



DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FORUM

High-level Symposium in preparation
of the 2010 DCF

“Coherent Development Cooperation: Maximizing Impact in a Changing Environment”

3 – 4 June, Helsinki, Finland

Background

The 2005 United Nations World Summit outcome mandated the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) that would *review trends* in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing; *promote greater coherence* among the development activities of different development partners and *strengthen the normative and operational link* in the work of the United Nations.

The first Development Cooperation Forum in 2008 took a decisive step in positioning ECOSOC as a key venue for global dialogue and policy review of international development cooperation and its effectiveness and coherence. It reaffirmed the demand for a universal and inclusive space for discussions on international development cooperation. The role of the DCF as a focal point for such discussions was recognized at the Doha conference on Financing for Development.

Objectives of the 2010 DCF

The second DCF will take place on 29 and 30 June 2010 in New York, against the backdrop of the multiple crises and challenges in reaching the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

The DCF gives voice to a wide range of stakeholders, including DAC and non-DAC donors, programme country governments, parliamentarians, local governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector. It is thus poised to produce agreement on priority actions to advance the implementation of commitments on development cooperation, based on impartial and forward looking analytical work and consultative processes involving national practitioners.

The DCF will review global trends in development cooperation and address a broad range of issues that affect its scale, quality and coherence. This will include the impact of the economic crisis and of climate change, the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in a changing global environment, quality and effectiveness of aid as well as policy coherence, among others. Looking ahead to the September 2010 Summit on the MDGs, the Forum will also discuss how to enhance development cooperation to accelerate progress towards the MDGs.

A global High-level Symposium held in Vienna in November 2009 to prepare for the 2010 DCF emphasized the need for more accountable and transparent development cooperation and called for a more inclusive framework to hold all key development actors answerable for honouring the commitments they have made. A review of progress in the area of mutual accountability and aid transparency is being conducted in preparation for the 2010 DCF.

Objectives of the Finland Symposium

The multiple crises have exacerbated the existing challenges in scaling up aid and its effectiveness. Bearing in mind the imperative of delivering on aid quantity and quality commitments, much attention has been given to the need to pursue more coherent development cooperation. This implies, among others, ensuring that development cooperation objectives are bolstered by the range of policies in other areas, such as trade, climate change, food security, migration and security.

Changes in the global aid architecture, with the growing number of providers of development cooperation, also make it more difficult to ensure consistency between the activities of various actors. These changes also challenge the already weak capacity of many programme countries to ensure coherent and effective management of incoming aid flows. Against this backdrop, there is a continuing need to improve the accountability of providers and recipients of development cooperation for their activities.

The Finland Symposium will address these interrelated challenges with the overall objective to promote practical solutions for a more coherent development cooperation framework, notably from the perspective of recipients of development cooperation and building on their experiences.

Country case studies will illustrate successes and challenges and support a frank debate among aid practitioners and other senior policymakers and representatives of civil society and the private sector. The sessions of the two-day meeting will focus on:

- (i) Policy coherence for development;
- (ii) The role of private sector actors including foundations in a coherent development cooperation framework;
- (iii) Examples in holding development cooperation actors to account at the country level;
- (iv) Impact of development cooperation in reaching the MDGs on gender equality and women's empowerment.