

Minutes from meeting in the Council for Development Policy
on 30 September 2021

- Members: Professor Anne Mette Kjær, University of Aarhus (Chair)
International Director Jarl Krausing, CONCITO (Vice Chair)
Senior Researcher Lars Engberg-Pedersen, Danish Institute for International Studies
Executive Director Rasmus Stuhr Jakobsen, CARE Denmark
Head of Department Kenneth Lindhardt Madsen, The Danish Agriculture & Food Council
Private Advisor Morten Lisborg, Migration Management Advice
Vice President Bente Sorgenfrey, Danish Trade Union Confederation
Director for Global Development and Sustainability Marie Gad, Confederation of Danish Industries
General Secretary Birgitte Quist-Sørensen, DanChurchAid, had shared written comments but did not take part in the meeting
- MFA: State Secretary for Development Lotte Machon
Head of Department Tove Degnbol, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK
Special Advisor Anne Marie Sloth Carlsen, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK
Student Assistant Mille Poulsen Jepsen, Department for Financial Management and Support in Relation to Development, FRU
- Agenda item 1: State Secretary for Development Lotte Machon
- Agenda item 2: Head of Department Lars Bo Møller, Department for European Neighbourhood, EUN
Chief Technical Advisor Mogens Blom, Department for European Neighbourhood, EUN
Ambassador Ole Egberg Mikkelsen, Kiev
- Agenda item 3: Head of Department Karin Poulsen, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK
Chief Advisor Morten Houmann Blomqvist, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK
- Agenda item 4: Head of Department Karin Poulsen, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK
Chief Advisor Morten Houmann Blomqvist, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK
Chief Advisor Tobias von Platen-Hallermund, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK
- Agenda item 5: Ambassador Nicolaj A. Hejberg Petersen, Kampala
Deputy Head of Mission Henrik Jespersen, Kampala
- Agenda item 6: Head of Department Mette Thygesen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCE

Deputy Head of Department Fenja Yamaguchi-Fasting, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCE
Head of Section Rikke Lind Andersson, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCE

Prior to embarking on the planned agenda, the Council exchanged views on how to handle issues relating to potential conflict of interest and ensuring quorum in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. The Council agreed to request a brief note about the issue from the Secretariat for discussion in a future meeting.

Agenda Item No. 1: Announcements

The State Secretary for Development briefly informed about the situation in Afghanistan and the derived dilemmas facing international development cooperation going forward. The State Secretary encouraged Members of the Council to take part in a seminar on Afghanistan organized by the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) the following week.

The Chair informed of a change of staff in the Secretariat. From 1st October 2021 Josephine Mittag would take over from Jane G.H. Kaste.

Agenda Item No. 2: Strategic Framework: Denmark's partnership with the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries 2022-2026

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 700 million

Department for European Neighbourhood, EUN

Summary:

The Strategic Framework for Denmark's Partnership with the Eastern Neighbourhood 2022-2026 is developed with the overall vision of promoting the anchoring of the region's countries in the European Community of values and of strengthening their stability, progress and resilience. The Strategic Framework covers the entirety of the ministry's policy tools within the region: foreign, security, trade as well as developments policy. Four strategic objectives outlined in a results framework will contribute towards achieving this aim: 1. Supporting the continued development of democracy and human rights. 2. Supporting sustainable growth, green transition and increased energy independence 3. Supporting peace and stability 4. Supporting a broad range of Danish CSO, civic institutions, public authorities and private companies in establishing partnerships and cooperation with peers in the six neighbourhood countries.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the Strategic Framework for Denmark's partnership with the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries 2022-2026 for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

The Council commended the Strategic Framework, which was found to be informative, well written and well argued, with a thorough context analysis and a clear 'Theory of Change'. The emphasis on anti-corruption and on climate and green transition was also commended as was the involvement of civil society – targeting specifically women and youth – and the emphasis on Tech for democracy. Likewise, the research component was praised.

Members of the Council noted that the Framework was an example of geopolitical development assistance to countries in a region much less marked by poverty than other Danish partner

countries but largely in deficit of democratic development and where other, very strong forces were at play. The question was whether the Framework was overly ambitious. Were the goals achievable, given that democracy is not very likely in the near future in several of the six countries?

Members of the Council noted the implications of trade and high EU standards for the further development of the relations with the region. Ukrainian businesses such as the steel industry would have to adapt to the European Green Deal and Fit for 55, to retain access to the EU market. This would pose a major barrier for many companies, who – if they did not succeed in meeting the standards – would be de facto excluded from the European market and would be forced to seek new customers such as in the Middle East, China and India. This would further distance Ukraine from European integration. Because of this, the Ukrainian private sector was currently very motivated to work with green transition and to learn from Danish experiences, including the Danish Government's initiative on Climate Partnerships. It was noted that the Strategic Framework mentioned a variety of relevant tools. However, in the area of trade the EKF (Danish Export Credit Fund) was missing. EKF could play an important role especially if applying a bold approach.

Concerning the stakeholder analysis to be applied in preparation of specific engagements, Members of the Council questioned the defined categories of stakeholders and the analytical relevance particularly in contexts where 'oligarchs' play prominent roles. Members of the Council also questioned the focus on member-based organizations as opposed to alternative ways of organization.

Regarding Danish stakeholders, Members of the Council pointed towards the potential for involving Danish labour market organizations and noted the absence of references to the Danish labour market consortium in the Framework. Danish expertise with regard to cooperatives and cooperative enterprises was also highlighted as relevant, notably in the context of the organization of the agricultural sector where the green transition will also pose a major transformational challenge.

Members of the Council commended the emphasis on learning and action research and pointed to the potential for linking this to capacity development or support for educating future public officials. Moreover, Members of the Council argued for a need to focus more on results, monitoring and evaluation to be able to adapt the programme based on learning and new challenges/opportunities in accordance with the principles of Doing Development Differently. A caution against too high expectations regarding synergy between different activities in the programme was also voiced. Armenia was referenced as specific example where the possibility for including new activities in case of a new democratic opening should be kept open. Accordingly, Members of the Council urged a not too categorical division of countries.

Further, Members of the Council enquired about a few other issues, e.g. progress relating to land reforms and their impact on the organization of the agricultural sector and whether money laundering ought to be mentioned as part of the anti-corruption agenda.

Finally, Members of the Council requested an elaboration of the budget for the next neighbourhood programme: Why had the overall budget been cut from DKK 860 to 700 million?

And given the large allocation to the New Democracy Fund, which activities would be phased out due to the introduction of the New Democracy Fund? While the New Democracy Fund was seen to be a sensible response to the political wish to assist all of the six countries in the region, Members of the Council recalled the last review of the programme which had recommended further focus on the Ukraine. It was asked whether there had yet, as planned, been an inception review of the Fund?

The Head of the Department of European Neighbourhood (EUN) thanked the Council for its comments and questions. Regarding the budgetary framework, he apologized for the lack of clarity in the submitted draft Strategic Framework. To the DKK 700 million for programme activities, one had to add DKK 100 million for secondments and another DKK 75 million for the Danish contribution to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. Thus, the total budget amounted to DKK 875 million over a five-year period, which was approximately at the level of the budget of the previous phase of the Neighbourhood Programme. Funding for the New Democracy Fund was mainly based on reductions in the programme to Georgia. He proposed to schedule a more thorough briefing and discussion about the New Democracy Fund in the beginning of 2022.

The Head of EUN stressed that the Framework covered the entirety of the ministry's policy tools within the region, and that development aid was only one line of activity. Concerning the context of the strategy, there were two main challenges in the region, and particularly in Ukraine. The first was Russia's influence in the various conflicts in the region, which was difficult to counter; the other was the "grand corruption", e.g. the reign of oligarchs as cited in the recent European Court of Auditors report of the Danida-implemented European Anti-Corruption Initiative (EAUCI). He confirmed that the 'oligarch system' as such – not individual oligarchs - was included as the main spoiler in the stakeholder analysis.

The fight against corruption was at the core of the Neighbourhood Programme and constituted a red line through the Framework. In addition, issues such as money laundering and Illicit Financial Flows, were explicitly referenced.

The Head of EUN agreed that it was important not to be overly ambitious. The Framework outlined three scenarios and the general approach was based on the middle "realistic" scenario, assuming that democratization and reform would continue but that the process might also face backlashes. EUN would review the document yet another time to ensure this was fully reflected throughout. He agreed on the importance of close monitoring – and action research would, of course, include involvement of partners from the neighbourhood countries. Regarding concrete results, the programme had been positively reviewed and evaluated.

Flexibility and adaptability were prioritized in the Framework, and in case of new developments in the region, partnerships and support for a country such as Armenia would be a possibility within the framework of the New Democracy Fund.

Support to a well-functioning labour market was a strategic objective and enhancement of potential partnerships and exchange of experience between Danish labour market organizations and peers in Ukraine and Georgia were explicitly mentioned in Chapter 6. Likewise, the

establishment of the Ukrainian-Danish Youth House allowed for involvement of and support for ‘not-formalized’ civil society groups.

In the field of Tech for Democracy, ways of engagement and partnerships would be tested this autumn through a specific EUN ‘Call-for-Proposal’. Based on lessons learnt here, further engagements would be developed.

The Ambassador supplemented on Ukraine, the first priority country of the Neighbourhood Programme. Despite some regressions, overall Ukraine had undergone a positive development since 2014. All things considered, the nation had a functioning parliamentary democracy, relatively free media and a dynamic civil society. The Neighbourhood Programme would continue to build on these developments and support the reform movement within the country, with Denmark being Ukraine’s 6th or 7th largest bilateral donor.

The Ambassador stated that the agricultural sector was of significant importance in Ukraine due to the high quality and fertility of the country’s soil. The land reform was a step in the right direction with expanded rights to own land and take up loans. The Ambassador agreed that it was important that Danish agriculturalists enter into cooperation with their Ukrainian counterparts, to move the green transition of the Ukrainian agricultural sector forward and secure alignment with European environmental standards. A major event was underway with the Danish Agriculture and Food Association, where Danish machine producers would enter into talks with local Ukrainian farmers.

The Ambassador generally stressed the importance of improving business conditions and combatting corruption to realize the full potential of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA). The Ambassador agreed on the need to include EKF (Danish Export Credit Fund) in the Framework. According to a recent report made by EKF, Ukraine scored quite low on the global rankings for ease of exports.

Finally, the Ambassador mentioned a recent Danish investment in Rivne which included a significant local job creation of approx. 1,000 new jobs.

The Chief Technical Advisor, informed that the New Democracy Fund, established in December 2020, had recently finished its inception phase. Overall the activities were on track and the set-up of the Fund deemed well-functioning. The first grants had been allocated under the Rapid Response Fund and based on the general call for proposals.

The Chair thanked participants for a fruitful and interesting discussion with many good inputs and exchanges and concluded that the Council would look forward to a briefing and discussion about the New Democracy Fund in early 2022 and that the Council recommended “The Strategic Framework: Denmark’s partnership with the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries 2022-2026” for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

Agenda Item No. 3: Organization Strategy for the Nordic Development Fund

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 49 million (instalment for 2021)

Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Summary:

The Nordic Development Fund (NDF) is a joint Nordic International Finance Institution (IFI) focusing on the nexus between climate change and development. The majority of its funding is targeted Sub-Saharan Africa and climate change adaptation. NDF has found a niche in the global climate finance architecture by providing agile, early stage and catalytic climate financing. The Nordic countries decided to recapitalize NDF in 2020 with EUR 350 million over a ten-year period (2021-2031). The Danish share of the recapitalization makes up 21.8% and the first Danish instalment to NDF is planned to amount DKK 49 million in 2021. The organizational strategy for NDF outlines the rationale for the recapitalization of NDF and key Danish priorities in its engagement with NDF.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the Organization Strategy for the Nordic Development Fund and the first Danish instalment for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

The Council found the recapitalization of Nordic Development Fund (NDF) to be highly relevant and welcomed a renewed Danish commitment to NDF suggesting also an even closer collaboration among all the Nordic financial institutions, e.g. also the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO).

The Council furthermore acknowledged the niche of NDF as an early-stage and catalytic climate fund as relevant to gear new and additional climate financing towards Sub-Saharan Africa and fragile states. The NDF's objectives were found to be well aligned with the priorities of Danish development cooperation. At the same time, the Council warned against branding values - such as human rights, gender equality and anti-corruption - which are global and universal as "Nordic values".

Members of the Council encouraged an even stronger focus on climate change adaptation as an area where NDF really could establish a clear profile within the international climate landscape. It was also observed that NDF could become an important fund to support and develop the climate-security nexus, which is Danish priority. Members also expressed a concern for not focusing enough on 'leaving-no-one-behind', and the importance for NDF to also target the poorest and most climate vulnerable populations was underscored. Together with a focus on mobilising private capital, it was suggested that these concerns be the Danish priorities in the period 2021-25.

Members of the Council also asked for further clarification regarding the different types of partnerships established by NDF and how NDF added value in these partnerships by influencing the design and priorities of joint projects. Further, it was encouraged to engage the Nordic civil society as a knowledge partner to NDF.

Furthermore, Members of the Council asked into the level of interest from international partners and if the relatively small secretariat in Helsinki would have sufficient resources to deliver on the high expectations set out in the organizational strategy and actually identify new projects rather than reacting to proposals.

Finally, Members of the Council emphasized the relevance of NDF managing its own carbon footprint and securing affordable energy access.

The Head of the Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK) thanked the Council for the support and for highly relevant questions. She explained that NDF's new Strategy 2025 already had strengthened climate change adaptation as the primary area for NDF and further work to strengthen strategic communication was ongoing. NDF's role on the climate-security nexus was currently primarily targeted mobilization of climate funding to Sub-Saharan Africa and fragile states but could be extended over the coming years. Regarding leaving no-one-behind, she clarified that many of NDF supported projects and partners were targeting the poorest and most vulnerable communities in both rural and urban areas. The Head of GDK also emphasized the building a stronger Nordic climate fund with additional capital and staff on board was in the making with, among others, a new dynamic director and five extra staff, and that the added value would be strengthened through both improved results reporting and strategic climate communication. The MFA would also through its pro-active engagement in the Board and close dialogue with the secretariat support NDF to be in the driver's seat in its collaboration with international partners. The Head of GDK also explained that NDF already was establishing closer collaboration with NEFCO. Regarding the Nordic value of NDF this was broader than human rights and gender and would also entail stronger synergies to the Nordic pledge of becoming the most sustainable region and supporting a just green transition where no-one-is-left-behind. This would also be an opportunity for NDF to establish an ongoing dialogue with Nordic partners and civil society.

The Chair of the Council concluded that the Council recommended the Danish recapitalization of the NDF for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

Agenda Item No. 4: Clean cooking and access to water in Africa through ESMAP

DKK 95 million

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Summary:

The Danish support is aiming at stimulating green and climate resilient access to energy and water in Africa through the World Bank's multi-donor trust fund ESMAP (Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme). The Danish support will focus on innovative and pro-poor financing models and is targeted specific activities and complements the Danish core support to ESMAP's Business Plan 2021-2024. The total Danish contribution will amount to 95 million DKK and will be divided into three targeted engagements to be channelled through the ESMAP umbrella 2.0 trust fund: i) Rural solar-powered water supply in Tanzania; ii) The Clean Cooking Fund (CCF) in Africa; and iii) Mapping potential green energy-related jobs in Africa.

<p><i>The Council for Development Policy recommended the Danish support to Clean cooking and access to water in Africa through ESMAP for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.</i></p>
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The Council recognized the relevance and importance of the proposed support and its objective of providing improved access to water and clean cooking for poor households in Africa. The Council acknowledged the strong potential for seeking synergies with other Danish bilateral engagements as well as with civil society organizations. All three targeted interventions were perceived as relevant and aligned with priorities of Danish development cooperation.

Members of the Council asked about the added-value of channelling the funds through the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP) and the specific role of ESMAP. This included the reasoning for selecting ESMAP for conducting a green jobs mapping related to the energy sector. The Council also inquired to what extent ESMAP will ensure institutional development in the fields of intervention.

Members of the Council asked if it would be possible to focus more on youth and for more details about the youth employment of the programme and how this could possibly be measured as part of the results framework.

Regarding gender, Members of the Council asked about the specific positive impacts on gender-based violence, given that gender-based violence was known to be mainly domestic. It was proposed that gender could be a selected outcome indicator that would be monitored more closely by the MFA. The question whether the diverse services will be affordable for the poor was also raised.

In relation to the water programme in Tanzania, Members of the Council asked how it would fit into the future Danish bilateral engagement in the country now that the Embassy would be closed and bilateral development assistance to Tanzania through the country programme phased out. Concerns were expressed regarding the long-term impacts of the programme with little focus on capacity development and with regard to operation and maintenance of old water installations. Furthermore, it was requested to describe better the co-benefits on health and education and explain the reason for specifically linking a component on menstrual hygiene management to the water programme.

Regarding the Clean Cooking Fund, Members of the Council sought clarification regarding the selection of Uganda and Rwanda as the two first countries benefiting from the Fund.

Finally, Members of the Council enquired about the planned business models and focus on sustainability for both the water programme and the clean cooking fund and the implications for pricing. It was also recommended that the MFA would engage civil society on both clean cooking and water management.

The Head of the Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK) thanked the Council for the support and relevant questions and comments. She emphasized that the programme had a strong focus on the long-term impacts especially by mobilization of private financing to ensure speed and scale on investments targeted water and clean cooking solutions. Regarding the water programme, this would be done by incentivizing private sector companies to secure maintenance of the water systems, by introducing solar water pumps and by introducing pre-paid water meters that will improve efficiency without increasing the price of the water.

The Head of GDK underlined, that the water programme in Tanzania would be much aligned with the new Danish bilateral engagement in the country through a targeted partnership approach. It was also explained that for clean cooking, the demand-driven business models would be based on a Results-Based Financing model where subsidies would be targeted the different cooking needs and affordability in both rural and urban areas. Further, the clean cooking fund would also provide technical assistance to build adequate national regulatory framework,

awareness campaigns for end-users and certification schemes for the private sector. Regarding job mapping, the Head of GDK explained that ESMAP had been identified as a relevant institution for conducting mapping of job generation in the energy sector. Finally, it was explained that the Clean Cooking Fund was co-financing IDA-financed projects (World Bank's International Development Assistance), and that Uganda and Rwanda had been the first countries to present energy-sector projects with a clean cooking component which was up for approval in the World Bank.

The Chair of the Council thanked the members for good and relevant comments and questions and GDK for thorough answers and concluded that the Council recommended the Danish support to clean cooking and access to water in Africa through ESMAP for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

Agenda Item No. 5: Mid-term Review of the Country Programme in Uganda

For information and discussion

Summary:

The mid-term review (MTR) of the Denmark-Uganda Country Programme (2018-2022) provides a number of recommendations. Recognising the programme as lean and relevant, considering the exceptional COVID-19 situation, which has contributed to some delay of the implementation, the MTR finds the Uganda Country Programme to be reasonably on track and performing well. The MTR recommends extending the programme for six months, and also recommends that a new Country Programme be developed.

The Council welcomed the opportunity to discuss the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Uganda Country Programme and noted the significant strategic synergies between a number of programmes and engagements identified by the report. The Council also noted with great satisfaction that the Country Programme was on track despite the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19 and the significant political challenges in Uganda regarding parts of the programme.

Members of the Council then asked to learn more about a number of more specific issues.

The current challenges facing the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) were noted, and the efforts by the Danish Embassy in Kampala to lift the suspension of the DGF were commended. Members of the Council also noted the suggestion by the MTR for the Embassy to increase its focus on communication particularly in relation to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. Furthermore, Members of the Council noted the re-election of President Museveni earlier this year and asked how the new government would affect the Danish engagements. Particularly, would the post-election stabilization help programmes move forward, and how would the Embassy prepare for the next elections, e.g. build in risk assessments in the governance programmes? Members of the Council raised a concern regarding how close the cooperation with the Ugandan state should be under the present circumstances.

Members of the Council furthermore noted the recommendation to make the thematic programme UPSIDE (Uganda Programme for Sustainable and Inclusive Development of the Economy) more "visibly green" and asked whether there would be a risk of greenwashing, i.e. describing activities as green although they were not. Members of the Council also noted the lack

of references to the SDGs in the review and recommended that the important achievements be linked to the 2030 Agenda.

The recent exit by the UK from the Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA) engagement was also noted by Members of the Council who asked whether this would significantly affect the current strategic focus of the engagement and whether there could be an option for further Danish engagement. Members of the Council enquired about the MTR recommendation of a Theory of Change (TOC) for UPSIDE, noting that the three components of UPSIDE complemented each other very well and that this could be used to attract new donors to e.g. TMEA or Agricultural business initiative (Abi).

Finally, concerning the recommendation of the MTR regarding a new bilateral programme, Members of the Council urged that the current general priorities be maintained in the next country programme, also with the new strategy for development policy, expressing full support for the Embassy and emphasising that the current challenges should not interrupt Denmark's engagement.

The Ambassador explained that the DGF was still partially suspended by the Government of Uganda (GoU), noting that there was an ongoing dialogue with the Government about this. Partnering NGOs still received some support financially, so that activities could be resumed quickly, once an agreement was made. This would also prevent significant loss of staff, knowledge and skills in collaborating NGOs. The Embassy also noted, that Uganda still maintained a progressive refugee policy, with a strong focus on integration, whereby Uganda constituted a solid platform for the Humanitarian-Development nexus.

Regarding communications, a harsh media coverage of especially the DGF-engagement, had contributed to an at times hardened political dialogue with the GoU. The Embassy had found that a stronger communication profile was useful in managing this dialogue. Positive stories from successful engagements such as the Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative (NURI), offered an opportunity to garner political support. Similarly, during the recent visit of a Danish trade delegation, a solid communication effort had been instrumental, in successfully setting up meetings with the Prime Minister and the Vice President.

Concerning the MTR-recommendation to make programmes more visibly green, the Ambassador reassured that the green elements of the current programme were, in fact, green. Although the current country programme was not designed with a strong climate focus, Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative (NURI) already contained significant climate adaptation and resilience efforts. The agricultural programme activities clearly fell within the definition of green. Infrastructural and agribusiness activities were being adapted to include more green elements.

With regard to the UK exit from TMEA, the Ambassador informed that the Embassy planned to continue the engagement along the existing plans, recognising that the capacity of TMEA obviously would be affected by the UK withdrawal.

Finally, the Ambassador confirmed that a new country programme would maintain a strong commitment to the values of good democratic governance, possibly with a re-design of the engagement.

The Chair of the Council thanked for the informative exchange about the Mid-term Review of the Uganda Country Programme and stated that the Council would look forward to engaging with the Embassy on the development of the new country programme.

Agenda Item No. 6: Briefing about the new approach to Information and Engagement

For information and discussion

Summary:

Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and engagement (HCE) – Status of Information- and Engagement activities.

The Head of Section of the Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE) presented the state of play on the information and engagement activities within Danish development cooperation. A major rethinking of the approach to information and engagement had been launched in 2020. At the heart of the new engagement strategy was the ambition to reach new target groups and increase the reach of the supported initiatives. Almost all instruments had been evaluated and redesigned including pooled funds, partnerships and support to media. Two new pools would be launched in 2022 — the Information and Engagement Pool and the Global Engagement, Sustainability, Education and Cooperation Fund (GLOBUS) aimed at the education sector. Børnenes U-landskalender had been prioritized and scaled up in cooperation with Danish National Broadcasting Cooperation (DR) and a new engagement media will also be launched in 2022 to replace Magasinet 360.

The Council stressed the importance of public information and engagement and considered the strategy and approach to be promising and innovative. The Council expressed strong interest in the annual awareness analysis. The Council supported the increased focus on student exchange (GLOBUS pool) and welcomed the prioritization of the partnership with DR.

Members of the Council raised concerns about the degree of CSO involvement in and transparency and openness of the process of rethinking the instruments. Apparently, the reform process had been experienced as rather closed by many stakeholders. The members of the Council also stressed that the diverse civil society had an important role to play in raising public awareness and engagement and underlined the importance of preserving their freedom to do so in their own way.

The Head of HCE pointed out that the new design of the instruments would ensure greater arm's length and thus greater freedom for the engagement of CSOs by outsourcing the pools to an external partner and not managing them by a committee set up by the MFA.

The Head of Section described how a thorough involvement and consultation process had been carried out related to the rethinking of the instruments including an information session, four consultation meetings and written consultation rounds.