

# New EU Development Approach Threatens Decades of Progress

Fourteen international humanitarian organisations are urging the European Commission to rethink its proposed shift to a transactional approach in development cooperation, as seen in a recently leaked draft [Briefing Book](#) from the European Commission's Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA). This Briefing Book will set the direction for EU development in the next EU mandate.

The organisations warn that this approach could abandon vulnerable communities in fragile or crisis-affected contexts, leading to devastating consequences for those most at risk and undermining the EU's global relevance in an increasingly fragile world.

The leaked draft focuses almost entirely on the EU's Global Gateway Strategy, confirming fears that the EU's revised strategy for global cooperation will prioritise its own geopolitical and economic interests. This shift relies heavily on the private sector, moving away from commitments to locally led development and abandoning transformative and people-centred models.

Up until now, the EU has been a champion of good donorship principles, exemplified by the [European Development Consensus in 2017](#) - an agreement by EU Member States to target assistance where the "needs are greatest and where it can have most impact, especially in Least Developed Countries and in situations of fragility and conflict" – and by the EU Treaties which mandate that poverty reduction and eradication be core objectives of development cooperation.

Flexible, adaptable and innovative development cooperation approaches are crucial to address global crises' increased complexity and duration effectively. This includes concessional financing in places where extreme poverty is disproportionately concentrated and supporting basic services, people and community resilience and tackling the root causes of fragility.

Yet, this leaked draft reveals a cynical approach that starkly contradicts the EU's own stated beliefs, reverting to top-down approaches that ignore the needs of those in unstable and conflict-affected contexts. This shift threatens to destroy decades of good practice by undermining the EU's endorsement of the Humanitarian, Peace and Development Nexus, jeopardising its commitments to the Grand Bargain, and contradicting many Member States' national strategies.

The European Commission must urgently reconsider this pivot towards a flawed design and uphold its commitments to break the cycle of growing humanitarian needs globally. It must ensure its actions align with the values and fundamental objectives of poverty eradication and sustainable development, asserting Rights-Based approaches and the 'Leave No One Behind' principle.

## Signed by:

ACT Alliance EU

ADRA

CARE International

Caritas Europa

Danish Refugee Council

EU CORD

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

Mercy Corps

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

Oxfam

Plan International

Humanity & Inclusion (HI)

Save the Children

World Vision EU REP