Development cooperation: complementarity between community and Member states policies

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PURPOSE : to increase complementarity between Member States' aid and Community aid. CONTENT : the communication refers, first of all, to the main objectives of complementarity, namely: improving the impact of European aid through optimum use of the EU's human and financial resources, and through Community providing "value added" in relation to Member States' bilateral aid. The communication then describes the main conditions for ensuring greater complementarity: strong political will, operational co-ordination mechanisms, and a development strategy of the recipient country itself, which together will help ensure that Community aid is defined and targeted with reference to Member State aid. The communication goes on to describe the main forms of complementarity at operational level and in the management of human resources and implementing methods: apportioning sectors and/or targeting, comparative advantages and areas where the Community has its own value added. Furthermore, new initiatives are proposed : - in the short term, there are: systematic exchange and joint analysis of existing documents on strategies for supporting beneficiary countries, reflection on the re-definition of the roles of existing committees, simplification and harmonisation of procedures, strengthening of links between headquarters and links at the field level. It is proposed that Member States who so wish be associated with annual reviews of the Community programmes of aid to the ACP countries. - in the medium term, the Commission and the Member States must help the beneficiary countries to draw up their own national strategy documents, and this should mean that the Community support strategies will reflect the Member States' priorities and the Community's at the same time. It is intended that this process should lead gradually to the drawing-up of truly European strategies.