as a whole will occur in a fashion that the EU believes will lead to a more immediate and visible return on their money.

So the relationship that exists between the EU and the ACP, and hence Lesotho and Mozambique, is altered again. Perhaps one test of the equality within the relationship will be seen in the response of the ACP countries, and this could depend on their perception of the EU and the perspective from which they view the EU. As David

Campbell reminds us in *National Deconstruction* (1998), 'the same events can be represented in markedly different ways'. His book about the Bosnian war suggests that the war can only be known through perspective and thus it may only be possible to see the relationship between the EU and the ACP from each perspective. Devetak adds to this point by noting: 'For postmodernism, following Nietzsche, perspectives are integral to the constitution of the "real world", because they are basic and essential elements of it.'⁴ He goes on to say that 'perspectives are thus component objects and events that go towards making up the "real world".' Therefore, the hegemonic partner can vigorously present the most acceptable (to themselves) perspective and this conception of events acquires the status of reality. This is reflected in the EU's decision that the ACP mostly cannot deal with the sophistication of the EU's funding mechanisms and that the position of the NAO needs to be altered.

Devetak extends his argument by examining those ideas put forward by Cynthia Weber.⁵ Weber provides an account of 'how the meaning of state sovereignty is stabilised by theories and practices of intervention'. She notes: 'Like any political concept or institution, sovereignty is an essentially contested and unstable one whose functions change over time.' This is relevant to the position and the actions of the EU, which is not a state but acts with many of the functions of a state, as the hegemonic partner, and also to a certain extent, to the ACP. Devetak adds, 'By analysing the different forms of intervention and modalities of punishment which have occurred over time she seeks to trace the changing ways in which sovereignty has been constituted'.⁶ The position and power of the EU has been formed and built upon over the years since its inception, thus continually defining and redefining itself, and thus its 'sovereignty' over the ACP has been reflected in the changing treaties of Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou. However, whether the EU is acting merely to legitimise its existence or out of a desire to see a more effective return on the euros invested, the fact remains that the EU has attempted to redefine the NAO position from the position of hegemonic partner and the response of the individual countries and the collective response of the ACP may have much to say about the partnership between the EU and ACP. As Rousseau noted,⁷ 'I had seen that everything is rooted in politics and that whatever may be attempted, no people would ever be other than the nature of the government made them'. Thus Mr Barfod was per-

haps correct when he said that the Africans will have to give in eventually, even if they do not like what is suggested, because the EU will make them give in through the unspoken threat of withholding aid.

This paper produced by the EU has liberal wording that is similar to the Cotonou Agreement. It is also rather like the Cotonou Agreement in that there is some scope for a rather neoliberal interpretation of the content of the paper. Previous sections of this book have shown that the idea of partnership has evolved into two differing ideas for the EU and ACP and this paper presented by the EU reinforces that same idea.

THE CURRENT POSITION: AFTER THE MID-TERM REVIEW

'Every five years, the possibility exists to adapt the Cotonou agreement'¹ and this session of mid-term reviews has shed light on the type of partnership that exists between the EU and the ACP. 'By many this agreement is considered as a model for development cooperation as it stresses the equality of partners and the local ownership of development strategies, by recognising the importance of participation, dialogue and mutual obligations, differentiation and regionalisation'.² However, the light shed on the situation by this book has merely succeeded in illuminating the inequalities that exist in what was supposed to be a leading example of development cooperation. The mid-term review has spotlighted the different positions taken by the EU and the ACP, which therefore do not support the idea of a partnership amongst equals. The continual use of the word 'partnership' in many EU documents suggests the idea of equality in every area, but this concept is not fully addressed in EU or ACP documents. Equality of respect for a sovereign nation-state is evident in the same way that equality is granted in the United Nations, where each country is given one vote in the General Assembly and the rich countries have the same power of vote as the poorer countries (membership of the Security Council notwithstanding). The World Bank, however, takes a different approach and a 'weighted' version of voting gives much more power to the richer countries of the First World. The EU in its relationship with the ACP seems to espouse the UN version of equality of respect or 'rights', as Ms Moreau commented, but quickly moves to the World Bank version – giving the EU more say in

the partnership. This book has suggested differing theoretical appreciations of the idea of partnership and would further suggest that whilst confusion exists over which approach to the relationship is being taken, the different sides of the partnership have ample opportunity to 'choose' differing approaches and thus the possibility of disagreement or conflict between partners can easily arise. Disputes could be avoided where more time and energy are spent on agreeing to work to the same approach.

The organisation Concord, which represents a European NGO confederation for relief and development, notes that mid-term reviews have been going on since March 2004 in several ACP countries. Concord note that the European Commission stresses that 'this process is a joint exercise and should lead to serious discussion on both the national development strategies and their implementation'.³ The working group at Concord go on to note that political, economical and financial performance will also be evaluated and that this could lead to a reallocation of resources. Thus Concord suggests it 'can identify a trend in EU policy to further incorporate aid and other aspects of development cooperation into the commercial and security agenda of the EU'.⁴ Because of this, Concord's analysis 'suggests that the union risks reneging on its previous commitments to participation, ownership and partnership'.⁵ Concord goes on to ask whether aid could become instrumentalised, and further questions whether the 'new institutional architecture, not yet defined, could potentially lead to the politicised use of aid and on the priorities for and the volume of official development assistance for all countries, especially the Least Developed Countries and "poor performers"'.⁶

According to Concord, there were several meetings during 2004 to identify which issues were open for negotiation. It says that the EU claims it will not 'question or alter the fundamental "acquis" of the Cotonou Agreement'; however, the EU has also stated that 'the instruments of cooperation need renewing and some new political and security issues need to be addressed'.⁷ Thus Concord states that 'the ACP position is that the EU's view touches upon the very heart of the Cotonou Agreement'.⁸ Thus there are clearly great differences of opinion between the EU and ACP positions, and a strong possibility that these positions could become more divergent in the future.

Following the revelation by Mr Barfod at AIDCO (see interview

in Chapter 4, above) concerning a new 'post-participation paradigm' relating to the renegotiation of the NAO position, it is also noted by Concord that 'in several proposals put forward under the revision of the Cotonou Agreement the EU has indicated that it intends to redefine the responsibilities of the National Authorising Officers (NAOs), the Commission and its Delegations'.⁹ Concord goes on to say:

Although the EU stresses that it wants to uphold the importance of the concept of ownership and participation it is becoming clear that the Commission intends to work outside the NAO or RAO ... A proposal has been put forward that would under certain circumstances replace the NAO by the Chief Authorising Officer (Head of the Delegation). Moreover the decision to replace the NAO falls within the competence of the Commission.¹⁰

The actual practice of this proposal is far from clear, but the creation by the EU of the Water Facility (a project to provide further funding to ACP countries, outside the NAO role, to bridge the financial gap currently existing and to enable the ACP countries to meet millennium development goals on water provision) could also be viewed as a way to bypass and thus disempower the NAOs. A further proposal of delegating the execution of aid programmes to Ministries within countries can also be seen as reducing the position of the NAO.

These opinions strongly support the position taken throughout this work that the EU realises the inequality in the power dynamic between themselves and the ACP and will not hesitate to use this power if they deem it suitable. The information obtained from Mr Barfod and his suggestion of a 'post-participation paradigm' seems to show the way forward in a fashion much removed from the original statements put out by the EU and examined earlier in this work. The importance of the 'post-participation paradigm' as introduced by Mr Barfod cannot be overstated and clearly suggests that the EU is going to politicise the use of aid. Mr Barfod's comment that the EU will 'resort to simple methods of direct aid to civil society' can easily be related to issues of good governance, democracy and security and the power of the EU, and the recognition of the power imbalance and the attitude related to the use of this power

imbalance can easily be seen in the comments 'Those that can't will have a change in system' and 'By 2007 ... hope that the NAO concept will be redefined ... Africans will give in eventually ... they'll have to.'

The principle of partnership, and whether the EU and ACP could ever be equal partners, was discussed in the 'Future of Lomé' debate that preceded the negotiations for the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Included in this agreement was a chapter on the political dimension and this was seen as evidence of the maturity of the relationship between the EU and ACP. James Mackie of ECDPM has, however, questioned this claim. He notes in the *Courier* of September–October 2003: 'If the partnership was to get away from a dependency relationship, born out of the post-colonial era, then it had to be broad, far-reaching and involve frank, two-way dialogue.'¹¹ He notes: 'ACP–EU political dialogue has undoubtedly occurred ... but it has also hit major blockages and raised considerable doubts and fears.'¹² Mackie identifies fears over what happens when dialogue breaks down and the possibility of sanctions under Article 96 is invoked, and he suggests that 'for some this is the new conditionality hidden behind the partnership'.¹³ Mackie concludes that partnership is a central guiding principle for the Cotonou Partnership Agreement but believes that 'this is not yet working as well as had been hoped'.¹⁴ Mackie also clearly states that 'the partnership is manifestly not one of equals', saying also that 'the EU holds most of the major cards. The ACP feels this means the EU can twist their arm if differences are not resolved.'

A more recent publication from ECDPM looks at another area of disagreement between the EU and the ACP. The strong political dimension is recognised as one of the main characteristics of Cotonou and the ECDPM review seeks to enrich the political provisions 'with references to the International Criminal Court and the fight against terrorism'.¹⁵ ECDPM notes that 'a more controversial element is the EU proposal to extend the list of "essential elements" of the partnership by adding a reference to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction'.¹⁶ ECDPM claims that a violation of this principle could lead to suspension of aid under Article 96 of Cotonou. The ACP states object to this, claiming it is 'not an essential element for development or poverty reduction'.¹⁷ Here again is more evidence of disagreement between the EU and the ACP which extends into the consultation procedure associated with sus-

pension of aid under Article 96. The ACP want to make use of the so-called 'political dialogue' that is said to exist within the EU-ACP partnership to smooth over any bumpy issue in the partnership and therefore is proposing new wording allowing the start of a consultation procedure to be dependent on a joint EU-ACP decision. The most telling indicator of the inequality in the partnership is that 'the EU strongly opposes the co-decision principle'.¹⁸ The EU clearly wants to have control of this issue and the ability to use it whenever it desires.

The Society for International Development held a conference in The Hague in October 2004 which examined the relationship between Europe and the South and was attended by over 250 experts from America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Here, Poul Nielson's 'plea for fewer procedures and rules met with general agreement'.¹⁹ This tends to support the requests, or complaints, made in much of the empirical evidence gathered during interviews in Lesotho and Mozambique. It also suggests that the EU and ACP are thinking along the same lines, thus supporting the idea of a mature partnership between equals. However, the discussion on partnership at the conference produced a much more clear-cut outcome, with representatives of the ACP highly critical of the current situation between the EU and the ACP.

The pretension of creating partnerships, and the implicit assumption that a relationship of equals can be built up within such partnerships, was strongly criticised by some delegates. For example, the Assistant Secretary General of the ACP secretariat in Brussels, Pa'o Luteru, stated that Europe has the final say in the negotiations between the European Commission and the ACP countries.²⁰

This statement from a senior ACP official is a particularly strong attack on the EU rhetoric claiming a working partnership between equals.

Thus a variety of 'outside' opinion is critical of the relationship, but what of the two partners themselves?

The EU surely stands by the documents it publishes and the idea of a mature, working relationship that is a model for development cooperation, though this seems to have changed somewhat over the last few years. The Cotonou Agreement was hailed as a model for

development cooperation, though the inclusion of the political provision seems to be altering the balance between the two partners and the mid-term review appears to be altering the balance even further in favour of the EU. The interview with Mr Barfod and his 'post-participation paradigm' also tends to suggest that the EU wants to see a change in the way the relationship is managed. The ongoing examination of Cotonou via the mid-term review has produced the above comment from the ACP Secretary General. The proposed renegotiation of the position and power of the NAO has also prompted Dr Balye, an expert at the ACP secretariat in Brussels currently involved in the discussions related to the re-designation of the NAO position, to say 'we are concerned with this issue'.²¹

The ACP–EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, resolution 1 on ACP–EU political dialogue adopted by the joint parliament on 25 November 2004, examines the political dialogue associated with Article 8 of Cotonou and notes 'the necessity of joint decisions and conclusions in the spirit of the partnership' and believes that 'dialogue should be a two way process between equal and trusted partners'. The report does, however, feel it necessary to urge 'all parties to refrain from any unilateral action that might be seen as detrimental to the partnership'.²² This stands in stark contrast to the EU position of opposition to the co-decision principle noted earlier.

ACP press release No. 3 from The Hague on 23 November 2004 looks at political dialogue and is entitled *Towards True Partnership*. In it the ACP notes that, should the above report be adopted *and followed up* (my emphasis) by governments, 'it would serve as a safeguard for the promotion of a partnership spirit in the ACP–EU political dialogue'. In reality, however, the ACP are much more wary of 'the general tenor of the dialogue' which they believe 'resembles a big-stick policy based on punishment' that they believe will be used in a process that occurs if or when an ACP country is accused of violating an essential element of Cotonou and 'whose conclusions seem pre-established'.²³ This is very far from a relationship between trusted and respected equals and appears much more like a relationship between master and servant, bully and victim or, at best, parent and child.

In ACP press release No. 2, the EU Co-president of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly Mrs Glenys Kinnock felt the need to express 'a lengthy plea for protection of the interests of the ACP group within the framework of the revision of the Cotonou

Agreement', in which she 'stressed the distrust of the ACP States and JPA Members regarding the manner in which the negotiations were being conducted by the European Executive'.²⁴ The fact that the Co-president felt the need to ask for protection again suggests the existence of a weaker 'half' that is being bullied or dictated to by a stronger partner. This press release also notes the importance of water management as it represents 'a means of achieving genuinely sustainable development'.²⁵

In a press release from the ACP Secretariat dated 3 December 2004, the ACP report that Mr Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development at the EU, presented a series of proposals related to the budgeting of the EDF which include:

the partial allocation of resources to ACP countries at the start of the financial protocol and flexible undertakings based on performance or emergencies; possibility of including non-ACP countries among the beneficiaries of EDF projects subject to reciprocity; increased coherence between the development policies of the Union and its Member States; possibility of re-adjusting the national and regional envelopes outside of the mid-term reviews; modification of the responsibilities of ACP National Authorising Officers whose functions might, in the event of incapacity, be assumed by the European Commission.

The ACP took note of the proposals while 'expressing reservations'.²⁶

In November 2004, Mr K.D. Knight, President of the ACP Council, addressed the new President of the European Commission, Mr Jose Manuel Barroso, at the opening session of the Council of Ministers at ACP House. Mr Knight took Mr Barroso's presence as a sign of the 'commitment of you and your team to ACP-EU cooperation' at a time 'when ACP-EU relations are at a crossroad, as manifested by the revision of the Cotonou Agreement'. Mr Knight said he hoped Mr Barroso would 'aim to deepen the unique partnership that has existed between our two sides for close to three decades'.²⁷ Here again on the surface, just as in the official publications, there is a formal politeness and a sense of correctness and perhaps a desire to be 'pleasant' to the new President of the Commission, yet Mr Knight still felt the need to remind him of the 'unique partnership'.

November 2004 also saw the opening of the 8th session of the

ACP–EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly at The Hague, Netherlands. The opening speech of Mr Sardjoe, ACP Co-president, noted ‘significant developments regarding ACP–EU cooperation’.²⁸ Further into the speech Mr Sardjoe noted the issues around performance criteria and the idea that ‘countries that perform well will be rewarded, while those that perform unsatisfactorily will be sanctioned by a reduction in their resources’. He noted that ‘experience has shown that the ACP countries are not always the source of the delays in the implementation of EDF-financed projects and programmes’. This point raised by Mr Sardjoe clearly relates to issues raised in interviews of officials in Lesotho and Mozambique who claimed that EU delays held up projects, to the proposals to ‘renegotiate’ the position of the NAO as put forward by Mr Barfod at AIDCO and to ongoing worry or concern as expressed by Dr Balye at the ACP. Furthermore, it highlights the position and attitude of the EU which, despite causing its share of delays in the implementation of projects and programmes, has shifted problems into the laps of the ACP countries.

This section of the book provides more proof of the EU politicising the Cotonou Agreement and notes that the ACP and the EU are not seeing the basis of their partnership in the same light. The ACP goes so far as to call it a ‘pretension of partnership’ (see above). There is also more evidence of the EU using its power to dictate to the ACP and the resentment this causes. Here then is further proof that the concept of partnership has evolved to become two different ideas to the actors involved.

CONCLUSIONS

This book has examined the state of the partnership that exists between the EU and the ACP; it has done so by looking at the attempts to provide an improved water supply and sewerage facilities in the Kingdom of Lesotho. A wide variety of interviews conducted in Lesotho raised a series of issues that were then taken up in Mozambique to look for evidence that these same issues existed elsewhere.

As these same issues did occur in Mozambique, it seems likely that they may also occur in other ACP states. This leads to the broader conclusion that similar problems may exist throughout the EU–ACP relationship. The specifics of this case study of Lesotho, reinforced by proof of similar problems in Mozambique, allow for the definite conclusion that problems exist in the relationship between the EU and Lesotho and also between the EU and Mozambique. The evidence contained within this book suggests that there are different degrees of inequality within each EU and aid–recipient relationship; this conclusion is supported by Mr Barfod’s division of the ACP recipients of aid into three different groups that he called ‘those who can, those who can be helped to achieve the required standard and those who cannot (be helped)’. It is also supported by the working paper on the repositioning of the NAO, which shows the three different groups or classes into which ACP recipients will fall. From this it is therefore reasonable to conclude that there are different degrees of equality or inequality and, furthermore, that there are different degrees or types of partnership that exist between the EU and each recipient of aid within the ACP. In order to provide definitive proof, further research would need to be conducted into the specifics of each

bilateral aid relationship.

I began this book by making the case that there is a human right to water and noted that the National Indicative Programme for Lesotho, agreed with the EU, has the provision and improvement of the water and sewerage system as one of its main thrusts.

The idea of partnership that is still used in many EU documents and speeches suggests a concept of equality in whatever arena is discussed and it is reasonable to assume that the ACP would like to be treated as equal in all respects. This high ideal is an appropriate aim that has perhaps been achieved in the past under the original Lomé Agreement. This appreciation of the zenith of the EU-ACP partnership is shared by many authors and is confirmed by an EU official in Brussels. Mr Barfod, unit head at AIDCO in Brussels, commented, 'At Lomé the EU relationship (with the ACP) was the most advanced in the world' (see interview transcripts in Appendix 1). This book has examined the way partnership is viewed by the parties in the EU-ACP relationship and noted how the concept has evolved to mean different things to each party: The EU sees the partnership as one thing and the ACP sees the partnership as another and thus there is plenty of scope for misunderstanding and disagreement. It naturally follows that, because of this disagreement, there is potential for a hegemonic position to arise, and the opportunity for the hegemon to use this position to dominate the partnership.

Changes in Lomé III and IV followed and the successor Cotonou Agreement continued on the same path; becoming more neoliberal and seen by the Europeans as a more political agreement in contrast to the members of the ACP who still saw it as a financial tool for the transfer of aid. Thus the nature of the partnership has shifted and the possibility for problems and confrontation has increased. This work has examined a variety of philosophical bases for partnership and examined the different positions of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. The possibility that the EU has adopted one approach to partnership and the ACP a different approach was discussed.

Discourse analysis was employed to establish the existence of two opposing partners, namely the EU and the ACP, and from this it was simple to position the EU as the hegemonic partner within the relationship. The power of the hegemon was frequently displayed in the empirical evidence gathered in the case study in Lesotho. Issues raised in Lesotho were transferred to Mozambique

to look for replication, which duly occurred. In Lesotho, the EU was frequently viewed by the indigenous people employed in the water sector as a 'boss' or an employer rather than an equal partner. It is possible to suggest that this sense of inequality could be simply an isolated, subjective perspective, but further research in Brussels confirmed the existence and use of unequal power by the EU.

Thus it appears that, despite the rhetoric of the EU documents examined at the beginning of this work, the empirical evidence suggests all is not perfect in the relationship between the EU and its aid recipients. Problems in the relationship identified in Lesotho and Mozambique cast doubt on the quality of the 'relationship between equals'. To the credit of the EU, it appears to have realised that problems exist and is attempting to correct them and improve the situation. Whether this is being done in the spirit of a mature relationship between equal partners is very open to question. The constantly changing power dynamic appears to be swinging still further in favour of the hegemonic partner, the European Union. The theoretical positions of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau examined earlier have different perspectives or versions of partnership in which the relative positions of the 'opposing sides' are examined. It was appreciated at that point that if the EU and the ACP chose different ideas of partnership, the chance of disagreement would be much higher than if they worked to the same position. The 'common future' referred to in the Brundtland report of 1987 seems to be in contrast to the 'us and them' approach that the empirical evidence from Africa highlighted. Furthermore, the mid-term review of Cotonou, and the working paper on repositioning the National Authorising Officer (see Chapter xx and Appendix 1), seem to be reinforcing this position.

This book has linked the different positions on equality, a realisation of the changing face of Lomé and Cotonou, a distinctive approach to the philosophy of partnership, and discourse analysis of documents and interviews in a unique way to provide a degree of originality in examining the EU-ACP relationship. It has made it possible to make critical, emancipatory suggestions as to how the partnership might be improved by countering the differing perspectives that have emerged now that partnership appears to have evolved, within the EU-ACP relationship, into two different things.

This work is highly relevant today as the EU-ACP relationship is still very much in existence and is likely to run for the foreseeable

future. Whilst the Cotonou Agreement, and Lomé and Yaoundé before it, has helped to raise the living standards of some people – for instance, the townspeople of Teyateyaneng in Lesotho – this is being carried out in an increasingly unequal partnership. The relative wealth of the EU, which was shown at the beginning of Chapter 4, allows for a hegemonic position to be adopted. The world financial system maintains this position, which is in turn reinforced through the changing partnership agreements between the EU and the ACP. If the critical approach of my argument begins to suggest a way to redress this imbalance, then a more fair and equal relationship could be built within the EU–ACP relationship and the concept of partnership could again resemble the ideal envisaged and perhaps reached under Lomé I.

In conclusion, it is possible to suggest that the concept of aid between equal partners is impossible. Partnership suggests a position of equality that when applied to a trading relationship could result in fair trade between equal partners or blocks, such as the EU and the ACP. However, the concept of aid suggests a position wherein one side has something that the other lacks and can thus be helped by the provision of aid. If this need exists, then a position of inequality clearly also exists between the two sides. To begin an aid relationship from a stated position of equality that is impossible to achieve seems to be a pointless exercise without at least attempting to define clearly what the two sides mean by partnership. A clearer understanding could perhaps be reached if the two sides involved in this study began by both accepting the same concept of partnership as that suggested earlier by John Locke. Working to the same guidelines could give each ‘side’ the common, beginning position they are perhaps seeking when they claim that they are equal partners.

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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEWS

Lesotho Interviewees

Interview 1

European EU technical advisor who wished to remain anonymous, Monday 10 Feb 2003, 8am.

Interview 2

Mr Kulam, Deputy to Director of Engineering, and his main title is Manager Contract Administration, Water and Sewage Authority (WASA), Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, 9am.

Interview 3

Phera Ramoeli, Head, Southern African Development Community, Water Sector Co-ordinating Unit (SADC WSCU), Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, 11am.

Interview 4

Mr Khabo, Director of Rural Water Supply, Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, 2.30pm.

Interview 5

Mr Monteforte, (European) Technical Assistant, Micro Projects (EDF funded) Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, approx 3.45pm.

Interview 6

Mr Motanyane, Minister from the Prime Minister's Office, LCD Party, Wednesday 12 Feb 2003, 8.30am.

Interview 7

Mr Maope, Lesotho People's Congress (LPC), [small party],. Ex Minister of Finance in LCD government. Wednesday 12 Feb 2003, 9.30am, interviewed in EU Delegation building.

Interview 8

Mr Lekhanya, leader of BNP also Mr Sekonyana, deputy leader of Basotho National Party (BNP), Wednesday 12 Feb 2003, 11am.

Interview 9

Mr Letsie, Deputy National Authorising Officer, Thursday 13 Feb 2003, 9am.

Interview 10

Local WASA officer, villagers and site visit, Thursday 13 Feb 2003, afternoon.

Mozambique Interviewees*Interview 1*

Iosu Arizkorreta, EU official for small projects, interviewed in the EU building, Monday 17 Feb 2003, 8am.

Interview 2

Bruno Duffau, TA at the DNA, Monday 17 Feb 2003, 9.30am

Interview 3

Emelio Muchanga, Head of Sanitation Dept at the DNA, Monday 17 Feb 2003, approx 10.45am.

Interview 4

CARE officials Fernando Pililao, CARE official
Mark Wentling, CARE Country Representative

Interview 5

Isabel Paulino, Development Project Manager, GON/NAO, Tuesday 18 Feb 2003, 8am.

Brussels Interviewees

Glenys Kinnock Co-president of ACP-EU Joint Parliament

Telephone interview, 1 July 2003.

EU official who wished to be known as an informed source within the EU (from the office of Poul Nielson)

Telephone interview June 2003.

Francoise Moreau, Deputy to the Director responsible for policy issues

Brussels, DGVIII Building

Adolf Riehm, Desk officer, AIDCO

Brussels, AIDCO Building

Passadeos Panayiotis DG Development desk officer for Mozambique

Brussels, DGVIII Building

Georges Eliopulous, Head of Information and communication unit

Brussels, DGVIII Building, Wed 10 Sept 1pm/

Lesotho Interviews

Interview 1

European EU official who wished to remain anonymous, Monday 10 Feb 2003, 8am

The official suggested many people to go and see in Lesotho and in discussing the problems, he mentioned the family/cronyism and said there was no middle class and no civil service. He talked about brain drain and said it's because salaries are better in South Africa. He said Lesotho did well out of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project; it was paid for by South Africa and according to the official, the negotiations between South Africa and, Lesotho were very interesting because of the inequality in the power relationship. The negotiations were weighted in favour of South Africa, as it is the more powerful of the two.

The EU officer commented: 'The negotiations are similar with the EU.' Thus he is saying the negotiations are unequal because the EU is more powerful.

He said all the power was concentrated in Brussels and that all the power of the delegates had been taken away to Brussels. He talked about the devolvement of power to the delegations but said it would cost about 50 per cent more.

He suggested that what the EU should be doing is supporting local industries to create jobs and therefore tax revenue so that the government of Lesotho could pay its own way.

Regarding the rules that the EU lays down, he said: 'It's not breaking or bending the rules; it's applying them to each country.' He contrasted this approach to 'the local' by saying: 'They (EU) are doing what makes the system work – that's not a country.' He favours EU people in local delegations having the power to make decisions for the locality because he thought their greater knowledge of the local situation would be beneficial, and added 'We can't change these countries'.

He went on to say that he saw the EU becoming more bureaucratic and office bound, and that few people in delegations had any experience of the world. He discussed problems over the length of time involved in getting money allocated and used.

Regarding EDF9 and the Ministry of Finance and Development, he again noted unequal negotiations. He suggested targeted aid is 'bullshit' and went on to say that we should agree on parameters. He believed the EU system is better – 'because we [EU delegates] live here' – and compared this with the World Bank and the IMF who just fly in.

The official believed that NEPAD and AGOA were positive developments.

Interview 2

Mr Kulam, Citizen of Lesotho. Deputy to Director of Engineering. His main title is Manager Contract Administration, Water and Sewage Authority (WASA), Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, 9am.

Mr Kulam, a civil engineer by profession, arrived late for the interview at 9.50am. He explained that as his boss, the director, was on extended sick leave, he had twice the work to do and had just forgotten about the appointment.

We discussed the Six Towns Project, an EU-funded project to improve water and sanitation to six towns in Lesotho. He said 'We get to say what projects to do', but added: 'They push environmentalism'. So I have to ask myself if the EU are pushing their own

agenda? Thus he said the Lesotho government dept have to adapt their principles/rules/regulations – it's difficult to do initially. He made various comments such as, 'They don't like it when we do things our own way. They only like it if you do it their way ... If you don't do what they want, they wouldn't finance you ... If you don't follow their rules, it is taken away.'

In further discussion about the relationship between the EU and his department, he said, 'They try to influence you'. He noted that they generally respect your technical expertise, but added that 'they try to run things for you.' Is this the EU trying to be helpful, or is it interfering and suggesting that the local staff lack expertise?

Mr Kulam added that an [EU] civil engineer was always present at the project and he related this to the rules of the EDF when he said, 'The system causes the problem, occasionally the person'.

In discussing the time taken by the EU to reach decisions, his impression was that there were too many people and too many desks that decisions had to pass over and he said it was 'very difficult to get a decision'.

He said that project meetings were held every two weeks and it felt like they were there to 'check up on him ... It felt like a boss – you feel he has financed it so he wants to be the boss, in control ... This is the impression one gets, you do it the way they want.' He commented that there was less contact in the case of projects financed by the World Bank and the IMF, and that he felt more comfortable being left to do the job.

In discussing the Six Towns Project, Phase I, he noted that the EU made them proceed with a particular design even though they realised there were a lot of problems with it. And again, referring to Phase II, 'We have expressed our opinion with a project like this, but they still want to do it'. He added, 'We pushed them to agree but they were not interested'. Eventually, 'they came round to our point of view'; he thought this was after intervention from Brussels. He commented that the local engineer did not agree with him, but communication with Brussels made it work.

We discussed my visiting a project and he suggested a place called Teyateyaneng (TY), approximately 30 to 40 km away. He then kindly phoned the local office to arrange for his representative to meet me later on in the week.

Interview 3

Phera Ramoeli, Southern African Development Community, Water Sector Co-ordinating Unit (SADC WSCU), Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, 11am.

At this interview we discussed the relationship between the EU and the SADC WSCU. Mr Ramoeli said that SADC approaches the EU on his department's behalf. He commented that the WSCU were not really involved and he felt 'left out a bit'.

Mr Ramoeli noted that 'they [the EU] generally accept our expertise'. Of the relationship he said, 'Previously it was poor but it is improving a lot; perhaps the definite water sector has made it better'.

The system – the bureaucracy – was now partly defined by SADC WSCU and he believed that having a 'clear programme has made it better ... Their attitude has changed – probably because of the improved infrastructure'.

The only limitation he noted was that NGOs have a problem (presumably with the EU?). In talking about the SADC WSCU, Mr Ramoeli noted that Southern Africa is trying to share water for peace and integration. This links to modern definitions of security in International Relations (for instance, in Buzan et al. 1998).

He did suggest that while the EU had stipulated that water must be a developmental priority, some (recipient) countries were not so sure. He observed, however, that 'you have to agree with them to get the support'.

Mr Ramoeli noted that although the EU now 'come in and want to know what you want', they still make their own preferences abundantly clear. He said the EU's approach is along the lines of saying, 'You will get the support, please put water as a priority ... If you don't do this they are reluctant to do anything if the priorities don't match.'

Interview 4

Mr Khabo, Citizen of Lesotho. Director of Rural Water Supply, Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, 2.30pm.

Mr Khabo said his organisation had had no real dealings with the EU for a few years but suggested that more EDF projects were coming and said, 'They don't have strict rules'. This contrasts with most other interviewees, who thought the EU rules and bureaucracy were too difficult to understand. He noted that the people in 'the

village' have to contribute something to the value of 25 per cent to a project, payable in cash or kind – for example, their labour and the use of their tools. As far as the general procedure is concerned he noted that his department prepares the projects, and if it is within the value of the agreement, then it is okay. He noted that 'the majority [of projects] they agree with straight away'.

Mr Khabo gave an example of the relationship and the attitude of people in the EU in discussing the use of boreholes and pumps as opposed to water catchment systems. He said that boreholes and pumps were 'not really their favourite kind of system' and suggested this was perhaps because they were expensive. When the pump and borehole system was shown to be the only one that would work in a particular area, the EU accepted it, but as Mr Khabo said, 'Not with a very good smile on their face'. He said other [aid donor agencies] are worse and hinted at the World Bank, but did not specifically name it. He commented that in their dealings with the EU, they wanted more freedom, and he believed that they were getting it.

Interview 5

Mr Monteforte (European) Technical Assistant, Micro Projects, Tuesday 11 Feb 2003, approx 3.45pm.

Mr Monteforte worked with local partners to bring to fruition micro projects that were requested by the local community. He declared himself to be 100 per cent in favour of complete empowerment and capacity building in local communities, noting that 'my aim is to make myself redundant'. He noted that 'political statements [from the EU] need to be interpreted by local technical assistant expertise and translated into best working practice'.

He suggested that the EU was good at delivering financial help but not as good at carrying out the process involved. As far as the procedure was concerned, if he followed the guidelines, he got the freedom he wanted. If they had to ask for permission and no reply was forthcoming within two months: 'Silenzio consenso' [silence is consent or no news is good news]. He said micro projects are exempt from some rules of the EDF and they have an accelerated procedure. Then he suggested that the system is giving more of the decisions to the delegations and said that he had heard from colleagues in Nigeria, South Africa and either Kenya or Ethiopia that this was the case. He commented that this was not so in Lesotho

but that things were moving in that direction. He suggested that the EU should try to improve the efficiency of the implementation and improve the relationship with government and civil society.

Interview 6

Mr Motanyane, Citizen of Lesotho. Minister from the Prime Minister's Office, LCD Party, Wednesday 12 Feb 2003, 8.30am.

I arrived at 8am at the government offices. There was the usual security company at the gate, then military to get into the Prime Minister's office. At this point it is interesting to compare the Lesotho government building with the EU building, as they are the same style, rather castle- or fort-like with the same stone construction, same attention to security, and one has general security and military, the other has sealed doors, bulletproof glass and electronic measures. I had to ask myself who was trying to impress who. Inside, everyone was quietly and efficiently going about their business though the Minister was not there yet. A male secretary/PA/official came out of the minister's office, addressed me, the white man, first in English, despite the fact that I was the last of several people to arrive in the waiting room, and then the Africans, who were much older than me, in their language (Ntate).

The minister arrived at 8.20 and I went straight in. He began by saying that he would like party-to-party negotiations with the EU as he thought the parties were not very well organised and that this affects the relationship with the EU. He suggested that the EU should help modernise the parties, which he suggested were still rather stuck in the old 'freedom fight against colonialism'. He noted that water and transport/roads were the basics that the EU was dealing with. He said his government inherited this position. Next he suggested that perhaps Lesotho needed help searching for minerals and wondered if this could come from the EU. He suggested that diamonds had been found in Lesotho for many decades, even hundreds of years.

Of the EU, he said, 'The relationship is excellent but needs to be deepened'.

And there is 'ample space for improvement – to get to know our culture, systems and so on – our way of doing things'. His hopes for the next three years of his government were a little vague, but he did say that there was 'not sufficient interaction' with the EU.

Interview 7

Mr Maope was formerly a member of the LCD who left to form his own party – the Lesotho People's Congress (LPC). He was formerly the Minister of Finance in the LCD government. Wednesday 12 Feb 2003, 9.30am, interviewed in EU Delegation building.

In discussing the relationship between the EU and Lesotho Mr Maope said he faced 'political demands' from the EU. We both noted that he used the word 'demands'. He then changed it to 'political changes suggested by the EU'. He said they are 'well intentioned [...], but it can't happen the way they want'. He gave one example related to land reform, suggesting that it was needed and it was coming. He said he agreed with this but the initial elements were not in place. He suggested there should be finance to make compensation available for people who lose land and noted that 'land is part of our culture'. A second example concerned gender and the EU's demands for reform. He said, 'But the debate is unjust ... It should be justice not just feminism'. He suggested that the emphasis on feminism might not be as relevant to Lesotho as to many other countries 'because more women are educated in Lesotho. It's cultural and historical. Boys traditionally get sent to look after cattle and then in their late teens they go to South Africa to work in the mines. Thus the schools have more girls than boys. The civil service, the women have succeeded in getting an equal share. The university has more women in it.'

When asked about why he left the government to form his own party, Mr Maope spoke about the government administration having collapsed and said there was a problem with dishonesty and gave an example of fixing the results of votes. He said he disagreed with the party leader over this and left to form his own party as a result.

Regarding the procedures required by the EU, he suggested they were difficult to understand and that aid is difficult to get because of the bureaucratic approach of Brussels. However, as Minister of Finance, his opinion had been sought and he was very satisfied with this, as he thought it was a good way to go about things.

He did suggest that educated Basotho, who had been influenced by the West and Western influences, are beginning to change the legal system and was concerned that the traditional system should not be abandoned yet.

Mr Maope favoured working through the local EU delegations because they have a good working relationship with the community. Then he gave an example of a bad working relationship. He was visited by an official from Brussels and was presented with a report or contract and told to just sign it. He observed that 'it's supposed to be a negotiation but it's not – just sign it'. He believed that 'when you question the content, there is the implied threat that you will lose out.'

Mr Maope summed up the position of many around the world when he said: 'It's the position of poor countries, it's an unequal partnership.'

He also noted that the EU deals with government but the EU could do more and be more effective if it dealt more with NGOs and civil society, which he said exists already in 'villages'. He also mentioned the existence of local cooperatives.

Interview 8

Mr Lekhanya, leader of (opposition) Basotho National Party (BNP) and Mr Sekonyana, deputy leader of BNP, Wednesday 12 Feb 2003, 11am.

During a previous military coup against the elected government, Mr Lekhanya was the general who became the military leader. He was interviewed in the EU Delegation building.

Both men arrived at about 11.18, explaining that they had been in parliament and could not leave before the end of a debate. Of the relationship between the EU and Lesotho, they suggested it was quite healthy and they agreed that water and roads were good priorities but suggested health should also be considered.

They said the EU gives aid to the government and then suggested the government uses the aid to influence the people in order to get their votes. [Is this just because they are in opposition or is it precisely because they are the opposition that they are aware of good governance issues?] They said that aid is given to LCD supporters and is not evenly distributed, and that therefore discrimination occurs. The EU should be aware of this and address it. They said that district level and constituent level official positions are overwhelming dominated by the ruling party's people and suggested that these positions should be inclusive of all parties. They asked the question about aid: 'Does it reach every Basotho? All aid projects should include the participation of all parties and sectors

of the community, but they don't.' They gave another example of lack of good governance. Clothing donated to the Roman Catholic Church was stopped at the border, and the Catholic Church in Lesotho was told to pay an import tax. Then sales tax was added, approximately another ten per cent. Thus the local Catholic Church could not pay. They then said the government confiscated it and gave it to their own people. They suggested that in the Lesotho government, aid is lost, not absorbed, and not used in time. 'The government would rather lose it than give it to someone who is equally competent but of a different political party.'

They said a variety of things had been donated, but the government always had first choice (for instance, in obtaining wheelchairs). These two men suggested that the EU should find out from the government the way things are distributed. 'Is it inclusive of all or distributed along party lines?' They hoped for more monitoring of the good governance idea. They compared the corruption in Lesotho to Mugabe in Zimbabwe supporting his own party by rewarding his own people. We discussed traditional African 'nepotism' as opposed to the EU's request or demand for good governance and they said: 'You have to blend modernity with custom, tradition and heritage. A gradual merging – not an immediate demand.'

'The lack of good governance is creating disillusionment in the political system. The people have no faith in the political process.' Our discussion then continued along a logical progression from having no faith to civil unrest and ending up with internal security problems and maybe external security problems

They suggested there should be some sort of forum where all these issues could be discussed – NGOs, civil society, government and the EU.

With their call for 'more monitoring of the issues around good governance', it could be suggested that the men are perhaps calling for this because they have an axe to grind with government, as they are in opposition. It is also interesting to consider whether they would make such a call if they themselves were in government.

Interview 9

Mr Letsie, Deputy National Authorising Officer, Thursday 13 Feb 2003, 9am.

Regarding the relationship between the EU and Lesotho and his

office, Mr Letsie said that, on the whole, it was generally a good relationship. They (the local EU delegation) had been very helpful in enabling them to access resources. He believed it was 'almost Lesotho and the delegation against Brussels'. Thus he was grateful for the help of the delegation because he believed that 'the government side starts off in a weak position'. I asked whether this was because it did not know the system or because Lesotho is a small weak, country? But he definitely believed that 'our problem here is not this delegation'. He said there were occasional technical clashes over quality, but that these had been ameliorated with more frequent meetings. Then he suggested the problem was with the bureaucracy. 'The rules are aimed at many different countries; they need to be more specific for each different locality.'

Regarding the sectors in the NIP, he said Lesotho wanted both transport and water, but Brussels wanted only one area or sector and through the talks they made it work. Through negotiation they now have two sectors. He added that 'at implementation level, all is good'. But he then noted that 'political-level people may say the EU could be heavy-handed'.

He made suggestions for the future, which included 'a few or two more people in the delegation ... the people should [also] stay a little longer'. He suggested that staying longer would give members of the delegation more time to know the local people and local system and thus better use could be made of junior experts.

At the international political level there are different approaches to issues when dealing with Brussels, but Mr Letsie was certain when he said, 'There is no case for Europe dictating'. He noted hypocrisy in Europe by mentioning 'the CAP is still an issue – they can still subsidise but we cannot do the same thing – we are a weak economy'.

He noted that Lesotho is generally moving in the same direction as that suggested by neoliberal economics coming from the Washington Consensus.

In the case of disagreement, he hoped that professional discussions would sort it out and solve any differences – if it did not work out, the finance would not be forthcoming.

Interview 10

Local WASA officer, villagers and site visit, Thursday 13 Feb 2003, afternoon.

The local WASA office in Teyateyaneng (TY) was a container/temporary office. The WASA officer took me by car to see the various areas of the project.

The old system for water supply had one small black pipe hanging into the river. The EU had paid for 'below the river bed access points' (he understood there to be 12), or pumps to extract the water and move it to the treatment plant. The EU had added chlorine tanks. They maintain approximately 9 km of 200-millimetre pipeline to the town. Halfway up this pipeline we saw a pumping station that the EU had contributed towards in some way, but the officer could not explain exactly how.

We went to the hill above the town and on to the water tower reservoir. From here he showed me the extent of the area supplied by the water system. The officer told me that the system supplied over 2,000 individual units, by which he meant houses with a tap in them, and about 24 communal standpipe taps.

Those I spoke to were unanimous in their praise of the new water supply system. Comments included:

- 'The water supply is much better with this system.'
- 'It is much better.'
- 'Now we get water all the time.'
- 'Before we get water only one or two hours, now we get it all the time.'

Mozambique Interviews

Interview 1

Iosu Arizkorreta, (European) EU official for small projects, interviewed in the EU building, Monday 17 Feb 2003, 8am.

In talking about the relationship between the EU and the people in Mozambique, Mr Arizkorreta said, 'For sure it could be better'. He added that because of the history and situation in Mozambique (years of war and floods) there are lots of donors [contrast this with the position and power of the EU in Lesotho], but that there is a lack of cooperation. He suggested, however, that the EU and others are working together to improve the situation.

In any negotiating situation, he said: 'The DNA [Mozambique's National Directorate for Water] will never say no as it has no money.' [This is reminiscent of previous quotes in Lesotho about

the position of economically weak countries.]

Mr Arizkorreta noted that the EU rules and procedures were often too complicated for the local people. He noted that the salary differential causes a problem when working with people in Mozambique government departments. He thought there was a high level of corruption at a high level of government but was generally happy with the people lower down the scale. He admitted that he was not happy with local working conditions in the DNA as it affects the projects. He suggested that staff there needed better salaries, more responsibility and the authority and the power to make more decisions. He said one difficulty was that 'they think we can change EU rules to fit each different situation'. [A postmodern argument referring to localism would say this should indeed happen.]

Because of the salary differences and the local salary being so low, government officials very frequently go to seminars in order to get the expenses payments. As they are the only ones with the power to make decisions, nothing can be done while they are away from their offices. Mr Arizkorreta said if he could change anything, he would like for the local people to be happier in their jobs, as he believed this would make the projects work better.

Interview 2

Bruno Duffau, technical advisor at the DNA, Monday 17 Feb 2003, 9.30am.

Mr Duffau's first big issue was with the lack of capable people, and the general lack of staff in local government. This resulted in the staff being overworked and thus ineffective and confused in their jobs. 'The infrastructure is poor; there are no people in places.' 'People are not identified in each department.' He suggested that by 'our' (European?) standards, the system is not working. Partly because the bosses were always out of the office, he suggested there was a 'need to decentralise the power to heads of department. Because bosses go out and no decisions can be made.'

He believed there was a problem with relations with provinces, which are particularly weak and lacking in capability, and that 'the DNA won't decentralise because of this'.

Regarding the EU, he suggested that overall relationships were good. However, he repeated the complaints that had been voiced earlier about the complexity of its rules. As an example, he cited an

example of a problem he had had concerning vehicles. He wished to order cars, was told by the EU that this was in order, but his request had not been met. This was because EU rules state that the cars should have 60 per cent of their component parts from an EU country, whereas Mr Duffau preferred a Japanese make of vehicle. This rule is not applied to other items, such as computers, however.

Regarding implementation, he complained about the delays involved. He spoke about reports going from desk to desk where small comments or changes were made that did not really matter but meant that the report needed to be done again. His answer to this situation was to give more power to the local delegation because at the moment 'they are just a mailbox'.

He suggested there was paranoia or fear of mistakes at each level. No one wanted to get rude letters back, and therefore his answer was to devolve power.

He said that the bidding system for consultancies was not fair and said the EU was 'making decisions based just on money but not taking account of the quality of the proposal ... The best proposal does not always win.'

He believed the EU should 'balance the technical with the financial'.

He suggested that other agencies do balance both sides but that the EU doesn't do this in ACP countries. He did say, however, that they are doing it in Eastern Europe. He hoped for more flexibility in the policies.

Interview 3

Emelio Muchanga, Head of Sanitation Dept at the DNA, Monday 17 Feb 2003, approx 10.45am

In discussing the EU with Mr Muchanga, he suggested that it was important for both parties to understand the rules and that currently there was an 'inequality of understanding ... The rules are not constant.' He suggested that the rules concerning the spending of money are unnecessarily complicated, and cited the vehicle issue again (see previous interview). In addition, he felt that 'some procedures are restrictive and should be opened'. He did qualify this by suggesting that if they tried to negotiate on every point, the procedure would take too long.

When talking about negotiating with the EU, he made the rather

cryptic comment: 'They are polite, but...'

He next suggested that there was a problem of inequality in the information they had, held or shared. He said that it was his job to draw up lists of contractors that he then submitted to the EU. They then changed the list and sent it back. 'They change your list. It's no problem if you put in the people they say.'

He questioned why they were doing this, and suggested that they had information that he did not, and they did not wish to share it with him.

He suggested they were taking over his job. He noted that this was indicative of an unequal partnership and said that if he had this unknown EU list, he could use it and thus do his job and save lots of time.

He went on to suggest that, in some contracts, the EU have used their power to gain control. He said they have also used their power to control meetings by having more people involved and said that this 'could be a problem if used incorrectly'.

He also passed comment on the amount of time taken to get things done. There were too many steps and even if each step had no objections, things still took too long. He suggested that Brussels should delegate some power down and said that in examples where they have done this, it has worked better and quicker.

He suggested that, once the system was understood, the EU is quite open and that they are allowed more flexibility with the budget. He said that they are better than the World Bank for allowing them to manage their own budget (a point also made in previous interviews).

Interview 4

Fernando Pililao, CARE official

Mark Wentling, CARE Country Representative

Mr Pililao said he knew of two projects that were shared with the Australian and Irish governments and the EU. He dealt with water supply and sanitation issues, including the provision of boreholes and shallow wells, for small institutions such as schools and churches down to household level.

Part of his organisation's task was trying to educate the people. He gave a sanitation example. When the locals went to collect water in their containers, they very carefully cleaned the outside of the containers but not the inside, so that after a while they became mouldy.

He noted that they were trying to improve the availability of spare parts and said that in issues such as this, 'previously the local community was not involved, but now we are working through local distributors and it is working much better'.

He said the World Bank had a problem with this approach but the EU was amenable, provided they were kept informed: 'They recognise the value of this approach.'

Mr Pililao noted that the NGO unit in the EU had closed and said he did not know why; this indicated a regrettable lack of communication.

Mr Pililao commented on the SWAP (sector-wide approach) brought in by the EU, noting that it had changed the method of accessing funding and 'made it much more difficult'. He said they 'change the system but no one knows how to work the system ... [There is] no real clarification.'

He commented on the government departments and said there were problems with government as it had 'no capacity to deal with the budgets', and that they were 'taking the money but not doing anything with it'. This point about lack of capacity was made repeatedly in Lesotho as well as Mozambique.

Mr Pililao discussed field assessment and related this to the change in the EU system of funding. Under the new system, the EU has paid into the national budget but government officers will not come out into the field unless they are paid again by CARE (per diem, hotels, food etc). He said he was not told about or trained in how to deal with the new system and he thinks therefore that he 'can't help as many people'.

Mr Wentling was interviewed immediately after Mr Pililao.

Mr Wentling's opening statement was to suggest that he agreed with everything that Mr Pililao had said. On the EU relationship, he noted the relationship changes every time the EU official changes: 'The EU changes people too often.'

He made a comment on the time issues involved. He said that the projects were good but second fundings were hard to get: 'We like the EU as a donor but not the system', He noted that 'time taken to get the money is bad but once you have it, there is freedom to do what is wanted'. He qualified all these things by suggesting of the EU 'they are getting better'. He hoped for more decentralisation of EU power and regretted that CARE as a charity

had to support an office in Brussels just to keep up with EU meetings, publications, press releases, etc.

In recapping, Mr Wentling became a little more 'politically correct' and spoke more carefully. He suggested that the EU should inform concerned staff when people are leaving or changing jobs.

He suggested that NGOs do not like the sector-wide assistance and commented on the weak capacity, corruption and incompetence (in government). He suggested that he would prefer a mixture of deals that were part government/part NGO and went on to suggest that the government needed to fit into the idea of a new liberalised economy [Washington Consensus?] in order to raise tax revenues and pay its own way. He commented that the NGOs were being hit with a 20–30 per cent tax bill and was worried that some may leave the country. He said that various NGOs were banding together and had hired a lawyer to fight this issue with the government.

Interview 5

Isabel Paulino, Development Project Manager, GON/NAO, Tuesday 18 Feb 2003, 8am.

Of the relationship between her organisation and the EU, Ms Paulino said it was 'not bad but could be better'. She complained about the problem of the time taken to approve documents.

With regard to the decision making/negotiating process, she noted 'they like to guide us! ... We make decisions half/half. In a problem situation we say one way, they say another; we just have to do it.' These remarks indicate that she feels the EU likes to have the final say on decisions, even though there is the appearance, or one might even say the pretence, of equal participation in the decision making. This impression is confirmed by Ms Paulino's observation about the National Indicative Plan: 'They [the EU] wrote it and told us to approve it.' Of the Strategic Document, she said the EU chose the sectors that would receive help, and 'the boss had to sign it in order to get the help'. She noted that the EU did not want to change the sectors and that they wanted to focus on budget support, infrastructure, transport and water.

She mentioned that 'civil society wanted education included but it's not in ... No changes could be made'. Talking about her boss she said, 'He was very, very cross'.

Ms Paulino noted 'the EU always wants the GON out of the tender process' and then went on to add that perhaps this was

because local firms do not have the capacity and financial ability necessary to carry out the tenders.

Ms Paulino indicated that there had been improvements in the negotiating process with the EU over the years. Whereas with the former EU delegate meetings included just two or three people from each side, the new delegate had meetings that included 'all the staff'. She said this had improved the relationship between her office and the EU.

Ms Paulino noted that on the 'technical level, [the relationship] is very flexible and it works', and that problems only occurred 'when it's the politics ... In Brussels they make a lot of problems.' Implementation of projects was affected by the change from one EU convention to another. She gave an example of a water project to provide water along the line of the Limpopo railway that was well advanced but came to a halt at the end of December 2002 while the financial convention was changed.

Ms Paulino said she would like to see a reduction in the waiting time for documents to be approved, and 'more power for local delegations' so every decision did not have to be referred to Brussels.

Brussels Interviews

*Glenys Kinnock Co-president of ACP-EU Joint Parliament
Telephone interview, 1 July 2003.*

Mrs Kinnock noted of the EU's method of operation that 'we deliberate on issues and pass on any information and resolutions. It is a unique setup – nowhere else in the world do they have this organisation or anything similar.' But 'by definition there are inequalities' (between the ACP and the EU). 'In the EU, the capacity is better. Lots of ACP countries are disadvantaged – they don't have the funds, the expertise or the capacity. They are very separate countries in very separate parts of the world, but they can get organised as a group if necessary' (as in the example of the ACP countries focused and united at Doha). She said that some countries had problems meeting EU standards, for instance, sanitary and phytosanitary standards in particular, as well as standards regarding Djibouti and shellfish. So, she said, the EU helps them to achieve this so that trade can take place. However, this takes time and 'some countries get impatient'.

Mrs Kinnock noted that 'the EU is not an ex-colonial power'. She suggested that the ACP countries think that the EU has no colonial

baggage and thus, 'the countries prefer the EU' to most bilateral donor-recipient relationships. On the future of the ACP, she believed that links between the EU and the ACP could lessen in future. The ACP as an organisation could become less important as certain regions, for example the African countries, organise themselves more locally. The immediate future of the ACP is linked to the EU because Cotonou runs until 2020.

Mrs Kinnock discussed accountability to national and universal values. It is interesting to consider exactly what she might mean by this, and whose values she might be referring to. She noted the EU's emphasis on the concept of 'human rights', and conceded that not everyone might have the same definition of human rights. She gave an example of Zimbabwe and suggested that President Mugabe's version of human rights would be different to hers and the EU, whereas (opposition leader) Tsvangari might agree with her. Notwithstanding this insistence that the EU adheres to certain universal values, she expects to 'listen and learn from people' on certain visits.

Mrs Kinnock said that the EU-ACP relationship 'should not be a donor-recipient relationship in a patronising sense ... But that is what it is in reality.'

Mrs Kinnock noted that Mozambique was one of Africa's most hopeful countries. She suggested that the country could be helped to overcome its difficulties, and that there was a precedent in the Southern African country of Botswana, which is successfully exploiting its diamond resources and putting a large percentage of the diamond money back into development. Mrs Kinnock noted that she thought political will was an important factor in this.

*EU official who wished to be known simply as an informed source within the EU (from the office of Poul Neilson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid)
Telephone interview June 2003.*

This official made several introductory comments on the relationship between the EU and the ACP: 'It isn't perfect but it is the best relationship they (ACP) have going ... We can talk to each other.' He quickly noted, however, that 'the ACP lacks co-ordination' and that the 'EU must be a bit more forceful as the ACP lacks capacity'. He said: 'Neilson gets on well with them ... the relationship does work but sometimes we have to cajole and bully ... We get exas-

perated with them.' He used the phrase 'rich arrogant North' and linked this to the old colonial system. He noted that sometimes the 'cry of colonialism, rich North, etc.' is a negotiating ploy by the ACP countries, but that 'they [the aid recipient countries] are happy with Cotonou Agreement'.

The official felt that generally the change in Cotonou from Yaoundé through Lomé was a big improvement that had led to a 'more mature relationship ... Development policy has gone from a pseudo-colonial agreement to participation, equality.'

The official noted that 'certain issues are forced on us by the EU parliament, (because of 'political correctness') but 'the whole process and relationship should be looked at in a longer term'.

While the official felt that 'frankness and conflict is a strength of the agreement-not a major source of friction', he qualified this by adding 'we are the ones with the money. There is a responsibility to European taxpayer.'

*Paul Malin (Head of Unit relations for EU and ACP institutions)
Telephone interview June 2003.*

Mr Malin has had experience in Mozambique. When asked about the relationship between the EU and that country, he said 'we are dealing with blocs who respect each other as blocs', but that 'the EU and ACP are not equal, therefore there are unequal power relations'.

He went on to note that 'the agreements set out a way of working together [but] we are often attacked by the ACP for not taking their views ... Sometimes they cannot get a uniform point together or it takes too long to do so.'

Mr Malin noted that the relationship was accompanied by 'lots of historical baggage'.

He felt that both the ACP group and individual countries use their positions of weakness as a strength. He said 'they (Mozambique) use lack of dialogue as a strength to balance their weakness ... and resist the influence of overseas donors', perhaps by playing off the donors against one another. Mr Malin noted that the relationship has changed over the years, and that it used to be run by ex-colonial officers. In his opinion, the relationship was generally improving. He felt that dialogue was improving on all levels, from individual projects to policy/political level.

Mr Malin saw a lack of capacity in Mozambique as a stumbling block in the relationship. This led to unequal power relations,

which was not helped by the EU's need to meet its responsibility to the EU taxpayers to get the best value for money. All in all, he felt it was still a donor and beneficiary relationship.

Françoise Moreau, Deputy to the Director responsible for Policy Issues.

Brussels, DGVIII Building

When asked about partnership and equality, Ms Moreau replied 'What is equality?'

She said the 'key word is partnership' but then talked of 'equality of rights' (not power, money etc.). She said that the EU does not impose issues as imposing does not work. It operates on the principle of partnership – whether the other party is a government, a non-state actor or an NGO.

With regard to the operational efficiency of the EU, Ms Moreau noted that 'to be more effective we need to find another way to make payments [to aid recipients]', and that in a move to streamline things, 'power to make decisions is moving to the EU [in-country] delegations'.

Talking about the actual negotiations for Cotonou, Ms Moreau said she felt it was important to 'concentrate on business issues first'. Regarding the issues of good governance, she said the EU had wanted it to comprise an essential element of the Agreement, but the ACP said there was a problem of defining 'good governance'. For example, a government that failed to provide 'good governance' might simply be too weak to do so, and not necessarily bad or evil, so it did not make sense to penalise that government. As a result of these objections, 'good governance' was negotiated 'down' from an 'essential' to a 'fundamental' element of the Agreement. Thus some common ground was found, indicating that both parties were gaining something from the negotiations.

Adolf Riehm, Desk Officer, AIDCO

Brussels, AIDCO Building

Mr Riehm explained his that his role was that of 'geo-coordinator' – a liaison person between EU delegates and HQ services, or to put it another way, a 'watchdog to see that agreements are kept'. He said [of ACP recipients] that 'their governments often seem to deviate from country finance agreements' and therefore there was a need to 'bring things back on track'. Mr Riehm added that some-

times there are political conflicts, and he gave as an example Fiji, where 'the EU doesn't like the political situation'.

When discussing the system of providing aid, Mr Riehm noted that 'we must look to the procedures; they must be transparent and verifiable'. He said that the EU did not force agreements on recipients but that 'they sign finance agreements blindly ... to get access to the money ... they don't read the agreement ... then they can't do it so there is a problem when they can't keep their side of the bargain. Some countries are negligent and don't keep up their end of the deal.' He noted that there was another problem in that 'locals sometimes cannot communicate with technical consultants' and 'people sometimes complain about procedures ... too heavy, too much. The EU are not very flexible during projects ... Our role is administrative control.' He acknowledged that many staff the EU had to deal with were not competent, and that there was a lack of capacity in the receiving countries' administrations. He was also aware that this was partly because in many ACP countries, trained people leave their home country because of salary differences.

Passadeos Panayiotis DG Development desk officer for Mozambique Brussels, DGVIII Building

When asked whether the relationship between the EU and ACP countries was unequal, Mr Panayiotis said, 'Yes ... All ACP countries see themselves as this [unequal].' He noted that Lomé was seen as an arrangement where the EU acted as 'big brother' and that 'Cotonou was to try and change this idea'. One of the first ways in which it did this was to draw up country strategy papers that gave up to 80 per cent ownership of projects to local governments.

Of the Mozambican government, Mr Panayiotis noted that 'it's very dynamic ... all the money is identified and a budget in is place as far as ahead as 2005; Mozambique is doing very well.'

While he noted that there was 'huge work to do on good governance', he felt that 'by African standards they [the Mozambican government] are quite transparent'. He felt that 'they are sensitive, as a new country ... it is a matter of their perception. Cotonou gives them a chance to be in the driving seat.'

Mikael Barford, Unit head at AIDCO Brussels, AIDCO Building, Wed 10 Sept 2003.

Dr Barford completed his Masters dissertation on EU development

policy. He noted that under the Lomé Convention, the precursor of Cotonou, the EU created the concept of National Authorising Officer to facilitate and monitor the disbursement of aid. He said that while it was a very effective innovation, as the EU agreements have become more complex, the NAO system has struggled to cope and the position of the NAO has become more tenuous. He felt that 'the NAO concept is in tatters, the EU sophistication is too great ... we prop up the NAO'. Because the present system was 'not viable', the Cotonou mid-term review was looking at redefining the position of the NAO. He said the idea was to come up with a 'post-participation paradigm' which he suggested might operate as follows: 'Those that can will continue as they are ... Those few that can be brought up to the required standard could be helped to achieve it ... Those that can't will have a change in system.' He hoped that by 2007, the NAO concept would have been redefined. He noted that the sector-wide approach was a partial paradigm that helped deal with the current situation, but he then noted that we 'need to be tougher with countries that cannot make it'.

In the case of those that could not 'make it', he said that the EU would have to 'resort to simple methods of direct aid to civil society'.

APPENDIX 2

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EuropeAid Office of cooperation

Africa, the Caribbean, Pacific Directorate
Regional Integration, Institutional Support Unit

Brussels, 15 February 2004

WORKING PAPER

Orientation note on the reinforcement
of the National Authorising Officer system

1. Introduction

In the coming two years, the implementation of the NIP and RIP resources will need to be accelerated. This means a smooth operation of the co-management system with an efficient sharing of responsibilities between the ACP States and the Commission: the National Authorising Officer (NAO) plays an essential role in the co-management process. Moreover, the issue of strengthening the structures of the National Authorising Officers needs to be considered within the context of the deconcentration process from EC headquarters services to the EC delegations which the Commission has been engaged upon for two years.

This working paper proposes an analysis of main problems identified in the exercise of the NAO's functions and identifies measures that can be taken on both sides, ACP and the EC, in order to address them.

It is based on the findings and recommendations of the thematic evaluation of projects of support to the NAOs and Regional Authorising Officers (RAOs) completed at the end of 2002 and of the Declaration adopted in

Brussels on 12 May 2003 by the meeting of NAOs on 'the timely and effective implementation of the EDF and the EPRD'. It reflects also the results of a dialogue between the EC delegation and the NAO and his services in each ACP country which took place over the last semester of 2003 on ways and means to improve the effectiveness of EDF implementation through the strengthening of the NAO system and for which a report was received from around 35% of the EC delegations.

The proposals contained in the document are meant to serve as a guide in the dialogue between the delegations and the NAOs on how to improve the effectiveness of the NAO system. They do not constitute a 'Blueprint' of measures to be implemented in the same ways in all countries. Local context may vary considerably according the political and socio-economic environment and the relative importance of external aid (and of EU assistance in particular) compared to the National Budget. The NAO system must be adapted to the realities of the country concerned with the ultimate aim to produce both short-term results in terms of improved EDF implementation but also long-term impact on institutional capacity and sustainability in the management of public resources of the ACP countries.

2. Findings from the evaluation and the current review

The evaluation of projects in support of the NAOs has been based on a representative sample of the main situations (online version at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/program/acprep.htm>). Data have also been collected from the EC delegations (62 of them) and from the reports received from some of them on the dialogue which took place between the delegation and the NAO. This has helped in highlighting some interesting characteristics of the current NAO system.

- **The positioning of the NAO within the government system varies as follows:** 48% are located at the Ministry of Finance, 20% at the Planning Ministry, 8% at Foreign Affairs, and 23% elsewhere. The positioning of the NAO within one or the other Department does have an influence on the way he exercises his functions in particular from the point of view of coordination both internally (with other Ministries) and externally (with other donors).
- **The creation of support units to the NAO has been generalised:** 75% of the NAOs are assisted by such units. The presence of expatriate technical assistance in these units is significant: around 52% of the cases.

This reflects the significant workload of the NAO even if the main focus of these support units, as shown by the thematic evaluation, tends to be on administrative and financial aspects of EDF implementation. Such support units provide, according to the results of the evaluation, satisfactory results in terms of improvement in performance. However, a number of support unit projects do not develop pertinent strategies towards institutional support and interface with line ministries.

- **The ‘ownership’ and sustainability issues are not properly addressed in the projects of support to the NAOs.** Projects of support to NAOs tend to succeed one another, one technical assistant replacing another one: the issue of institutional strengthening to allow for sustainability of the management of public resources is very often not properly dealt with.
- **No in-depth specific analysis was undertaken concerning the functions of Regional Authorizing Officer.** This issue shall be addressed specifically by future research, which is essential given the emphasis put by the 9th EDF on regional integration, delegated regional organizations, and the negotiations of the EPAs.

3. Analysis of the main problems identified in the exercise of the functions of the NAO

Three main categories of difficulties were identified whilst examining the functions of the NAO at the different stages of the cooperation cycle.

3.1. Institutional difficulties

The totality of the functions described in the Cotonou agreement, which are supposed to be ensured by the NAO, cannot be fitted into one single administrative entity. If the NAO with his support unit has to perform all these functions, one runs a real risk of developing within the national administration a body which does not match with the national institutional framework, thereby preventing the development of a sustainable interface between the various actors and partners of the Community development aid. It appears that in a number of countries, the NAO structure is not sufficiently integrated in the normal administrative structure established for the development process of the country. In particular, the lack of linkage between the NAO unit and the departments in charge of the planning and management of both external and internal resources does not allow for optimal integration and synergy between Community aid and the other resources available for development. On the contrary, in the ACP countries

where the institutional anchorage of the NAO is consistent with the overall system of management of the public resources, it appears that the implementation of the EC cooperation is much more effective.

Some institutional constraints encountered by NAOs are due to a more global problem of dysfunctioning of the public administration system and therefore progress in the management of external assistance is depending on the positive results of the Public Administration Reform Process.

3.2. Functional difficulties

The mandate of the NAO is often interpreted to be limited to the contractual and financial management of EDF projects: consequently there are often significant weaknesses in the areas of strategic planning and the monitoring of implementation of EC resources, including the impact of EC assistance on the development policies of the country. Similarly, the support and interface functions with line ministries and also with representatives of civil society and other non-state actors to provide them with methodological assistance in project preparation monitoring are often neglected. On the other hand, other examples have shown that if the NAO is too concentrated on its political and coordination functions, projects implementation may be delayed as the NAO has no time to get involved in the day to day management.

3.3. Structural difficulties

The structure of the NAO services, and of the support which Community aid provides, does not encourage responsibility and ownership of functions and of tasks by the partner country. Despite recent developments, all too often substitute staff in the form of technical assistants support the NAO in his functions. Half of the units are led, de facto, by expatriate substitution staff. This is partly explained by the fact that the transaction costs of Community aid in terms of financial and contractual procedures are high and should not necessarily be borne by the resources of the ACP State concerned. In addition, the mandate of technical assistants does not systematically include a responsibility in terms of transfer of know-how, and the assessment of their performance is not sufficiently based on the criterion of strengthening of local capacities.

Similarly, the management or monitoring systems of projects are often developed in an autonomous way by external consultants and, consequently, are not easily owned by the national administration. Moreover, even if a transfer of know-how and of management tools is well conducted, it remains limited to the management and procedural aspects specific to the EDF and therefore does not contribute sufficiently to the strengthening of

capacities as regards management of the development process.

In connection with national staff working in the support units, the questions of remuneration, bonuses and the differences in remuneration between civil servants and contracted staff give rise to difficulties and tensions which influence performance negatively.

Finally, the use of local competencies and expertise (the audit, accountancy, and research functions) is not sufficiently developed.

4. Proposals on measures to take

The measures suggested under this heading constitute ideas to explore, possible options, whose feasibility needs to be assessed according to the conditions specific to each country, in particular the institutional environment, the existing management systems for national and external public resources and the characteristics of cooperation. Some of the proposed measures may be already partially or totally implemented and are intended to suggest a path that can be followed through different stages, modalities and time frames. Moreover, the following proposed measures should not be considered collectively as leading to an improvement in the effectiveness/efficiency of cooperation. Therefore, a certain degree of flexibility should characterize their implementation.

The proposals concern both the improvement of the organization of the NAO system and the improvement of support projects to NAO. It suggests a process of reinforcement of the NAO system in two stages. On the one side, a re-evaluation of the NAO system may lead to: (i) a better positioning of the NAO system within the national administration; (ii) an improvement of the interface role between the NAO and line-ministries and a progressive sub-delegation by the NAO of certain functions to the appropriate level; (iii) the setting up of an effective monitoring system, improving the NAO's synergies with partners. On the other side, the design of support projects to the NAO must be improved through more concrete measures addressing at least two main issues: (iv) the review of the role and mandate of the support unit (v) the review of the role of TA and the promotion of the use of local personnel and institutions.

4.1 Re-assessing the current organization of the NAO system

4.1.1 Defining the NAO system

The rationale behind the concept of an 'NAO system' is based on the following three considerations:

Firstly, the role of NAO incorporates many functions, broadly divided in two families: political and technical functions. The major functions which the NAO has to assume relative to the role and the tasks (reserved to him in the Cotonou Agreement) concern:

- arbitration and political decision-making (programming, identification of the projects, general review and monitoring of progress of cooperation)
- coordination with line Ministries and other public agencies
- management of projects
- monitoring of projects
- dialogue with civil society.

All these functions need to be carried out in close cooperation with the EC delegation concerned.

Whereas NAO's technical functions are described in detail in Art. 35, Annex IV of Cotonou Agreement, the more political ones are less explicit. According to the Cotonou Agreement (Articles 2 and 4), the political dimensions (development of the cooperation strategy, preparation and adoption of the indicative programme) do not specifically involve the NAO, but more generally the 'ACP State'.

Nevertheless, this means that the NAO - responsible under the terms of Article 35 of Annex IV of Cotonou 'for representing the ACP State in all the activities financed from the resources of the EDF' - must be able to prepare and organise the data collection and analysis, then negotiate and arbitrate, take part in, and also ensure that the necessary decisions are well taken and implemented. Resources and skills of the same order are necessary to carry out the processes of review of the national indicative programme, for which the Cotonou Agreement specifically designates as responsible the National Authorising Officer and the Head of Delegation (Article 5 of Annex IV). Such a responsibility of the NAO involves important political functions, in terms of internal coordination and interface with the Commission. Under Cotonou the NAO's role is being extended to dialogue with civil society as well.

All these functions require a 'politically strong' entity.

The functions of the second family are of an operational nature and require other specific capacities, either technical, or administrative and financial. They mainly involve the 'preparation, submission and appraisal of projects and programmes' and include all operational procedures related to tenders, clearing and authorization of expenditure, technical and adminis-

trative arrangements 'necessary to ensure the proper execution of approved projects or programmes from the economic and technical viewpoint'.

Secondly, all these functions encompass several areas of government in terms of content (trade, finance, social and economic development, democratic governance), of level of government (central, regional, local) and consequently the sectoral and technical expertises and responsibilities are distributed among different public entities and departments.

Last but not least, NAO's functions can be carried out by different actors such as *NAO substitutes and, in some cases, NAO delegates*. The attributions of NAO substitute and NAO delegate fall within the competence of each ACP State. However, the following broad definitions could apply: 1) the NAO substitute is the person who replaces the NAO in all his powers and functions whenever the latter is unable to attend. In this case, acts laid down by the substitute are to be attributed to the substituted NAO; 2) the NAO delegate is the person who, in place of the NAO, performs the functions that have been formally delegated to him by the NAO. In this case, the delegate is responsible for the acts he lays down in his own name (on the basis of the delegation). In either cases (substitution or delegation), the NAO as representative of ACP state remains responsible vis-à-vis the Commission.

The line Ministries (or implementation agencies) play also an important role in the design and implementation of programmes, even if they have not received formal delegation of functions from the NAO. In all cases, the NAO's support units continue to play a major role in the administrative and financial management of EDF projects.

All these elements denote the complex system that revolves around the important figure of the NAO. The latter relies upon a system rather than a single person or unit.

4.1.2. Improve the positioning of the NAO system

It appears necessary to examine, in each country, the existing national system for the planning and management of external and internal resources.

On the basis of the results of this examination, the principal question relating to the position of the National Authorizing Officer in his full capacity (person responsible for the entire NAO system) within the national administration needs to be considered.

An improved positioning of the NAO in the national institutional environment should allow Community interventions to be better integrated into *the national system for management of public resources*. In this way,

Community support to the NAO system will impact on the whole national development process and the coordination between the different actors will be improved.

Coordination should occur at two levels: 1) coordination of internal resources: this includes the definition of development priorities and strategies, annual and multi-annual planning, the budget allocation process and the analysis and dialogue functions; 2) coordination of external resources: this includes the integration of external aid within the budget cycle, the continued monitoring of performances (annual review) and the coordination and harmonization of aid within a coherent framework jointly approved.

Experience has shown that whenever the NAO is positioned in a ministry or department entrusted with the management of internal and external resources and with a coherent and unified development strategy (in particular the Poverty Reduction Strategy, PRSP), the whole NAO system can positively influence the development of the broader capacity of national governments and eventually the development efforts, with a subsequent positive impact on the coordination and the effectiveness of cooperation. In this context, even the mandate of the NAO's support unit needs to take into account both the requirements and needs in terms of coordination and management of other external aid.

4.1.3. Improving the interface role between the NAO and line-ministries and promoting the sub-delegation of functions

It needs to be recognized that the totality of functions assigned to the NAO on account of Cotonou cannot be taken up by only one person or entity. As shown by the evaluation, it is often impossible for the NAO alone to exercise his/her political, technical and administrative functions as described above (see 4.1.1).

It is therefore crucial to clarify and improve the articulation of responsibilities between the NAO as '*maître d'ouvrage*' and the line-ministries as '*maître d'œuvre*' and to propose organizational solutions in order to improve the system. *This approach means a strengthened role of the NAO as interface and support to line Ministries or agencies which are the main responsible for project implementation.*

It seems reasonable that the NAO system be directed by a strong political entity, the NAO in his full capacity, who could delegate all or part of his technical functions to various competent and well-equipped services

(Ministries or Public Agencies). These delegations of responsibility would concern the preparation and implementation of specific projects and programmes. This process would simplify the management of aid implementation and increase the ownership and responsibility of the partners concerned.

Delegation of functions should not be promoted systematically regardless of the institutional context of ACP countries. Depending on the different management capacities of the ACP states, and taking into account the wide variations in implementing conditions with which the cooperation is confronted, different solutions will have to be adopted. Delegation of functions may improve the implementation of projects whenever the delegated entity has sufficient capacity to deal with new tasks. Delegation of functions is recommended in the case of a sectoral support with budgetary aid or even of a sectoral programme when the existence of coordination and implementation capacity is ascertained.

It is suggested therefore that for every EDF project or programme to be decided a review/assessment of the concerned Ministry's capacity to manage mobilized EDF resources should be undertaken in order to decide whether it is possible and beneficial to delegate part of the NAO management functions towards the concerned Ministry.

Such an organisational structure is very different from the simple delegation of signature carried by the current system of the deputy National Authorising Officers and implies promoting the possibility offered by Article 35 Annex IV of Cotonou, where the NAO can delegate a part of his responsibilities and keeping the Chief Authorising Officer informed. In all cases, as representative of an ACP government, the NAO will retain the final responsibility for the use of EDF funds vis-à-vis the Commission.

4.1.4. Setting up systems for effective monitoring of cooperation

A review of the practical collaboration between NAO and delegations should be undertaken. Such a review would have the following objectives:

- **Simplify collaboration and make it more effective** by identifying at which level and in which manner collaboration for the preparation and the implementation of projects needs to be undertaken and, more particularly, which issues need to be dealt with at the level of the services of the NAO and which can be dealt with directly at the level of the line Ministries or implementing Agencies (in line with the sub-delegation sys-

tem to be set up). This should lead to a code of conduct to formalize procedures and timetables; each party concerned committing itself to this code **on the basis of reciprocity**. 'Silent procedures' could be defined, enabling the automatic advancement of files (payments depending on the approval of reports, closure of commitments/projects, approval of restricted shortlists), etc...

- On the basis of the experience already gained in several ACP countries, set up a system of monitoring the implementation of cooperation involving regular consultations at the appropriate level and based on the use of commonly developed management tools. If necessary, expertise could be mobilized from 'intra-ACP' funds to carry out an evaluation of the management tools already in place in some countries to evaluate their interface potential with the databases used in the deconcentrated delegations. A high quality management information/accounting system should support the process of aid management. Building common databases may improve communication and standardization of procedures between NAO and EC Delegations, as well as improving the standard formats of relevant documents as invoices, procurement information, reporting, etc...
- Establish a warning system (based on criteria and indicators, such as those developed for the annual review) making it possible to detect at the appropriate time the difficulties, ranging from a too slow rhythm of implementation of cooperation up to a situation of total blockage. Such criteria and indicators would make it possible to initiate warnings at various levels, for which appropriate action plans could be put in place: analysis of the causes of delays, definition of corrective measures, setting up a time frame, and evaluation of the results obtained.

It is also important to pursue the efforts in improving the dialogue and synergies with non-state actors (notably through coordination with representative umbrella organizations), taking into account the published set of EC guidelines, in order to make consultation and participation of civil society organizations more effective in the monitoring of aid implementation.

Finally, an effective monitoring system has to seriously address the improvement of coordination between the national and regional level and consequently between NAOs and RAOs (this role is generally entrusted to regional organizations). Such a coordination is sometimes considered insufficient.

4.2. Develop a new type of support project to NAO

4.2.1. Re-examine the role and the mandate of the support unit

Following the above analysis, the role of NAO support units has to be re-examined with the objective to increase capacities in the main functions of the NAO (coordination, supervision, methodological support, procedural support). It is recommended to improve their role of interface and, when appropriate, to reduce their function of direct management of projects and programmes. The positioning of NAO support units is also an issue to be considered. Their degree of autonomy and integration into the national administrative system may vary following the specific context of the country. Generally, greater integration into the local institutional context will promote the ownership of the cooperation process by the national administration. Institutional support to be provided under NAO support project should therefore not be limited to implementation of EDF resources but include capacity building in the overall coordination/management of public resources. However, this integration into the national framework may create difficulties in some countries due to serious weaknesses in the national system. The approach to be adopted needs to find an acceptable balance between long-term ownership by addressing progressively important structural weaknesses and short-term effectiveness in terms of project implementation. The ownership needs to be strengthened in particular for the decisions on strategic issues (planning, programming, monitoring) and, at the level of line Ministries, for the design and implementation of cooperation. The approach could be somewhat different with regard to the specific requirements of EC cooperation involving high transaction costs of aid (the contractual and financial aspects of implementation based on EDF regulations) for which additional outside expertise will have to be procured and funded by project resources.

4.2.2 Review the role of technical assistance and promote the use of local personnel and institutions

The need for technical assistance (local or expatriate) for each NAO support unit has to be established on the basis of an organisational review and cover all the functions to be provided by the NAO system. This review will take into account the sharing of responsibilities between the ACP State and the Commission and for the latest, the new context created by the deconcentration process.

This implies the possibility of providing experts to other services than the NAO support unit itself. The terms of reference of technical assistants should focus on the development of tools, training, and the strengthening

of capacities rather than on substitution tasks. On the basis of the profiles required, an evaluation of the possibilities for recruitment of local and regional experts as well as on level of remuneration on the regional and local level has to be carried out.

Collaboration with national institutes specialised in the field of development needs to be explored (possibly in partnership with European or regional institutes): these institutions can provide assistance notably in the field of data collection and analysis, monitoring, research on cooperation strategies and programmes and also in training on thematic or methodological issues. Similarly, the association of the national bodies (State Inspectors, Court of Auditors etc.) in the process of audit and control of the management of Community aid, has to be considered. A diagnosis of their capacities must be made and possible support foreseen to address potential weaknesses. Such interventions could be incorporated into broader support programmes addressing public finance management and could complement interventions developed in this field under macroeconomic and budgetary support.

The procedures for the recruitment and management of local and expatriate experts need to be streamlined and respect the principles established by the EDF regulations particularly as regards transparency and publicity. Regulations governing local staff working within the NAO support unit must be carefully examined and must conform to national labour regulations. The administrative position (secondment or public service status), level of remuneration of local technical assistance (based on a comparison with the practices of other donors and market conditions) must be defined, including the possibility, in accordance with national legislation, of granting bonuses. In the latter case, a link with performance levels (evaluated on the basis of defined objective criteria) needs to be established.

Promotion of local personnel along with the aforementioned measures would increase ownership by national governments and progressively reduce the use of expatriate TA which is often considered very costly.

Yet, promotion of local personnel can be difficult due to 1) the lack of necessary competence/capacities to deal with specific EDF procedures and methodologies, or 2) the periodic turnover of local personnel (sustainability issue). In the first case, it would be useful to differentiate between general aid management and execution of specific short-term technical functions which can benefit from the inputs from expatriate technical assistance. As

for the second concern, periodic turnover of local personnel could be considered as a normal process. It is indeed part of career development for the local personnel to seek better financial conditions and career opportunities. Yet, the project of support should define financial conditions and develop an incentive system of local personnel (including appropriate training) to ensure a minimum of stability.

4.3 The specificity of Regional Authorising Officers (RAO)

This note will not specifically address a series of issues revolving around the figure of the RAO even though many issues raised in this note for the NAO are valid for the RAO as well. Specific issues will need to be addressed in a separate note, notably the following ones:

- in the majority of cases the role of the RAO is exercised by the entrusted regional organizations, which are at the same time the main beneficiary and implementing partner of regional programmes, and the ‘maître d’ouvrage’ and ‘maître d’œuvre’. The institutional support projects to the RAO have to take into account this specific configuration of roles within the same institution.
- the articulation of functions between RAO and other partners entails subsidiarity between regional and national levels and actors. The role of coordination and interface of the RAO with these different level can consequently be quite complex and different from that of NAO.

5. Concluding Remarks

The Cotonou Agreement and its new dimensions (political and in terms of programming, review and monitoring) as well as the new contractual and financial regulations of the 9th EDF increase substantially the demands towards ACP countries and in particular on the NAO system. In the medium term, EDF budgetisation will reinforce these demands. The objective of substantial improvement in the management of external aid constitutes a common challenge for the ACP States and the Commission.

In this context, it is necessary to pursue the dialogue at the level of each ACP State between the relevant authorities and the delegation in order to ensure, notably through a new form of support project to NAO, an adequate response to this common challenge.

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Websites

The following is a list of websites used in the course of research conducted for purposes of this book, and recommended for those who wish to acquire more information on the topic of water politics in Africa.

Africa, Caribbean, Pacific:

www.acp.int

www.acpsec.org

Africa–Europe Faith and Justice Network:

www.aefjn.org

African Action:

www.africaaction.org

African National Congress:

www.anc.org.za

Australian news site:

www.news.com.au

BBC News:

www.news.bbc.co.uk

BOND: Networking for International Development:

www.bond.org.uk

British Government's G8 website:

www.g8.gov.uk

Concord: European NGO Confederation For Relief and Development:

www.concordeurope.org

Cornell University:

www.cornell.edu

European Centre for Development Policy Management:

www.oneworld.org

European Development Policy Study Group Manchester, UK:

www.edpsg.org

European Parliament:

www.europarl.eu.int

European Union:

www.europa.eu.int

European Union–ACP:
www.ue-acp.org

Europe's Forum on International Co-operation:
www.euforic.org

Institute for Development Policy and Management, Manchester UK:
www.idpm.man.ac.uk

Mozambican Statistical Office:
www.ine.gov.mz

Mozambican Water Authority:
www.dna.mz

Murray Irrigation Limited, Australia:
www.murrayirrigation.com.au

Oneworld:
www.oneworld.org

Oxfam:
www.oxfam.org.uk

Pacific Institute:
www.pacinst.org

Prairie Research Associates:
www.pra.ca

Sydney Water, Australia:
www.sydneywater.com.au

United Nations Development Programme:
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United Nations High Commission for Refugees:
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