

THE EUROPEAN UNION TRUST FUND FOR AFRICA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The following paper provides a critical literature review about *The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa*, also known as the European Union Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF for Africa). It identifies two dimensions of analysis of the EUTF for Africa from the literature, each of them raising different sets of questions. The first one looks essentially at its structure, while the second one compares its goals and functioning with conventional development policy projects. By splitting the analysis of the EUTF for Africa, the paper aims to contribute to the discussion about the implications of the design and goals of such instruments, which added value can be examined according to two different perspectives. The paper concludes that the literature essentially questions whether an emergency European Union Trust Fund was necessary as an instrument for this long-term objective given the various implications that arise from it.

Keywords: development policy; migration policy; trust fund.

Introduction

In response to the increase of migrants attempting to reach Europe via its southern borders, the European Council responded by calling for an international summit to discuss migration issues with African states and other key countries, which took place on November 2015 in Valletta, Malta. This summit resulted in a common declaration and an action plan. In addition to that,

the European Commission established *The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa*, also known as the European Union Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF for Africa).

By reviewing the literature on the EUTF for Africa, the paper identified two main dimensions of analysis, each of them raising different sets of questions. The first one looks essentially at its structure, while the second one compares its goals and functioning with conventional development policy projects. By splitting the analysis of the EUTF for Africa, the paper aims to contribute to the discussion about the implications of the design and goals of such instruments, which added value can be examined according to two different perspectives.

Looking at the first dimension, the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, p. 76) argues that the EUTFs set up new governance procedures that deviate from the ordinary or regular decision-shaping and decision-making procedures, thereby posing mistrust issues within the European Union (EU) and cooperation with third countries and hence should be seen as exceptional or emergency-led instruments whose added value and effects should be very well justified. The justification from policy-makers to going outside the EU budget is the need for more flexible and rapid EU funding instruments to respond to various emergencies outside the EU (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.9). In that regard, the European Court of Auditors (2018, p.23) says that, in comparison to traditional instruments, the EUTF for Africa provides added value in project selection and launching, although facing similar challenges concerning their implementation.

Regarding the second dimension, Bartels (2019, p.15) claims that the EUTF for Africa funding is at odds with the traditional objectives of development cooperation because the funding goes to people who are capable of migrating, rather than those in the greatest need. The Global Health Advocates (2017, p.15-16) argue that the starting point of what is presented as a development tool was not partner countries' development needs and, therefore, falls short on the principles of alignment by minimizing their ownership of the programs. In the same way, Castillejo (2017) points out that although the core principle of the EUTF for Africa intervention is local ownership, African ownership within the EUTF for Africa is undoubtedly weaker than within traditional European cooperation and development instruments. Furthermore, Cortinovis and Conte (2018, p.6) explore the conditionality approach of development policy formalized under the Commissions' *Communication on a New Partnership Framework with Third Countries under the European Agenda on Migration* in June 2016, which involves positive and negative incentives to gain cooperation with partner countries on border management and readmission.

The underlining rationale behind the EUTF for Africa, according to the European Parliamentary Research Service (2019, p.2), is that greater investment in development assistance will provide an incentive for people to stay at home. In fact, they argue that the main components structuring the EU external migration policy confirm the new political importance of the migration and development nexus (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2019, p.2). Furthermore, the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, p.74) claims that the EUTF for Africa also helps to set in motion a conceptual shift in the “migration and development” policy field, from migration *for* development to development *against* migration. The European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs (CONCORD, 2018, p.2) argue that the links between migration and development policies and the securitization and externalization of the control of EU borders, may have consequences on EU’s external action. Under this circumstance, the European Parliamentary Research Service (2019, p.11) suggests that some compromise will be required both from development and migration policy actors to work out synergies and balance the divergent interests, approaches and time perspectives that distinguish migration and development policies.

The paper will be structured as follows: first it will present an overview of the context that led to the establishment of the EUTF for Africa. Later on, it will address its structure (first dimension) and then compare its goals and functioning with conventional development policy projects (second dimension). The last section will present a compilation of data about aid funding and disbursement according to the three Annual Reports on the EUTF for Africa available so far, in order to look at its general trends.

The agenda behind the European Union Trust Fund for Africa

According to Cortinovis and Conte (2018, p.5), the dynamics of migration in the Mediterranean led to a policy reorientation from a narrow approach focused on containment of flows towards a more comprehensive solution. First, the events at the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla prompted the adoption, in 2005, of the *Global Approach to Migration* (GAM) – the overarching framework of EU cooperation with countries of origin and transit. Later, the changing geopolitical situation in the North of Africa and the Middle East following the Arab uprisings motivated its revision and expansion, in 2011, leading to the *Global Approach to Migration and Mobility* (GAMM). The aim of the GAMM is to establish balanced and comprehensive partnerships with third countries covering various aspects of migration and has been associated with a shift in EU policy discourse that signals a willingness to exploit the positive impact of migration on development processes.

More recently, against the backdrop of a rising death toll in the Mediterranean and the ensuing public attention, the European Commission signed its *European Agenda on Migration* in May 2015. According to Bartels (2019, p.8), in terms of its programmatic approach the Commission's *European Agenda on Migration* is both a continuation of the GAMM and indicative of a new crisis mode in the governance of migration from 2015 onwards, by stressing the external dimension of European migration policy through the outsourcing of practical migration policy with the involvement of a broad range of state and non-state actors. At the same time, (Bartels 2019, p.9) a new discourse has crept into European migration policy, termed “addressing the root causes of migration”, which places increasing amounts of hope in development policy measures.

In response to these events, the European Council called for an international summit to discuss migration issues with African states and other key countries. The summit took place on November 2015 in Valletta (Malta) and resulted in a common declaration and action plan. In order to pay for the goals set up in Valletta, the European Commission signed the constitutive agreement establishing the *European Union Emergency trust fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa*.

The European Union Trust Funds

Trust funds (European Court of Auditors, 2018, p.7) established for a specific development purpose with financial contributions from one or more donors are generally administered by an international organisation. Since the 1990s, they have been used increasingly as a financing vehicle for international cooperation and often set up in response to crises such as natural disasters or conflicts.

In the particular case of the European Union (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.18), the 2012 EU's Financial Regulation has legally foreseen the possibility of the creation of European Union Trust Funds (EUTFs) by the Commission under an agreement with other donors. The article 187 of the Financial Regulation stipulates a number of conditions under which the EUTFs needs to comply with, being the bottom line their added value above and beyond national interventions and existing funding instruments. According to the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, p.9), since 2014 four EUTFs have been established outside the EU's budget: the *EU Trust Fund for Colombia*; the *EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa* (EUTF for Africa); the *EU Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis* (the “Madad” Trust Fund); and the *EU Trust Fund for the Central African Republic* (the “Bêkou” Trust Fund).

As argued by the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, p.21), “[...] any full understanding of why and how the EUTFs are established should not treat the EU as monolithic actor. Rather, the inter-institutional struggles and the multi-level venues of policy-making in the EU system should be taken into account. The EUTFs arrive in a landscape already crowded by financial instruments, actors and priorities.” Having that in mind, the following paragraphs of the paper aim to briefly explain the complex structure of such funds while, at the same time, to present the distinctive features of the EUTF for Africa. This section will be mainly a synthesis of the work done by the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018) and the European Court of Auditors (2018).

Each of the EUTFs has its own specific structure and logics of functioning, which are related to the context in which they are established (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p22). Nonetheless, at the most basic level an EUTF implies a *trustee* (the Commission), contributions by the donors (including the EU itself, Member States and sometimes third countries) and its beneficiaries (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.28).

The constitutive agreement to establish an EUTF (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.20) between the Commission and the donors, in which the governance and management bodies are set, cannot be qualified as an international agreement under EU law, as it is not concluded with a third country and, therefore, not being required the consent of the European Parliament. Furthermore, under internal EU law terms, the *implementing decision* by the Commission for the foreseen trust fund falls under comitology with the exception for EDF-based EUTFs such as the EUTF for Africa. Under applicable comitology rules, the European Parliament has the right of scrutiny under the so-called examination procedure and is able to adopt a non-binding resolution arguing that the Commission has overstepped its implementing powers (*ultra vires*). However, given that the rules are different for the extra-budget nature of the EDF and its committee, the decision to set up the EUTF for Africa didn't involve the European Parliament's scrutiny.

Concerning their governance, the EUTFs work in a two-level governance structure. First, the Trust Fund Board (European Court of Auditors, 2018, p.9) provides strategic guidelines on the use of the funds. It is chaired by the European Commission and assisted by the European External Action Service and other Commission services. It is composed of the Commission and representatives of the donors that have contributed at least with €3 million. Donors that have not made the minimum contribution can participate as observers. Where relevant, representatives of countries concerned and their regional organizations may also be invited as observers. In the EUTF for Africa, although not having a formal observer status as per the constitutive agreements, the European Parliament has been granted an observer status since 2017. Second, an Operational Committee (European Court of Auditors,

2018, p.10) is established for each regional window to examine and approve the actions financed by the trust fund. Its structure is similar to the Trust Fund Board, with the difference that the European Parliament does not have observer status at the Operational Committee meetings.

The management of the trust fund (European Court of Auditors, 2018, p.10) is ensured by the Commission, which is responsible for the implementation of the actions financed by the trust fund and delegates the management tasks to members of its staff.

Concerning the project selection (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.28-30), the trust fund members represented at both levels have voting rights and the Commission has a veto right. However, this is not the stage or venue to actually engage in in-depth discussion on the projects, given that, even though the third country or region concerned is usually represented, the *de facto* decision for project approval is reached beforehand through a series of informal talks and meetings with the country or regional organization. Therefore, the full understanding of the governance procedures requires more focus on the stages preceding the Operational Committee meetings. A key role is foreseen for the EU delegations in the third countries involved, since they are the main entry point for the submission of project proposals by participating Member States and their agencies – when it is implemented via delegated agreements –, and also by international and other organizations. Hence, the role of the EU delegation is to provide a first scrutiny of potential projects.

The implementation of EUTFs' projects, as for other EU external funding instruments, can be done under different types of contracting, such as delegated cooperation agreements (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.35). The EUTF for Africa's constitutive agreement reads: "To avoid duplicating structures on the ground while making the best use of donors' expertise and ensuring European Union visibility, delegated cooperation with Member States shall be the preferred option of implementation where the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness can be clearly demonstrated. Delegated cooperation with other donors will also be considered." The underlying logic of giving priority to the donors of an EUTF is also to incentivize Member States' contributions, although not constituting a guarantee that they will get their projects financed. Nonetheless, the potential element of leveraging contributions is not clearly working, especially in the EUTF for Africa. Even though the Commission made available €1.8 billion from the EDF/EU budget in November 2015 while also expecting Member states to put further €1.8 billion, their contributions remain well behind the expectations raised at the Valletta summit (Bartels, 2019, p.12).

As aforementioned, the European Parliament has limited possibilities to carry out oversight over the trust funds, but still has some opportunities to ensure

democratic accountability. Although not aiming to do a broad analysis of all the possible accountability venues, this section will highlight the most straightforward *ex-ante*, *ongoing* and *ex-post* accountability phases put forward by the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, pp.36-40).

In general, the European Parliament can ensure a low level of democratic *ex-ante* accountability over EUTFs in comparison with the *ex-ante* accountability over existing EU external funding instruments. With the exception of EDF based EUTFs such as the EUTF for Africa, the European Parliament can adopt a non-binding resolution against the Commission (*ultra vires*), therefore not being legally capable to force a change to the objectives or scope of an EUTF. Regarding the *ongoing* venues (those where accountability mechanisms can be exercised when executive competences are being held by the Operational Committees), given that the European Parliament is not represented, the possibilities are limited. Finally, the most radical *ex-post* mechanism for democratic oversight concerns the possibility for the European Parliament to request the discontinuation of an EUTF.

From the previous analysis of the structural dimension of the EUTF for Africa, it seems worthy of remark two main aspects.

First, the priority given to delegate cooperation agreements with Member states in order to provide more efficiency. Although providing added value in project selection and launching (European Court of Auditors, 2018, p. 23), it introduces an intergovernmental dynamic and gives rise to the question of whether the most appropriate and best available implementing partner is always selected (Centre for European Policy Studies 2018, p.35).

Second, the trade-off between flexibility and accountability enhanced by the extra-budget nature of the EDF based EUTF for Africa. Despite allowing more flexibility, it brings democratic accountability deficits back into fields where cooperation was supposed to be consolidated and expanded through the European Parliament under the Lisbon Treaty (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.9). Therefore, this situation provides a debate concerning the “budgetisation” of the EDF (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.39).

The goals and functioning of the European Union Trust Fund for Africa

After having explored the specific structure of the EUTF for Africa, this section intends to analyze its goals and functioning in comparison with conventional development policy projects. As aforementioned, to pay for the objectives agreed upon in the Valletta summit, the EUTF for Africa was created as a new foreign policy instrument to allow faster, more flexible and comprehensive support funding available for defined priorities from the year 2015 until 2020.

According to the constitutive agreement establishing the EUTF for Africa (European Commission, 2015, p.8), the overall objective and purpose of the Trust Fund is to address the crises in three regions or windows – Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa, and the North of Africa – by supporting stability and contribute to better migration management as well as addressing the root causes of destabilization, forced displacement and irregular migration. Following the overall objective, the strategic document (European Commission, 2016, p.12) draws four different strategic objectives: greater economic and employment opportunities; strengthening resilience of the communities and in particular the most vulnerable, as well as refugees and displaced people; improved migration management in countries of origin, transit and destination; improved governance and conflict prevention and reduction of forced displacement and irregular migration. As previously stated, to implement these various projects (Bartels, 2019, p.12) the EU itself made €1.8 billion available in November 2015 from its budget, coming mostly from the European Development Fund, while expecting Member states to put a further €1.8 billion as well.

The assumption behind EUTF for Africa is that greater investment in development assistance will provide an incentive for people to stay at home. In fact, the European Parliamentary Research Service (2019, p.2) argues that main components structuring the EU external migration policy – the *Global Approach to Migration and Mobility*, the *European Agenda on Migration*, and the *New Partnership Framework with Third Countries* – increasingly underline the link between migration and development. Also, in the EU development policy (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2019, p.2) the 2017 revision of the *European Consensus on Development – the New European Consensus on Development* – confirms the new political importance of the migration and development nexus, where it reads: “The EU and its Member States will take a more coordinated, holistic and structured approach to migration, maximizing the synergies and applying the necessary leverage by using all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools, including development and trade.” (European Commission, 2017b, p.18)

According to the European Parliamentary Research Service (2019, p2.), despite the fact that there is an agreement among academics that the relationship between development conditions and migration flows is nuanced, “addressing the root causes of migration” has become a mantra of an increasingly comprehensive EU external policy, including its financial diplomacy. Actually (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2019, p.6), concerning the impact of aid, while it is difficult to empirically establish the positive impact of foreign aid on development in a narrow economic sense, when it is the case, a positive correlation between migration and economic development persists until countries reach a middle-income country level.

Furthermore, the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, p.74) argues that the EUTF for Africa also helps to set in motion a conceptual shift in the “migration and development” policy field. Accordingly, although the EU has funded, and continues to fund, several programs aimed at harvesting the development benefits of migration – essentially entailing migration *for* development –, the EUTF for Africa brings the idea of development *against* migration, the idea of the “root causes” of migration which the EUTF for Africa is aiming to address. Nonetheless, although motivated by considerations of saving people from a dangerous journey to Europe through irregular channels, the rationale that development can curb migration is, as previously stated, still just a hypothesis (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.74).

The consequence of the conceptualization of development against migration subjects development funding allocation to where migration inflow origins and routes are, which may happen to be the places where the greatest development needs are located, but not necessarily (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.74). This means that the geographical priority and criteria of aid allocation have changed through the establishment of ad hoc financial instruments with aid being disbursed to regions strategically important from a migration management perspective (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2019, p.9).

Out of the 26 African countries included in the three regional windows of aid disbursement, five current recipients, namely Ethiopia (Horn of Africa window), Mali, Niger Nigeria and Senegal (Sahel/Lake Chad window), were covered by the 2016 EU’s *Migration Partnership Framework* with third countries, that foresees “more-for-more” conditionality on migration, such as returns and readmissions of irregular immigrants and asylum seekers. The EUTF for Africa would then help to enable such conditionality (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p. 23).

According to Cortinovis and Conte (2018, p.8) this raised concerns among NGOs representatives and also Commission and member state officials involved in foreign and development policy about longstanding EU priorities in these areas being eventually subordinated to the EU’s migration agenda. By linking the EUTF for Africa with the *EU’s Partnership Framework*, the EU puts development resources at the service of a strategy of conditionality and diverges it from the central objective of the EU development policy of poverty eradication under the article 208 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Moreover, the Centre for European Policy Studies (2018, pp.23-24) points that it has not become clear why an emergency trust fund is needed to address the “root causes” of migration in Africa, given that existing development instruments, such as the EDF, appear to already have a long-term and

comprehensive development rationale that is inherent to addressing root causes of migration. This links directly to one of the conditions of the Financial Regulation concerning the creation of an EUTF: the added value above and beyond existing funding channels. Therefore, it raises the question of what was the “emergency” to which the EUTF for Africa attempted to respond. Although not arguing that the EUTF for Africa has not financed specific actions that may have added value, the Centre for European Policy Studies questions whether an emergency EUTF was necessary as an instrument for this long-term objective and suggests that a “thematic” EUTF for Africa, as provided by article 187(1) of the Financial Regulation, would perhaps have been more fitting. However, the trade-off would be the exclusion of the delegated cooperation possibility and an eventual less efficient instrument, since the Financial Regulation states that delegated cooperation is exclusive to emergency and post-emergency EUTFs.

Still related to its functioning, the Global Health Advocates (2017, p.15-16) argue that the starting point of what is presented as a development tool was not partner countries’ development needs or policies and, therefore, falls short on the principles of alignment by minimizing the country’s ownership of programs. In the same way, Castillejo (2017) points out that although the core principle of the EUTF for Africa intervention is local ownership, African ownership within the EUTF for Africa is undoubtedly weaker than within traditional European cooperation and development instruments.

In this section the paper compared the EUTF for Africa’s goals and functioning with conventional development policy projects according to the literature on the topic. It seems worthy of remark two overarching aspects.

Firstly, concerning its goals. Although establishing a link between development and migration, the EU shouldn’t expect less migration through development aid. Therefore, Bartels (2019, p.16) argues that the financial and technical assistance provided for is not capable of managing migration movements in the long term and to tackle its structural causes and hence it is doomed to failure.

Secondly, concerning its functioning. The most controversial aspects are the diversion of aid, the conditionality approach (Cortinovis and Conte (2018, p.8), the non-alignment with partner countries’ development needs (Global Health Advocates, 2017, p.15) and the lack of ownership of African partner countries (Castillejo, 2017). Therefore, the European Parliamentary Research Service (2018, p.11) recommends the distinction of development and migration policies.

The allocation of funds according to the Annual Reports

So far the paper has laid out the two dimensions by which the EUTF for Africa's added value has been analyzed. In this last section, the paper presents a compilation of data about funding and disbursement of aid according to the three EUTF for Africa's Annual Reports available so far, in order to look at its general trends (European Commission, 2017a, 2018, 2019). Figure 1 shows the total amount pledged (in euros) by the different donors (Member states and the EU) and the approved projects by strategic objective (1-4) and region (Sahel/Lake Chad, Horn of Africa and North of Africa). In the regional section, it also presents the most financed strategic objective per region (in brackets).

	Annual Report 2016 as by 31/12/2016	Annual Report 2017 as by 31/12/2017	Annual Report 2018 as by 31/12/2018
TOTAL PLEDGED	2.555.800.000*	3.331.768.258	4.209.699.567
By donor	2.555.800.000*	3.331.768.258	4.209.699.567
Member states	152.385.265	378.834.400	489.532.083
EU/EDF budget	2.403.400.000	2.952.933.858	3.720.167.484
APPROVED PROJECTS	1.589.000.000*	2.388.000.000**	3.590.010.000
By strategic objective (1-4)	1.589.000.000*	2.388.000.000**	3.590.010.000
(1) Greater economic and employment opportunities	485.000.000	580.600.000	775.000.000
(2) Strengthening resilience of communities	531.000.000	732.200.000	931.930.000
(3) Improved migration management	278.000.000	555.100.000	1.107.330.000
(4) Improved governance and conflict prevention	277.000.000	492.900.000	713.250.000
Other	17.000.000	14.300.000	62.500.000
By region	1.589.000.000	2.388.000.000**	3.590.010.000
Sahel/Lake Chad	918.500.000 [(4) 271.600.000]	1.263.000.000 [(2) 397.000]	1.721.140.000 [(1) 464.580.000]
Horn of Africa	606.000.000 [(2) 265.000.000]	818.100.000 [(2) 335.200.000]	1.286.630.000 [(2) 475.200.000]
North of Africa	64.500.000 [(3) 64.500.000]	285.000.000 [(3) 285.000.000]	582.230.000 [(3) 570.370.000]

* rounded amounts

** adds cross-window projects

Image 1. Compilation of data from the EUTF for Africa's Annual Reports

From the presented data, three conclusions seem of importance:

1. The contributions from Member states have almost doubled since the creation of the trust fund, going from about 6% (circa 150 thousand euros) to 13% (circa 490 thousand euros) of the total amount pledged. However, it is still far from the ambition raised at the Valletta summit of putting together €1.8 billion.

2. It is also possible to observe that, while in 2016 and 2017 most of the approved projects were directed towards (1) greater economic and employment opportunities and (2) strengthening the resilience of the communities, the ones related to (3) improving migration management have doubled, making it the most financed objective so far.
3. The kind of approved projects differ by region. With the exception of the North of Africa region, where the total (or most) of the funding goes to improving migration management (3), the funds in Sahel/Lake Chad and Horn of Africa seem to be more evenly shared.

From these conclusions we can formulate further questions. For instance, the latest Annual Report (European Commission, 2019, p.18) shows that despite the fact that Member states are not contributing as much as expected, their agencies implement 37% of the projects. This might put into question if the preference for the delegate cooperation is worth it, given that it's added value is not only to provide more efficiency but also to incentivize funding from Member states. Also, the two other conclusions seem to support the aid diversion argument put forward by Barana (2017, p.3), that while in 2016 the numerous projects approved addressed development and protection priorities, the new initiatives in 2017 reinforce the gradual turn towards an increased focus on the short-term security implications of migration.

Conclusion

The paper aimed to divide the literature about the EUTF for Africa according to two dimensions, each of them raising different sets of questions, in order to contribute to the discussion about the implications of the design and goals of such instruments. The first one looks at its structure and the second one compares its goals and functioning with conventional development policy projects.

From the previous analysis of the structural dimension of the EUTF for Africa, it identifies two main aspects.

The first one concerns the priority given to delegate cooperation agreements with Member states in order to provide more efficiency. Related to this point, although providing added value in project selection and launching (European Court of Auditors, 2018, p. 23), the EUTF for Africa introduces an intergovernmental dynamic and gives rise to the question of whether the most appropriate and best available implementing partner is always selected (Centre for European Policy Studies 2018, p.35).

The second aspect concerns the trade-off between flexibility and accountability enhanced by the extra-budget nature of the EDF based EUTF for Africa, which despite allowing more flexibility, brings democratic accountability deficits back into fields where cooperation was supposed to be consolidated and expanded through the European Parliament under the Lisbon Treaty (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2018, p.9).

From the comparison with conventional development policy projects, the paper could identify two main points put forward by the literature.

Concerning its goals, although there is a link between development and migration, the EU shouldn't expect less migration through development aid. Therefore, Bartels (2019, p.16) argues that the financial and technical assistance provided for is not capable of managing migration movements in the long term and to tackle its structural causes and hence it is doomed to failure.

Concerning its functioning, the most controversial aspects are the diversion of aid, the conditionality approach (Cortinovis and Conte (2018, p.8), the non-alignment with partner countries' development needs (Global Health Advocates, 2017, p.15) and the lack of ownership of African partner countries (Castilejo, 2017).

In this way, although not arguing that the EUTF for Africa has not financed actions that may have added value the literature essentially questions whether an emergency EUTF was necessary as an instrument for the aimed long-term objective, given the different implications that arise from it and that the paper intended to highlight.

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