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# **AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STRONGER EU DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT**

Recommendations for Denmark's  
Development Policy Strategy

**Stronger EU development engagement and civil society support**

Denmark's new humanitarian and development strategy is being formulated at a time where the global landscape for development and humanitarian aid is shifting rapidly. US funding cuts to civil society, climate change-driven food insecurity and humanitarian crises piling up demand a strong and united EU response.

European leadership in promoting humanitarian response, sustainable development and equal partnerships with governments and civil society in the Global South is not only important due to growing needs, but also a geopolitical and security policy imperative.

The new Danish development strategy can support this by emphasising the following elements:

- Support a direction where the EU strengthens its commitment to promoting sustainable development, localisation and a fair green transition in developing countries. At a time when several EU Member States are cutting their development aid, it is crucial that the EU ensure its legitimacy with partners in the Global South.
- Strengthen EU support for local civil society. The EU has long recognized civil society organizations as key actors across the humanitarian, development, peace and climate nexus and promoted civic space and human rights work as a foundation for sustainable development. With the US scaling back its funding for civil society globally, there is a pressing need for the EU to reinforce its support and take immediate steps to safeguard key local civil society infrastructure, scale up localization efforts and prioritize direct funding and long-term partnerships with local CSOs.
- Ensure an ambitious focus on climate adaptation and food systems in the EU development cooperation. EU development cooperation including Global Gateway projects must ensure local ownership and integrate solutions that enhance climate resilience and food security. Efforts to streamline processes or boost competitiveness must not come at the expense of the EU's objectives to



support the green transition.

- Improve the design of the Global Gateway flagship projects, private sector instruments and multi-stakeholder partnerships in a way that facilitates local ownership and inclusive value-chains with a climate and development effect. Denmark has a unique tradition of facilitating collaboration across sectors through public-private partnerships like the Danida Green Business Partnership instrument, which can serve as inspiration across the EU.
- Prioritize, localize and ring-fencing humanitarian aid. The EU must ensure that humanitarian aid remains a key priority and is not diverted or politicized. Upholding the ring-fencing of humanitarian aid in the coming MFF is a must in that regard.

