

## Session 13 – Listeners' Highlights

Implications for SDC presented by Annonciata Ndikumasabo and Giancarlo De Picciotto

1. **Is PEA important for SDC?**
  - Yes, the topic is very important in SDC and in the Division, and can help increase the impact of our work. The shift of paradigm in the development arena, the global context and the institutional line make it compelling to mix technical and political work.
  - So far, current approaches have PEA components but they are not explicit. Staff are implicitly using PEA, but it is unspoken.
  - Further collaboration is foreseen between DDLGN and SENAP Division on the topic
  
2. **How can we work more effectively?**
  - Pre-requisite: PEA will have impact if we operate as self-aware actors in the countries where we are working
    - Make PEA more explicit in programmes/projects
    - Use both contextual and problem-focussed PEA.
    - Doing systematically context analysis is vital for determining programming priorities
    - Stay realistic about what change we can achieve. PEA provides an understanding of how countries really operate; enable to understand political settlement and risks of fragility; enables us to have realistic views of level of influence
    - PEA is most influential where where analysis is continuous and linked to key stakeholders that have political influence
    - Need to be clear about why we are doing analysis and for whom?
  
3. **Concepts vs reality**
  - Keep in mind the 5 stages of PEA.
  - Be aware of PEA factors in your context, and be flexible and adaptive.
  - Within a country: very important to understand how PEA factors shape the context. Understanding how the system works, why it works.
  - Rent seeking and neopatrimonialism do not always act as obstacles to development: Neo-patrimonialism systems for the distribution of rents can be harnessed for developmental ends so long as there is a centralized structure for managing rents; rents management is geared to long term development.
  - PEA is about understanding the situation and how we can act in that situation.
  
4. **Integrating PEA in SDC tools (MERV, Country strategy guidelines, Conflict analysis)**
  - MERV: is an intensive monitoring tool, is mainly descriptive and does not analyse causes of changes. **What** rather than **why**. MERV could be supplemented with some PEA questions.
  - Country strategy: PEA is useful to understand context, allows us to develop more grounded and realistic country strategy/programme; informing choices about priorities between sectors.

- Complementarity and link to CSPM and contextual monitoring – issues of relevance to MERV in Mozambique.

### **So what?**

- SDC has always been a political actor. We should acknowledge this, and be more self-aware about how we engage politically.
- SDC should be more and more involved in policy dialogue, can foster policy dialogue.
- Breaking taboos, we need to be aware that we need to do that.
- PEA helps to guard against the risk of falling into the routine trap of being too optimistic (but sometimes too pessimistic).
- PEA can help us identify and respond to critical changes in the context.
- Influence: Having a clear mind on what we really do, and our level of influence
- Demystify the mantra of participation, reflect on who participates in what, when?
- SDC is not alone. CH has a number of aid and non-aid instruments to contribute to solutions. PEA can generate ideas on where such synergies can be exploited.
- SDC should have instruments to “walk the talk” and show the necessary flexibility for a more politically informed approach.