

## **EGM to support the advancement of the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda**

**Session V – (28 February, 2012)**

### **Possible formats for a post-2015 UN Development Agenda**

#### **Summary**

To what extent do we indeed have agreement on these ten points?

The MDGs have had their staying power because they are clear, concise and measurable. Thus, there needs to be a careful selection of goals and themes that can only be carried out by the UN.

The following aspects of MDGs that should be maintained in a Post-2015 UN Development Agenda include:

- convene national reviews to include country perspectives from the global South;
- make full use of all new available mechanisms to ensure participation, such as social media and town hall meetings;
- have aggregate outcomes decided on by impartial partners based on the possible merit of each outcome;
- employ the UN as a gatekeeper to ensure that each theme passes the test of clear concept, solid indicators, robust data and whether it is about ends or means;
- ensure that the UN entities come together as one UN, rather than selling their own products.

The advantages of having an agreed framework for monitoring the development agenda are:

- it has fostered a strong partnership between the international statistical systems and countries for the development of statistics for MDG indicators;
- it has improved coordination within countries for reporting at the national level and the awareness of the need for statistics;

The main pitfalls to overcome in terms of indicators are:

- the view of indicators as top-down initiatives can be avoided by including the national statistical communities as often as possible;
- a fixed list of indicators can distort policy priorities, so the political dialogue and the technical work should converge;
- the number targets do not always reflect reality;
- an inconsistency among targets as some are poorly specified;
- the current framework did not allow an assessment of inequality which can be overcome by disaggregating data;
- inconsistencies between national and international data can create problems and this needs to be addressed through statistical capacity building at the national level;
- other aspects of statistical evidence could also be taken into account, such as measurement of the ecological footprint;
- a “one-size fits all” approach needs to be avoided and accountability gaps have to be closed;

- a framework should be goals rather than strategies to allow for national contexts;
- the risk of overloading needs to be avoided by any chance;
- a bottom-up approach, including CSOs is needed;
- national ownership should be key to post-2015, including a broader range of stakeholders in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the development agenda.

How far should the UN Task Team's report go?

- Present a concrete proposal for a structured agenda format: be fairly specific about goals and targets, or just lay out the principles and dimensions which then should be taken forward for further discussion.

In short, this is a question about how we should go about "hastening slowly".

Suggestions for the timeline for the consultation process, emphasized the need for time and leadership:

- establish the UNTT and HLP by mid-2015;
- use 2012 -2014 for consultations and the participation of Member States and external stakeholders;
- present an interim report by the HLP and UNTT to the GA in September 2013;
- table final suggestions and option in early 2015, so that the framework can be accepted by the GA in late 2015;
- the work on the statistical aspects can only begin once the themes and goals have been decided, and further statistical work has to be informed by the themes.

If we move towards a "structured agenda", what would it look like? Could it be one which set clear goals and targets for (a) human development and security; and (b) environmental sustainability; and further spell out certain guiding principles for "development enablers" at the national and global level?

Some suggestions to these questions included:

- an outline for a concrete approach towards cross-cutting issues, to either highlight, mainstream by embedding them into goals, or ignore them;
- a suggestion to focus on ends, rather than means and pinpoint the importance of ensuring that all future goals are objective and science based;
- At the regional level, few countries have yet provided country positions, so the regional commissions are undertaking different actions such as surveys on the ground or region-wide and consultations to outline the perspectives of their regions on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. A joint report of all regional commissions will be published in early 2013.

The following topics, priorities and goals emerged from the discussions with the regional commissions.

In Europe:

- the need for a stronger focus on sustainable development;
- a focus on peace and security;
- social issues, including political freedoms and labour standards;
- migration and demographic trends;
- gender and female empowerment.

A consultation by the ECA in partnership with the African Union and NEPAD found that the MDGs were still seen as relevant and that most of the MDG goals capture the policy priorities of SSA countries. A number of additional goals were suggested by African Member States:

- promote transformation and sustainable growth (including employment, rural development, food security, value addition of primary commodities and resources, trade markers, sustainability, robust and reliable infrastructure, fair trade, green economies);
- promote education and technological innovation (quality and access to basic and tertiary education, secondary, tertiary education and vocational education, technological transfer);
- promote human and social development (gender, human rights, social protection, maternal and child health);
- promote capacity development and technological innovation.

Western Asia, prioritized the following regional development issues:

- equitable and inclusive growth, including a focus on poverty and inequality;
- social inclusion and social protection;
- women and youth perspectives;
- democratic governance and participation;
- peace and security.

These correspond to the challenges faced in the region such as: i) the question of how to build inclusive institutions and foster a democratic culture; ii) how to avert a setback or a relapse into violence; iii) how to get economic policies right, including unemployment which is currently the most urgent socio-economic challenge; and iv) how to manage expectations in the short run as the benefits of these policies will only become visible in the long-term.

The Asia Pacific region is particularly struggling with the large disparities in the region and emphasized:

- a strong need to address inequality in post-2015;
- resilience to shock and national disasters as a priority;
- many countries have tried to adapt the MDGs to national contexts by adding goals, so the framework has to allow for the adaptation at the regional and national level.

**All regions outlined the need for a focus on youth perspectives.**

Do we agree inequalities should be mainstreamed across the goals and targets, rather than being a goal and target in itself?

The following answers were given to that question:

- inequality should be one of the topics highlighted and mainstreamed to avoid an incomplete framework;
- inequality is also important for all regions;
- in terms of statistical evidence, so far it has not been taken into account, but the statisticians were able to analyze inequalities by disaggregating data. However, more efforts need to go towards enabling statistical measures to assess inequalities.

How exactly should we redefine the global partnership for development?