



2014 Development Cooperation Forum Ethiopia High-Level Symposium

“A renewed global partnership for a post-2015 era”

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AIDE MEMOIRE

I. What should be the role of a renewed global partnership for development in a post-2015 setting?

The Millennium Declaration, adopted by world leaders in 2000, forged a global consensus on a shared vision for development. The internationally agreed development goals, known as the United Nations development agenda, summarize major commitments of the United Nations conferences and summits held during the 1990s on various aspects of development. The eight Millennium Development Goals – specific time-bound goals and targets focused on poverty reduction, gender equality and women’s empowerment, health, environmental sustainability and the global partnership for development – were put together following the Millennium Summit and are an integral part of this United Nations development agenda.

Member States also agreed in the Declaration “to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty.” As suggested in the “Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,” MDG8 on developing a global partnership for development includes indicators and targets related to aid, trade, debt relief and increased access to essential medicines and new technologies.” The Interagency and Expert Group on the MDGs refined the indicators to better reflect and monitor the targets. MDG8 today includes 6 targets and 16 indicators. The Secretary-General’s MDG Gap Task Force monitors and reports annually on those indicators and additional commitments made by developed countries during the decade.

In 2002, the Millennium Declaration was complemented in important ways by the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Monterrey Consensus contained policy commitments to strengthen both domestic and international economic governance and specified policy actions pertaining to the volume and effectiveness of Official Development Assistance (ODA), international trade and investment, sovereign debt management and crisis resolution, and international financial reforms. It also recognized the centrality of addressing systemic issues to ensure coherence and consistency of the international, monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation called for inclusive, integrated and nationally owned and led strategies for poverty reduction and sustainable development; promotion of mechanisms for the development, transfer and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know how; and development and voluntary adoption of indicators for sustainable development.

Lessons can be learned from the experience with the global partnership for development, including its partial reflection in MDG8, which has focused attention on the degree to which commitments were being realized on aid, trade, debt relief, access to ICT and essential medicines, and other forms of support. With its ODA target, MDG8 contributed to the 63 per cent growth of ODA from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries between 2000 and 2010. It also helped promote greater policy coherence for development and put a focus on the special needs of the most vulnerable countries. Yet, it also had important gaps and shortcomings. It reflected a donor-recipient paradigm; pieced together disparate commit-

ments in the Declaration; lacked a vision of balanced and inclusive development partnerships rooted in strong country ownership and leadership; overlooked aid quality issues; paid insufficient attention to domestic and external sources of development finance other than aid; and lacked sufficiently specific targets and an effective accountability mechanism.

The need for additional and predictable financing has also led to increased donor efforts to mobilize domestic resources; use aid as a catalyst to mobilize other sources of development finance; explore innovative sources of finance; direct remittances towards development purposes; address supply side constraints through Aid For Trade; and scale up transfer of technology, especially related to the green economy. As developing countries have enjoyed greater economic growth and improved macroeconomic management, they have mobilized more domestic resources, which should be a continuing trend if the international economic environment is supportive. While these other sources have gained in importance, ODA remains of vital importance, especially for Least Developed Countries, Land-Locked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States and countries experiencing violence, conflict, insecurity and unrest. It is thus critical that a renewed global partnership for development reinforces existing ODA commitments.

The internationally agreed development goals remain the guidepost for international development efforts. Yet, the international environment for pursuing them has changed dramatically since 2000, and not only in terms of the composition of development finance. As the global economy continues to recover from the economic and financial crises, a multipolar economy is emerging. Southern economies are playing a larger role in development cooperation, as are other actors, including the private sector, philanthropic organizations, civil society organizations and local authorities. At the same time, the geography of poverty has changed, inequalities are rising and sustainable development challenges have become even more pressing.

The early deliberations on a post-2015 UN development agenda have thus emphasized the need for an expanded and truly global agenda – for action by both developing and developed countries – with shared yet differentiated responsibilities for development actors, more broadly defined. All the above factors, plus lessons learned, would have implications for how the global partnership for development would need to evolve in order to provide effective support for the implementation of a post-2015 development agenda.

Questions for discussion:

- 1. What has been the role of the global partnership for development and how effectively has it performed?*
- 2. What are the lessons learned from this experience that should inform the way the global partnership works in the post-2015 era?*
- 3. What are the implications of the changed development landscape for a renewed global partnership for development?*

II. What could be the vision, principles and strategic priorities of a renewed global partnership for development in a post-2015 setting?

Building on the current global partnership for development, a renewed partnership could galvanize political support to create an enabling environment for development, attract broad participation of different stakeholders and ensure systematic monitoring and accountability. It could serve as a vehicle to mobilize financial and other resources to support implementation of a post-2015 development agenda, develop capacity and promote technology transfer and knowledge sharing. It could also facilitate efforts to address systemic issues; foster greater policy coherence between aid and non-aid policies; focus attention on enablers of development cooperation and reduce inequalities.

Since its inception, the United Nations development agenda has been permeated by a fundamental concern for equity and equality of all persons and a consistent emphasis on partnership. The Millennium Declaration outlines shared values and principles, such as: human freedom; equality; solidarity in sharing burdens and benefits of global challenges; tolerance for diversity in culture, language, belief; respect for nature; and shared responsibility for worldwide development, peace and security. These principles have been reiterated in the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Action, and the outcome documents of the 2005 World Summit and 2010 MDG Summit.

Many of these principles, in turn, echo the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and its set of 27 principles, which promote concepts such as the centrality of human beings to the concerns of sustainable development (principle 1); the primacy of poverty eradication (principle 5); the importance of the environment for current and future generations and its equal footing with development (principles 3 and 4); the special consideration given to developing countries (principle 6); and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR, principle 7). The development paradigm that frames the context of international development cooperation has not fully integrated sustainable development, with its economic, social and environmental dimensions, as evident in the discussions at the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012. Moving forward, there may be need to bring these two strands, including their overarching principles, closer together.

The UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda suggests that any post-2015 development agenda should be based on the principles outlined in the Millennium Declaration and the three principles of equality, human rights and sustainability. While recognizing the strong normative foundation of the United Nations development agenda, some stakeholders have called for a renewed global partnership for development to be firmly anchored in human rights, to pay greater attention to equity concerns, including gender equality, and to promote participation of all actors on a more equal footing. The High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 development agenda, in its Bali Communiqué, has proposed an equal partnership of all stakeholders to be at the core of a renewed global partnership that is guided by equity, sustainability, solidarity, respect for humanity and shared responsibilities in accordance with respective capabilities.

As recognized in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the global partnership for development is distinct from the various global multi-stakeholder partnerships that support implementation of different aspects of the United Nations development agenda. As new actors have emerged, multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as the Secretary-General's "Every woman, every child" and "Sustainable Energy for All" initiatives, have only gained in importance, along with other forms of informal networks. Such partnerships can strengthen advocacy, develop targeted and innovative solutions, mobilize additional resources and secure efficiency gains by helping different stakeholders to leverage their respective strengths. Discussions on a renewed global partnership for development provide an opening to reflect on both the strengths and weaknesses of these global partnerships and the partnerships space, which is both under-governed and under-managed, with attendant risks, such as duplication of efforts and diversion of attention and resources away from country priorities.

Another key concern is the present disconnect between the globally defined goals and the underlying principles that guide development cooperation operations at country level. Many national development strategies and action plans do not adequately address overarching principles. Nor do they adequately reflect the principle of country ownership and leadership or recognize the important role of the non-executive branch of government, civil society, private philanthropic foundations, the private sector and local governments in the process of development. Systemic issues are also frequently omitted from national strategies.

Questions for discussion:

- 1. What are the purposes that a renewed global partnership for development should serve?*
- 2. What principles should guide a renewed global partnership for development, in light of unfinished business, new challenges and the growing diversity of approaches and actors in development cooperation?*
- 3. How should a renewed global partnership for development – and its purposes and principles – relate to development partnerships at the national and global levels?*

III. How could a renewed global partnership for development work in practice?

Despite intensified efforts to accelerate progress towards the MDGs, ODA declined for the second year in a row in 2011 and is increasingly dwarfed by other sources of finance. Progress on other commitments encapsulated in MDG8 looks equally somber and some suggest that political support to the global partnership for development is eroding. A debate on the definition of ODA is also unfolding.

Moving forward, to propel urgent concerted action, a post-2015 development agenda and the global partnership for development that underpins it will need to be formulated in a more participatory and inclusive way than were the MDGs, more similar to the Monterrey Consensus. Global discussions are already ongoing and can be expected to shape the content of the agenda, which will itself affect the nature of a renewed global partnership for development and how it may best work in practice.

The MDG8 experience showed that the development process and the quality of support can be as decisive as the quantity of support for sustainable development results. It has therefore been proposed that a renewed global partnership for development should put a greater focus on the development process itself, including its inclusiveness and participatory nature. It should be able to attract the active engagement of the different stakeholders and emphasize and enable such working practices as progress reviews, policy dialogue, and coherent linkages to other global processes and to national and sub-national activities.

It has further been proposed that a future framework should monitor the quality of support more closely – a key finding that also emanated from the Paris Process on Aid Effectiveness. Policy makers might hence want to reflect to what extent operational development effectiveness considerations, including those being advanced by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, should be addressed in a renewed global partnership for development.

To make the renewed global partnership for development cooperation attractive for the diverse set of development actors, it will be critical to move from the current donor-recipient inspired global partnership for development to a partnership which engages development partners on a more equitable footing. A key challenge in this regard is how to build a renewed global partnership for development that provides a sufficiently robust normative framework while at the same time recognizing the different roles, responsibilities and capabilities of the different actors. A renewed global partnership for development will also need to be sufficiently flexible to enable different stakeholder to leverage their comparative advantages.

Traditional donors remain the principal sources of development finance, especially for LDCs, but Southern partners, parliaments, local governments, civil society, private philanthropic foundations are taking on a greater role. Parliamentarians, are increasingly carrying out their oversight function over national budgets; Southern partners have started to work together to explore how to pave the way towards stronger impact of South-South development cooperation and to define their role in a post-2015 setting, while stressing that their work should be seen as a complement and not a substitute to traditional development cooperation; Local governments have played a key role in advancing decentralized development cooperation; civil society organizations have further strengthened their critical role in advancing implementation both through their advocacy role and their presence at the grass root level. Philanthropic organizations are increasingly looking at how to best leverage their comparative advantages – as risk takers, innovators and strategic investors – in a post-2015 setting. The private sector has also enhanced its contribution to development by increasingly leveraging core business competencies for development purposes.

As new areas and actors emerge in the global partnerships, achieving coherence among the variety of actors and partnerships has become increasingly challenging. Recent estimates suggest that there are now 126 bilateral OECD-DAC agencies, 23 non-DAC providers and 263 multilateral aid agencies. The proliferation of development cooperation actors and forms has led to increased fragmentation, making administration of development assistance more complex and costly, in particular for countries with already limited administrative capacities. Since 2007, the average value of DAC ODA per project has registered a sharp decline. In parallel, the number of projects has steadily increased, leading to considerable transaction costs.

The present global partnership for development has disappointed in terms of its ability to promote policy coherence for development between aid and non-aid policies and to address systemic issues, both of which are critical for the creation of an enabling international environment. To optimize on the emergence of new actors and approaches, a renewed global partnership for development will need to place greater and more effective focus on strengthening policy coherence for development and addressing systemic issues.

Questions for discussion:

1. *What basic features and working practices should a renewed global partnership for development adopt to effectively support implementation of a post-2015 global development agenda?*
2. *How should the global partnership for development work in practice, at the different levels? What would make it attractive for different stakeholders to engage?*
3. *What opportunities and potential challenges do you see when thinking about roles and responsibilities of different actors in a renewed global partnership for development?*

IV. What role could enhanced monitoring and accountability play in a renewed global partnership for development?

To be fit for a world of today a post-2015 development agenda depends on robust and effective monitoring and accountability. The success of a post-2015 United Nations development agenda will hinge upon progress in implementing the ultimate outcomes it defines, including through more robust and effective monitoring and accountability of (a) the post-2015 development agenda as a whole; (b) the intergovernmentally agreed renewed global partnership for development that will underpin the agenda; (c) the global multi-stakeholder partnerships which will complement it, in supporting implementation in specific areas or sectors; and (d) partnerships at country level that help achieve agreed and broad-based objectives of national development strategies.

As the MDGs were conceptualized as benchmarks for monitoring government performance against normative commitments made to end poverty, progress on the UN Development Agenda also depends on the assessment of other essential commitments as contained in the internationally agreed development goals.

As global conferences have taken place year after year, there is a widespread lack of clarity on the amounts and policies committed to MDG achievement. The MDGs have often been obliquely referred to in such contexts, with the great exception of the 2010 MDG Summit. It is also unclear whether commitments, including those made by special initiatives and task forces, were additional and actually delivered.

MDG8 has served primarily as a monitoring framework, rather than a driver for implementation of the commitments it encapsulates. Public attention has also shifted towards promoting effective partnerships based on the recognition of national leadership to ensure ODA effectiveness and its poverty reduction impact – a key feature of the Monterrey Consensus. This call for *mutual accountability* between provider and programme countries, one of five aid effectiveness principles, was reaffirmed by the 2010 MDG Summit. Southern partners and non-state actors have also acknowledged the need for enhanced accountability in development partnerships.

The Integrated Implementation Framework (IIF), which records and monitors financial as well as policy commitments made in support of the MDGs, pools together all existing information on commitments made by different actors. The MDG Gap Taskforce Reports have introduced coverage of a broader range of partners and innovative sources of financing.

Ad hoc accountability initiatives in relation to individual goals and around vertical, multi-stakeholder partnerships at global level, show mixed results in ensuring a real shift to higher rates of progress. There is great merit in reviewing lessons from such practices, for instance from the “Countdown to 2015” and its high-quality annual reports reviewing a small set of clear indicators on maternal, newborn and child health, prepared by an independent Expert Review Group. Other successful examples include the International Health Partnership (IHP+), which reviews aid effectiveness principles in the health sector.

The scope of progress reviews behind the renewed global partnership for development will depend on the content of the post-2015 development agenda and the changing composition of development-related global flows. It will be important to review whether and how the broad range of issues, from trade to debt and market access to aid, can be reviewed. It will also need to be decided whether progress reviews will be detailed enough to show contributions by *individual* actors or groups of actors to hold them more effectively accountable. Another key question will be how the development effectiveness agenda and deliberations on the quality of development cooperation can inspire this discussion.

Intergovernmental deliberations on a post-2015 development agenda may benefit from the following and other lessons from global and national monitoring and accountability processes:

- i. *Lack of country leadership*: Despite growing awareness of benefits of strong *mutual* accountability between providers and recipients of development cooperation, and despite efforts to support countries in shaping and enacting a common agenda towards more predictable and transparent aid, country leadership and progress towards effective, results-focused reporting systems remains limited. Providers continue to dominate the accountability agenda, while placing the primary onus of reporting on the recipient countries.
- ii. *Implementation challenges*: Enablers of accountability are well known¹. They can help exert peer pressure and change behaviour on the ground. Yet, capacity needs make it hard for stakeholders to engage meaningfully at technical and political levels. Monitoring alone does not address the problem of non-delivery on commitments. Closing the delivery gap will require stronger accountability: most effectively, through a flexible but robust intergovernmental mechanism at global level that can galvanize political support.
- iii. *Independent global accountability*: ECOSOC's DCF, the Financing for Development review conference and the report to the General Assembly on a sustainable development financing strategy were identified by the Secretary-General as opportunities for multi-stakeholder discussion on reshaping the global partnership for development. Any global mechanism to review a renewed global partnership for development must be authoritative and autonomous, while also providing guidance to country-level actors, including to non-executive stakeholders engaged in reviewing its implementation on the ground. It should also be well placed to ensure coherence between different monitoring efforts. As an apex body for review of progress in developing a global partnership for development, and as an authoritative source of information on mutual accountability, the DCF can execute this role, supplementing the role of the ECOSOC's Annual Ministerial Review, which is bound to review progress towards the development goals in a post-2015 development agenda.
- iv. *Simplification of practices at country level*: Evidence shows that monitoring and accountability should build on existing, routinely undertaken in-country data collection processes that are complemented by additional, independent sources of evidence of a qualitative nature, including from civil society organizations and parliaments. It should allow for the voluntary participation of all types of providers and partners. Partners may also choose to engage in more than one progress review, tailored to reflect specific characteristics of a partnership. Programme countries will require strong capacities to achieve this.
- v. *Financing sustainable development*: To avoid greater complexity, review of progress on sustainable development financing may need to be incorporated in existing national results frameworks, and made part of in-country partnership policies, with participation of all relevant stakeholders. Some partnership policies address policy coherence for development on issues such as trade, debt relief, agriculture and technology. National strategies for sustainable development and National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs) on climate change are often piled on top of development strategies rather than integrated. At the same time, national councils and stakeholder advisory bodies need to feed better into efforts related to the management and coordination of development cooperation at country level.

Questions for discussion:

- 1. How can progress in implementation of the post-2015 development agenda as a whole be reviewed effectively, including that of global multi-stakeholder partnerships and development partnerships at national level?***
- 2. What would be the scope and key characteristics of effective monitoring and accountability of a renewed global partnership for development underpinning a post-2015 development agenda?***
- 3. What lessons can be learnt from past efforts to strengthen national monitoring and accountability for delivery on development commitments?***

¹ Regular surveys on mutual accountability conducted for the DCF have been successful in producing greater clarity on the types of enablers needed. They include: inclusive high-level policy dialogues, aid or partnership policies, results frameworks with targets for individual providers, availability of timely information on a broad range of aspects of development cooperation etc.