



Bringing the future of development cooperation to post-2015

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Summary by the President of ECOSOC

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ A new narrative for development cooperation is needed to reflect the changed realities on the ground and to support effective implementation of a post-2015 development agenda. It has to embolden new ways of working together, driven by innovation, passion, common sense, and relationships and trust built in the true sense of partnership.
- ❖ Development cooperation post-2015 will need to support a transformative agenda that will be unified in its focus, on poverty eradication and sustainable development, and universal in its form, applying to both developing and developed countries.
- ❖ More and better Official Development Assistance (ODA) will be a vital part of the post-2015 financing mix. ODA should be used as a smart catalyst to mobilize domestic resources and leverage private investment for development results. Principles and modalities of ODA will need to better target poverty in its multiple dimensions to ensure that no one is left behind.
- ❖ South-South Cooperation functions as an ever more important complement to traditional North-South cooperation. Its focus on mutual benefit, capacity building and knowledge sharing makes it well suited to tackle challenges of a changing world. An initiative, launched by Southern Partners, is under way to explore how to better map South-South Cooperation efforts for enhanced mutual learning and better development results.
- ❖ A renewed global partnership for development will be required to mobilize the unprecedented amount of financing and other means of implementation needed to support a post-2015 development agenda. It should reinforce existing commitments and be driven by national leadership and ownership, while being inclusive of all stakeholders, transparent and based on genuine exchange and co-creation of solutions.
- ❖ Policy coherence between aid and non-aid policies and the three dimensions of sustainable development is an intrinsic part of the new global agenda. If not addressed proactively, hard won gains in international development, including the effectiveness of development cooperation, will vanish.
- ❖ To enhance the quality and effectiveness of development, actors need to have a shared agenda and a common understanding of priorities. This in turn depends on public access to timely, relevant and simple data and collection thereof.
- ❖ Achieving inclusive development processes and sustainable development results will require a multi-layered, robust global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation post-2015, firmly anchored in national mechanisms.
- ❖ The Development Cooperation Forum has distinguished itself as the global and inclusive multi-stakeholder forum for policy dialogue on development cooperation, focused on priority issues for action that can lead to concrete results. The 2014 DCF has laid out an ambitious agenda for the Forum's further work on the frontiers of development cooperation.

Development cooperation post-2015 – setting the scene

Development cooperation will have to support implementation of a transformative post-2015 development agenda. A new narrative of development cooperation is required that supports the scope, scale and impact of changes needed to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development for all. It must invite people to join in a shared vision, translate words into actions and make development real and lasting. It has to embolden new ways of working together, driven by innovative practices and instruments, passion and common sense, and relationships built in the true sense of partnership.

Unprecedented financial resources will be needed to bring about transformative change. The ability to mobilize public and private resources and smartly use them to leverage action for development will be decisive. This will require a stronger emphasis on the complementarity of different sources of financing. Leveraging more and better-targeted financing for gender equality will be critical for effective implementation of commitments.

Beyond financing, technical cooperation, capacity development, technology transfer, trade and debt relief and addressing other systemic issues will all be, inter alia, important aspects of development cooperation post-2015 as a driving force for coherent engagement of the growing number of actors supporting implementation of a post-2015 development agenda.

International development cooperation can catalyze the engagement of national and local implementing agents and augment their efforts. An enabling environment for development starts with national ownership and leadership, supported by reliable national systems. Development cooperation should serve to harmonize efforts by provider agencies, non-governmental organizations, local and regional governments of recipient countries and others behind national development strategies that take into account the needs of the poor.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are imperative to reach development commitments. Setting gender-focused targets for development cooperation commitments, collecting gender disaggregated data and ensuring active participation of women in decision-making processes can all contribute to meaningful progress.

The right information on development cooperation has to reach the right hands. To enhance transparency and accountability in development cooperation, and instil trust, timely data has to become understandable and accessible for all. With significant differences in development progress within and among countries, disaggregated data is essential for effective development cooperation and better targeting support. The key is strengthening statistical capacities, technology infrastructure and widespread literacy on data and ICT. The business sector and civil society can play a key role in supporting data collection and availability and thus realising the “data revolution”.

Official Development Assistance post-2015

More and better ODA will be a vital part of the post-2015 financing mix, even as ODA is increasingly outsized by other sources. The optimal mix between domestic and international resources differs for countries at different stages of development. Aid dependency is declining, yet a number of LDCs will remain reliant on ODA in coming years.

Middle-income Countries need a distinct kind of support. As countries become better off, they gain better access to other resources for bankable projects. Yet, especially for lower-

income MICs, with limited institutional capacity, ODA remains critical to help attract other sources of development finance and to build their national capacities.

More and better aid is needed and it should go where it is most needed and has the greatest development impact. Redefinition of the ODA measure should be seen as a participatory opportunity to sharpen the poverty focus of ODA and ensure that more of it is directed towards countries with the greatest need.

A larger portion of ODA should go to assisting countries with domestic resource mobilization, as the spine of all development efforts. More ODA should be used to help developing countries put in place effective policies and institutional structures to support tax collection and combat tax evasion, and incentivize investment in sustainable and inclusive industrialization and development of their financial markets.

More ODA should be used towards the provision of sustainable development and strengthening resilience. Technology transfer, capacity building and investment in resilience against financial and natural external shocks are important to facilitate the transition towards truly sustainable development for all.

South-South Cooperation

Southern partners have become increasingly important players in development cooperation. Yet, South-South Cooperation will remain a complement for North-South Cooperation. It should be seen as distinct from triangular cooperation, which also involves donors and/or multilateral organizations.

South-South Cooperation is well suited for a post-2015 development agenda. It is focused on mutual benefit, long-term capacity development and knowledge sharing and often tailored to productive sectors and infrastructure development. It has low operational costs compared to North-South cooperation. Innovative sources of financing and private financial flows should be scaled up to further advance South-South cooperation.

The concept of mutual learning is embedded in South-South Cooperation. With its focus on capacity building and knowledge sharing, such cooperation is demand-driven, focused on concrete development needs and geared toward win-win outcomes. It promotes mutual understanding and brings to the forefront relevant and similar experiences. Greater clarity on shared principles of South-South cooperation, based on common features, while capturing its diversity, could contribute to more effective development results.

Southern partners, meeting under DCF auspices, have launched an initiative to better document South-South cooperation efforts as a fresh opportunity for mutual learning and better development results. Steps are being explored towards a global report is envisaged that will be intergovernmental, produced in a horizontal manner, with an incremental approach to reaching common understandings of technical terms and methodologies of South-South cooperation.

A renewed global partnership for development

A renewed global partnership for development is needed to mobilize international support for financing and other means of implementation beyond 2015. Combined with a focus on mobilizing domestic and international public and private financing for development, it should also address issues such as, debt relief and restructuring, trade, technology transfer,

capacity development and greater participation of developing countries in global economic governance.

A renewed global partnership for development should bring together the Monterrey and Rio tracks and promote policy coherence. It should build on past commitments and lessons learned from MDG8. It should support stronger coherence between aid and non-aid policies as a driver of sustainable development progress. Parliaments, civil society and regional communities play an active and invaluable role in overseeing policies.

A more genuine process of partnership is needed, with country ownership and leadership, mutual learning and robust monitoring and accountability taking place at all levels. This will both require and engender greater trust. It will also require strengthened commitments from developed countries to engage in international cooperation and ensure sufficient policy space for developing countries.

A renewed global partnership for development should provide a balanced and inclusive platform for meaningful engagement of all stakeholders. These include governmental representatives of both developed and developing countries, Southern Partners, members of parliament, local and regional governments, civil society organizations, academia, philanthropic organizations, foundations, the business sector and regional and international organizations.

Effectiveness of the partnership will depend on a clear division of labor among all actors and coherent action at all levels. All actors should play key roles, shaped by their distinct capabilities and responsibilities. Multi-stakeholder engagement should be promoted at all levels. To enable this, capacity development, more specifically the building of human capacity, will be essential.

The business sector is an important partner for development, bringing in knowledge and expertise, as well as financing. Public-private partnerships and traditional ODA are invaluable complements. Where public funds are used to catalyze private financing, this should be guided by effectiveness principles to ensure country ownership and leadership, alignment with country priorities and transparency and accountability.

A key challenge is to ensure that the profit driven nature of the business sector is better aligned with countries' development priorities. When the right incentives are in place, the business sector can promote sustainable development by shifting to more sustainable production, supporting technology transfer and providing better social protection of its workers. It also plays a key role in advancing women's rights and economic empowerment.

Partnerships can play a critical role in supporting implementation of a post-2015 agenda, if well designed and coordinated, with broad political support. At their best, multi-stakeholder partnerships serve as vehicles for solving problems that governments cannot address on their own. They can also provide a vehicle to ensure meaningful involvement of women and strengthening of their capacity as rights holders in decision-making. Multi-stakeholder partnerships cannot replace the intergovernmentally agreed global partnership for development. Yet, they are likely to become even more important complements.

Quality, transparency and effectiveness of development cooperation post-2015

Effective development cooperation requires sound structures and adequate capacity to monitor commitments and review progress, as well as political leadership. Government

and citizens must be engaged together, through parliament, supreme audit institutions, civil society and the media, and also with international partners, in order to ensure delivery on development commitments and results.

Parliamentarians need to be empowered to play their distinct role in development cooperation. Parliaments have important functions in overseeing and scrutinizing development cooperation, ensuring gender-responsive budgeting and passing legislation pertaining to development cooperation. A major effort by donor representatives at country level is needed to support capacity development of parliaments as well as of civil society and the media.

Existing global benchmarks on quality and effectiveness of development cooperation should be independently reviewed for their fitness for a post-2015 development agenda. The need for adjustments to reflect new developmental challenges should be examined. Such a review could also motivate different actors to clarify their roles in development cooperation, learn from each other and engage in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Mutual accountability can improve effectiveness by freeing up resources and capacities through cost-effective modalities and predictable funding, with limited conditionality. Enablers of mutual accountability in development cooperation include policies, results frameworks, dialogue structures, institutional support, capacity and data. When in place, they can solidify trust between providers and recipients, build positive pressure for change and provide the right incentives to meet development cooperation commitments.

For better development results, national mutual accountability mechanisms should be further strengthened and expanded. Efforts should build on positive experiences to date, centered on results for people in need and driven by global reviews, such as the DCF Global Accountability Survey and the Global Monitoring Report of the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

Global Accountability for development cooperation post-2015

An inclusive, robust and fully recognized monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation is critical to achieving sustainable development results. Such a framework should build on findings from existing mechanisms at all levels and meaningfully interlink them, putting in place multi-directional feedback loops for constant review and evaluation. It should be supported by strong secretariats serving as independent and objective custodians.

Global accountability for development cooperation is a dynamic process to help create an environment that empowers people. It should entail ongoing mutual learning and genuine exchange and co-creation of data and solutions. Especially women, youth, marginalized and the poor should be enabled to engage, to openly share their experiences of what does and does not work, and to report on progress against targets and goals.

To be effective, such a framework should provide the right incentives to mobilize all actors to become engaged, with the promise of lasting results in sustainable development and poverty eradication as the most powerful motivation. Such a framework should also be geared to attract engagement of the business sector beyond Corporate Social Responsibility; creation and use of codes of conduct should also be considered.

Accountability mechanisms must be anchored and strengthened at national and local levels. Such mechanisms should be coherent, transparent, inclusive and participatory in

design; focused on commitments and results; ensure a broad evidence base; and enable rights holders and their representatives in parliament and civil society to engage meaningfully at stages of the policy process directly relevant to them. To this end, capacities of national statistical institutions and human capacities have to be developed significantly.

The global framework for monitoring and accountability of development cooperation should work as an integral part of a comprehensive monitoring and review of the broader post-2015 development agenda. It should be consistent with and intrinsically linked to the monitoring and review of a renewed global partnership for development.

Post-2015, the Development Cooperation Forum will review the development cooperation aspects of a renewed global partnership for development and successor arrangements to MDG8. The High-level Political Forum, which will review progress towards the sectoral and cross-sectoral dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), will take the work of the DCF into account.

The role of the Development Cooperation Forum

The DCF has distinguished itself as the global multi-stakeholder forum for policy dialogue on development cooperation that engages all stakeholders, focused on priority issues for action that can lead to concrete results. It has full multi-stakeholder buy-in and a clear mandate to examine the frontiers and future of development cooperation.

The 2014 high-level meeting of the Forum attracted a remarkably high level and diverse assembly of experts, from LDCs to the big emerging economies and traditional donors and the full range of non-governmental stakeholders, including prominently Parliamentarians, representatives from supreme audit institutions, local authorities and civil society.

In launching an initiative to better document South-South cooperation efforts, for mutual learning and better development results, the Forum potentially broke new ground. The value of the Core Group of Southern partners meeting under DCF auspices as a dedicated platform for policy dialogue was recognized. Southern academia and think tanks should be engaged in the ongoing work of the group and help design a concrete program for facilitating cooperation and linkages.

The Forum injected new momentum into the preparations for a post-2015 development agenda by sounding a clear call for a strengthened global partnership for development to mobilize financing and other means of implementation, bringing together the Monterrey and Rio tracks.

The Forum laid out an ambitious agenda for further work by DCF on all the above fronts, especially review of a renewed global partnership for development, including the successor arrangement to MDG8; review of national mutual accountability and transparency; and sharply focusing on policy coherence between aid and non-aid policies for development, seen as vital to ensure that development cooperation is able to effectively support country-level implementation of a unified and universal post-2015 development agenda.

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