

Contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums are invited to share relevant inputs and deliberations as to how they address goals and targets from the perspective of “*Ensuring that no one is left behind*”.

Inputs could use the template overleaf, inspired by the report of the Secretary-General on Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level (A/70/684).

Submissions will be publicly posted online at the United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, at sustainabledevelopment.un.org, as input to the 2016 meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Please send the completed form no later than **16 May 2016** to the Secretariat’s e-mail pietracci@un.org

Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

1. Assessment of the situation regarding the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind” at the global level

The universal, ambitious and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require all countries and actors to work together effectively to leave no one behind. The SDGs call for an equally ambitious response to ensure that “billions” of dollars of available development resources attract, mobilize and channel “trillions” in investments of all kinds: public and private, national and global, and through both financial and non-financial means of implementation.

Domestic resource mobilisation is the most sustainable source of development financing in the long run. It provides the fiscal space for countries to exercise policy space, and to build societal learning and solutions necessary for nationally-led and self-directed development.

At the same time, Official Development Assistance (ODA) remains an important external source of development finance. ODA is relatively stable in aggregate terms, and it can be used for counter-cyclical investments when progress decelerates. It is available to countries that are less able to access market-based forms of external investment, or where opportunities for domestic resource mobilization are limited by geography or natural resource endowments.

For ODA to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, its effectiveness must continue to improve. It must become more predictable, concessional and transparent, and become better aligned to national development goals. Scrutiny of the quality of ODA reflects its value to both sending and receiving countries as a targeted tool. At the same

time, ODA is part of a mix of resources and assets available for development that are several orders of magnitude larger than the total volume of ODA itself. Added together these may be able to deliver the trillions of dollars required to implement the 2030 Agenda.

For example, the material benefits of South-South and Triangular forms of cooperation, which have grown substantially in scale in the last twenty years, can help power progress towards the SDGs in a wide variety of country situations. Progress through South-South cooperation has been possible—in part—due to the principles on which it is based. These include solidarity, non-conditionality and non-interference. Triangular cooperation that is led by recipient countries can similarly benefit all parties involved, strengthening institutional ties and increasing mutual benefits.

Beyond traditional and emerging forms of development cooperation, additional engagement will be necessary. In a time of heightened economic volatility and risk, the achievement of the SDGs will require the enabling actions of international financial institutions and of capital markets, as well as the support of central banks and other regulatory bodies. Conducive market incentives, macro-prudential regulation and macro-economic stability, together with liquidity in credit markets, will be crucial for sustained private sector investment.

The inter-related nature of the SDGs, the relatively short time frame for their implementation, and the multiplicity of actors, increase the importance of cooperation. This draws attention to the need for knowledge sharing on tested solutions available across all sources of cooperation. Evidence and learning will be crucial to drive informed progress on the ground. This can in turn build confidence and enabling environments for additional investment in both financial and non-financial terms.

A multi-stakeholder partnership for development cooperation that is recognized by Member States as a complement to the Development Cooperation Forum, that pools and disseminates available knowledge, and that leverages the contributions of non-State actors, can help to extend the work and impact of existing and new modalities and approaches. It can support national ownership and coordination over the growing and varied forms of cooperation for development, ensuring effective partnerships that deliver for those most in need through bankable initiatives and in a cost-effective manner.

2. The identification of gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation is already a contributor in the global agenda for effective development partnerships. It was established in 2012 as an outcome of the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation to promote development cooperation between stakeholders at global and country levels for nationally owned results.

The Global Partnership can trace its roots to the early 2000s and a discussion within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to enhance effectiveness of ODA for achieving the MDGs. This quickly evolved into a dialogue between donors, partner countries and international organizations. It has continued to evolve. What began as an ODA-centric platform has gradually evolved into a more inclusive vehicle to promote effective development cooperation at large.

In 2011, a comprehensive evaluation of the Paris Declaration in 2011 made the following observation:

The changes made by the [Paris] Declaration [on Aid Effectiveness] have not yet reduced the overall burdens of aid management as hoped. However, they have contributed to a better quality of aid, to more transparent and effective partnerships, and to supporting rising volumes of aid.

Executive Summary, p. xv

The current Global Partnership is based on a set of principles that recognize the indispensability of national ownership by developing countries; inclusive development partnerships; recognition of the different and complementary roles of all actors; partnerships aligned to priority results set by developing countries; and increased transparency and mutual accountability. It provides a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and learning that can help to make development cooperation more effective. The knowledge generated and exchanged through the application of the principles helps lead to behaviour changes that make development co-operation more effective.

These principles reflect circumstances pre-dating the 2030 Agenda. Their scope and ambition today require refinement, as do the institutional arrangements and working methods of the Global Partnership. The new emphasis can aim to promote inclusion, multi-stakeholder knowledge sharing at country and regional level, real-time monitoring, in-country coordination mechanisms, and the continued greening of stakeholder contributions to development.

Updating and reinforcing the principles of effective development cooperation can help to put the 2030 Agenda into practice in a nationally-led and country-specific manner. If the Global Partnership is able to evolve in this way, it may provide Member States with an inclusive vehicle to advance the effectiveness, quality and impact of development co-operation (as called for in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda paragraph 58).

Changes of this magnitude are not easy to realize. It is understandable that stakeholders among both developing and developed countries may have concerns about opening up to more inclusive and universal arrangements at a global level. There is therefore a risk that the status quo will continue at a time when both political and practical interests need to become better aligned to intensify partnership engagement and improve implementation.

There is also a risk that the changes needed may take so long to establish that this undermines progress on the SDGs within the set timeframe. This risk is exacerbated by a tight fiscal outlook, with stakeholders becoming inclined to opt for short-term and discreet commitments rather than to collaborate on a longer-term basis.

There are therefore a number of challenges that need to be addressed to help make the Global Partnership match the demands of the 2030 Agenda. These include aligning its purpose, mandate and core principles with the needs of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. They extend to finding an appropriate institutional model for the Global Partnership, together with its mechanisms for inclusion, and its scope of agreed work. Important decisions on these issues will be taken during the Partnership's next High Level Meeting 28 November-1 December 2016, in Nairobi.

3. Lessons learned on ensuring that no one is left behind

The experience of the Global Partnership reinforces the lesson that development co-operation is most effective when it is led by developing countries and tailored to country-specific needs and ambitions.

The Global Partnership supports developing countries to ground development co-operation in country-specific priorities and policies, to lead in the development and oversight of monitoring frameworks, and to create a legitimate basis for mutual accountability. It also calls on all international and national partners to engage and provide necessary information to support country-led monitoring.

Country-led monitoring facilitated by the Global Partnership encourages an inclusive dialogue that can produce mutually beneficial changes in policy, practice and behaviours within government, civil society and the private sector. They have, for instance, resulted in the establishment and strengthening of national institutional frameworks needed to increase the transparency, co-ordination, harmonisation, alignment and results focus of development co-operation in a number of countries.

These results are reinforced by more than 30 Global Partnership Initiatives that innovate in areas such as transparency, multi-stakeholder partnerships and country ownership. The Global Monitoring report, due for consideration at the Nairobi High-Level Meeting later this year, will add to the supply of evidence, and contribute to a review of the agreed development effectiveness principles.

The commitment to leave no-one behind as presented in Agenda 2030 implies substantially strengthened monitoring and inclusion of the full range of development actors in development efforts at the country level. The Global Partnership has the potential to deliver in this regard.

4. Emerging issues likely to affect the realization of this principle

There are a number of emerging issues that a renewed Global Partnership could support countries to address. First, the large and growing number of development finance providers and their modalities means more choice that adds complexity.

Building greater coherence, harmonization and alignment in support of national priorities, and providing support to those at risk of being left behind, becomes more urgent.

Second, the poorest and most vulnerable countries, in particular the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Least Developed Countries, and Small Island Developing States, need specific attention. It is also important to recognize that middle income countries continue to face serious challenges. Many middle-income countries face the 'middle income country trap' and are ineligible for sources of finance and modalities intended for poorer or richer economies.

Third, environmental and economic volatility, together with crises of increasing scale and reach, are having a significant effect on investment decisions across both public and private sectors. This can and does divert attention away from long-term and resilient development and towards short-term crisis management. It calls for improved coordination globally and at a country level between development and humanitarian finance. An inclusive partnership for effective development cooperation can help to strengthen collective action, beginning with prevention.

Fourth, the data and evidence base – especially at the national level – will need sustained investment from all quarters (the availability and reliability of data are two of a number of challenges recognised through the work of the United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators). The Global Partnership has experience that can be brought to bear to this shared priority.

5. Areas where political guidance by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is required

The High-level Political Forum can help to give impetus to an inclusive Global Partnership for effective development co-operation to accelerate results-oriented implementation of SDGs.

Such guidance would be timely in view of the decisions that the Global Partnership is preparing to take at its High Level Meeting end 2016. The HLPF can signal the Global Partnership as a venue for principled engagement between governments, civil society, the business community, national and international financial institutions and regulatory bodies, in ways that complement the mandate of the Development Cooperation Forum. The Global Partnership can bring actors together at global, regional and country level to share expertise on what works in reaching the most vulnerable and to apply such knowledge on the ground, jointly defining the way forward in improving policies, partnerships and concrete practices.

The HLPF can underline the importance of national ownership as a first-order priority within any multi-stakeholder arrangement and all forms of cooperation for development.

At the same time, and in recognition of the ‘all of society’ approach required by the 2030 Agenda, the HLPF may invite the Global Partnership to reach out decisively to a wider range of stakeholders. In so doing, civil society actors may increasingly use a renewed Global Partnership for development cooperation as a venue to exercise voice. The private sector can engage with other stakeholders to advance the ‘triple bottom’ of social, environmental and economic viability, through which it pursues wealth creation. Outreach may extend to new multilateral development banks central banks, capital markets and regulatory bodies.

The HLPF can also point to how a renewed Global Partnership can invest in strengthening the capacities of national monitoring and the evidence base. High-quality monitoring is vital for revealing gaps, duplications, overlaps and redundancy in investments targeting disadvantaged groups within and between countries. In the context of a “trillions” agenda, monitoring demands could encompass a wider and more diverse range of tangible and intangible contributions to development, promoting coherence, transparency, learning and mutual accountability, while reducing inefficiencies and duplication.

6. Policy recommendations on ways to accelerate progress for those at risk of being left behind

A renewed Global Partnership can be an important means to enable and support inclusive development at the country and local levels. The journey begins with strong country leadership that champions inclusion in development cooperation at the global level, which can then be carried forward into inclusive, country-led mechanisms for development cooperation at national and regional levels.

Such vertical coherence can strengthen solidarity, mutual learning and mutual understanding. It can promote changes in how cooperation happens for better delivery. By promoting ‘mutual self-interest’, it can foster stability and help quickly build momentum on the unfinished business of development co-operation. These qualities – drawing on the different experiences of different forms of cooperation – are vital for a whole-of-the-society approach. They matter to governments, to civil society and to the private sector, building cohesion and stability and fostering long-term investments in bankable opportunities.

A renewed Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation can support this effort. In so doing, it can help to galvanize the trillions of dollars of investments necessary to leave no-one behind.
