

**Monitoring Mechanisms for Tracking the Progress in
Implementing the Development Commitments to Africa:
A Brief Review**

The past few years have witnessed pledges of increased support by Africa's development partners for Africa's development, in particular for NEPAD. This effort has spurred the need for mechanism(s) to track progress in implementing those commitments. In particular, some recent key reports calling for enhanced international support for Africa have incorporated recommendations concerning the need for a mechanism to monitor commitments to Africa.

This note has been prepared as a background paper for the discussion on a possible successor arrangement for SAPIS-NEPAD, given that its initial mandate for two years expires in 2006. This note briefly examines the one existing mechanism as well as two new proposals, including the establishment of an essentially civil society-centred monitoring mechanism for international commitments to Africa.

A. African Partnership Forum: OECD – NEPAD

The African Partnership Forum was established in 2003. The Africa Partnership Forum is a forum for discussion and monitoring at a senior political level of policy issues, strategy and priorities in support of Africa's development. The role of the forum is to enhance policy dialogue and actions in support for Africa's development.

The Forum brings together high ranking representatives of OECD countries that give \$100 million or more in aid to Africa, multilateral institutions and representatives of the 20 countries that serve on the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, the AU Commission and the representatives of the African regional economic communities recognized by AU.

At their 2005 Summit in Gleneagles, the G8 leaders expressed the view that the APF has a sufficiently comprehensive membership, including high-level representation from donor countries as well as NEPAD countries and multilateral institutions such as the UN, World Bank group and the African Development Bank, in order to be tasked with monitoring the progress on implementing the commitments.

Under the auspices of the Forum, a Joint Action Plan has been developed which brings together the commitments that African countries and their development partners have made to respond to the region's needs as articulated in NEPAD and other AU programmes. The Forum has been entrusted the task of monitoring progress of and identifying priorities for action in the Joint Action Plan. The draft Joint Action Plan was released on 12 January 2006. [See attached copy.]

The Forum will be supported by AU/NEPAD Secretariat and an APF Support Unit. The latter will be located at the OECD. A number of OECD countries have expressed interest to contribute in kind or cash to the APF Support Unit. At present, 11 countries have given an indication to support the Support Unit: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

The strengthening of the APF and establishment of the APF Support Unit appear to satisfy the recommendation in the report of the Commission for Africa's that an effective independent monitoring mechanism should be created to be supported by a small unit within an existing African or international institution.

The main advantage of the APF is that it enjoys strong political support, as it was initiated by the major donors – the G8 countries and is acceptable African governments.

B. African-Union – United Nations Partnership

The United Nations Secretary-General announced the establishment of the Advisory Panel on International Support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in July 2004.

The main objective of the panel is to promote international cooperation and partnership in support of Africa's development and in particular, NEPAD.

The roles of the Advisory Panel are to review and evaluate the extent and adequacy of international support for NEPAD implementation; conduct consultations with Africa's development partners and African regional institutions; and make recommendations to the Secretary-General on actions to be undertaken by the international community to enhance support for the implementation of NEPAD.

The Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD (SAPIS-NEPAD) in its first report entitled *“From Rhetoric to Action: Mobilizing International Support to Unleash Africa's Potential”* proposed a mechanism for monitoring and following up on the commitments made by Africa's development partners. It proposed that the process should “involve an African Union – United Nations partnership to ensure regional legitimacy and international credibility”. The report further suggested that the proposed process of consultation and dialogue should be more than “a technical exercise of periodically publishing figures on aid commitments and disbursements, an exercise that many organizations, including the United Nations undertake already”. This is an attractive option that has to be explored with the African Union. Its viability will critically depend on its acceptance by Africa's development partners.

The principal strength of the proposal articulated in the first report of SAPIS-NEPAD is that it would be largely independent of the governments that made the commitments, composed of high level personalities and serve also as a mechanism for advocacy and negotiations.

C. African Monitor: Civil Society Involvement

The Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town has proposed the establishment of an independent high level body to monitor the implementation of measures agreed in 2005 to meet the needs of Africa. The independent body to be called “African Monitor” would be Africa-led, civil society-driven and based in Cape Town. The key motivation of the ‘African Monitor’ is to maintain the unprecedented momentum on Africa in 2005 by focusing on the question: Whether we are making a difference in the lives of the poor in Africa.

The ‘African Monitor’ will have high level secretariat that can interface with and enjoy the confidence of developed and developing world, of governments, international institutions, the private sector and civil society. It will provide a clearing house for existing analyses of development initiatives towards and within Africa, including from donors, recipients, NGOs, business and academia. It will foster local monitoring and reporting through grass roots networks, such as faith communities, which are among the most widely established civil society bodies on the continent. By identifying emerging trends, it will encourage citizens’ ability to engage with their own development and gather and share experience across Africa.

The main strengths of the proposal by the Archbishop of Cape Town lie in the involvement of grass roots groups from all over Africa, in the effort to harness civil society activism in partnership for monitoring accountability and delivery of commitments made and in what is described as a strong African component.

The ‘African Monitor’ can be an important complement to the two other mechanisms. The proposal is based on the recognition that the civil society can play an important role in assessing the effects of development aid at the community level and should not be excluded from the donor-recipient partnership. However, the civil society may not have the capacity or high-level political support necessary to monitor commitments at the government level.

D. Conclusion

There is a general agreement about the need for effective mechanisms to monitor international commitments to Africa. Whatever mechanism is created needs to meet certain criteria and all proposals should be evaluated according to those criteria. The mechanism should have the high-level political support of African countries and their development partners. The mechanism should be able to get the job done, i.e. have the necessary capacity and expertise to conduct monitoring at the regional and international levels. The mechanism should be independent of governments, but accountable to them, in that their reports will be submitted to governments for consideration and discussion. A wide range of stakeholders, including representatives of civil society should be involved in the partnership in order to allow for a real dialogue. These are the issues that SAPIS-

NEPAD needs to consider in its discussion of a successor arrangement. On the other hand, SAPIS-NEPAD could reaffirm its recommendation on monitoring mechanism in its first report.