

Summary note on Post-2015 Consultations prepared by UNDP for the OWG¹

1. The Global Conversation Begins

The UN Development Group (UNDG) consultations on the post-2015 development agenda have been set up to respond to the call for greater participation in the shaping of any new development agenda. They represent an unprecedented effort to engage with people all around the world on their priorities. The consultations are taking place at three levels:

- **National consultations** are currently under way in 86 countries, with an aspiration to reach 100 countries during 2013. These are being facilitated by UN Country Teams who are working with a wide range of stakeholders including governments, civil society, the private sector, media, universities and think tanks.
- **Thematic consultations** are being held on 11 topics covering the existing MDG areas and prominent challenges that will shape the prospects for sustainable development in the coming decades: Conflict, Violence and Disaster; Education; Energy; Environmental Sustainability; Food Security and Nutrition; Governance; Growth and Employment; Health; Addressing Inequalities; Population Dynamics; and Water.
- A **global online conversation** is taking place on the worldwewant2015.org website, on Facebook and other forums in various countries, as well as through the MY World survey which enables individuals to rank their own priorities. The MY World initiative was developed by the UN with support from over 230 committed partners worldwide to reach out to communities and constituents.

This brief draws from the report "*The Global Conversation Begins: Emerging Views for a New Development Agenda*" which summarizes the results of consultations on the post-2015 development agenda from 36 developing countries and 11 thematic consultations as well as regional consultations and consultations in OECD countries where interim results of on-going discussions are available. So far 400,000 people have been able to contribute to the global conversation. This includes 130,000 people who have participated in person or online to the national dialogues, and some 280,000 people who have voted for their development priorities on MY World, the UN survey for a better world.

2. Emerging Views for a New Development Agenda

The first key message we are hearing is that the issues covered by the **MDGs are still fundamental**: they drive the efforts of governments, experts, members of the public, activists and academics, and they help to channel support to people living in vulnerable situations across the world. People across a range of countries and thematic backgrounds are telling us that reducing poverty, access to education, good health, clean water and equality between women and men are on top of their agendas. As are the need to reduce hunger and malnutrition, ensure natural resources are protected and create partnerships to support development.

We are also hearing that **the MDGs need to be adapted** to take into account advances in measurement and social media, the need for qualitative results and the demand for policy coherence

¹ This note draws primarily from the report "*The Global Conversation Begins: Emerging Views For a New Development Agenda*" (UNDG 2013), <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/the-global-conversation-begins>.

between issues. Many participants in the consultations are calling for a framework that balances attention devoted to quality and quantity of development results. Taking education as an example, while many countries are improving their enrolment rates, others are stuck or even backsliding. This is because school enrolment does not tell the full story. A focus is also needed on what children and young people learn and whether it equips them functionally for life and work.

The third key message is a strong **call for an expanded development agenda** that reflects strengthened public accountability, equity and human rights and remodels itself to respond to new realities including the ongoing jobs crisis, good governance, growing and moving populations, resource scarcity and environmental degradation, and peace and security. Below are five examples of issues on which people want more emphasis in the new development agenda:

- Jobs - Consultations indicate that job creation will remain a major social challenge for almost all economies including wealthy ones beyond 2015. Several national discussions call attention to the mismatch between the skills people have and available jobs. While the jobs crisis has been amplified recently, even before the recent economic downturn many people including young people and those engaged in informal or seasonal work, not least of which are women, were particularly vulnerable. As a result, several consultations have asked for greater social protection.
- Governance, public accountability and political inclusion - Issues related to governance and accountability are being raised as a priority consistently across the national consultations. The consultations consistently present human rights as a non-negotiable element to deliver this accountability. There were also calls to increase access to and trust in justice provision among all social groups but also to focus on greater fairness and inclusivity and provide opportunities for economic and political participation.
- Inequalities - We are hearing that people see a small group of elites who benefit at the expense of the majority. And despite all of our efforts, in almost all countries and thematic discussions, most women reported that they still feel less safe, less listened to and less important than men. We hear a very clear call for a future development agenda that is capable of shifting the trajectory toward more equal and just societies, everywhere, not least with equal opportunities and freedom from fear, for women.
- Poverty-environment linkages - At the national and local level, people refer to the kind of environmental conditions that affects their daily lives and well-being. Businesses, young people, poor people, human rights activists, and environmentalists are part of a growing chorus asking that the new development agenda tackles planetary boundaries and climate change. People are calling for the next development agenda to break down the silos of the MDGs - which has been recognized as a key bottleneck for achieving MDGs in general and particularly related to environmental sustainability. We are hearing calls for a broader way to frame environmental sustainability such as notions on natural capital, ecosystem services, ecological footprint, and planetary boundaries which cut-across sectors.
- Human security and freedom from violence - The consultations point to the interdependence among countries, and see the need for peace and security as something that reaches beyond those countries and personal security affected by conflict.

In sum, the consultations **demonstrate an appetite for truly transformative change**. People are calling for a fundamental rethink of current models ---- they want an overhaul of economic progress

that is jobless, burns through natural resources and results in growing inequalities. The thousands of people engaged in the consultations are asking for a global development framework, backed by national policy action, to improve their lives by making people across the world less vulnerable, more empowered and more resilient to change. They want leaders to take action to create the conditions for a more equitable and safer world. They recognize the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and note the challenges that persist regardless of economic growth, and they want a forward-looking approach that does not breach planetary boundaries.

The consultations suggest three implications for a new development agenda:

- First, while a focussed agenda will continue to be important, the new agenda should be balanced and holistic to be successful.
- Second, the consultations point to the need for a genuinely universal agenda, taking up persistent social challenges in relatively wealthy countries and acknowledging the interconnectedness of people, governments and business across the globe.
- Third, the new agreement must find a way to ensure real results, realize human rights and use technology to engage people the world over in taking the next development agenda forward amongst others to keep the conversation with civil society going until 2015.