Background and context

• EGM (Sept. 2012) →

• Priority theme of 51st session of Commission for Social Development (Feb. 2013):
  – Promoting the empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all

• EGM Sept. 2013 →
  – Concrete recommendations for presentation to Member States
EGM 2012 Definition

• No one agreed definition
• Empowerment as an iterative process requiring
  – An enabling environment
    • human rights, expanded choices, institutions, attitudes, values...
  – ‘empowered participation’ in decision-making
    • At local, national and global levels
    • Often mediated through civil society organisations
  – From group specific to holistic
    • Empowerment of women vs people-centred development?
  – Key elements:
    • agency, structure, behaviour, values
Outcomes?

• Effective participation by members of society, as individuals and groups, in decisions about their lives, that is conditioned by a supportive enabling environment, and leads to the solution of economic and social problems confronting them.

• Outcomes – changes in behavior, social relations and institutions necessary for socially sustainable development... (concept note)

• Indicators? Evidence?
Key points from CSocD 2013 High-Level Panel discussion on priority theme

- Empowerment of people requires actions along multiple fronts, including:
  - political commitment;
  - common objectives;
  - inclusive policies that are coherent and integrated across sectors;
  - a strong, just and non-discriminatory legal framework;
  - appropriate institutional arrangements that facilitate civic engagement and broad-based participation;
  - aspiration and determination of vulnerable groups and individuals to improve their well-being.
Concrete measures to creating an environment conducive to people’s empowerment involve:

- further strengthening of **social policies** to address specific needs of disadvantaged social groups;
- adoption of **people-centred development** as a core objective of social and sustainable development;
- formulation of policies and programmes to improve **access and opportunities** for all;
- building or strengthening the **institutions for participation** and engagement of citizens to be more efficient, effective, transparent and accountable;
- ensuring **access to justice** and legal instruments to reduce/eliminate poverty and inequality;
- strengthening of **human capacities** though inclusive labour markets, social protection, education, health, and ICTs.
Issues & principles

- Human rights, citizenship, non-discrimination
- Institutions and policies, enabling environment
- Knowledge and information
- Ability to make claims, claim rights or entitlements
- Access to justice, remedy, redress
- Meaningful participation
- Measurable outcomes and indicators
Expected outcomes of EGM?

• Challenges, ‘good’ (bad) practices, lessons learned...
• Concrete strategies, experiences in relation to empowerment of different social groups
• Identification of (widely/universally applicable) empowerment strategies and indicators
• Monitoring frameworks and social impact assessments
• Implications for design / implementation of post 2015 goals
• New issues / gaps for consideration, research
• Recommendations
Structure

Enabling Environment → overcome structures of constraints / change power relations

Strategies and programmes
Actors and Institutions

Individuals households
collective
markets
state

Resources, capabilities, opportunities...
## Resources, capabilities, opportunities

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<th>Policy and institutional framework</th>
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### Strategies / interventions that work

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Reflections and challenges

- Empowerment as a process of change → what does it take to create (social, policy) change?
  - History, complexity, mobilisation, resources...
  - Context, political-economy, actors, relations
  - Agenda setting and claims-making: What issues get put on to agendas, who makes claims for what on behalf of whom (eg of care)
  - When and how do ‘policy moments’ arrive / how can they be made use of?
  - State / institutional capacities – services, frontline workers
  - Easy wins vs going the last mile
Key recommendations from SG Reports on promoting empowerment

• Governments should establish or strengthen institutions that facilitate civic engagement and broad-based participation of all citizens and communities in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of socioeconomic policies;
• Appropriate public sector policies should be adopted to encourage both public and private investment in social and economic infrastructure;
• Universal access to basic social protection and social services is an important instrument for empowering people: Governments should consider establishing a national social protection floor consistent with national priorities and circumstances;
• Strategies to empower women, youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other marginalized groups should be addressed in the mainstream development agenda;
• Governments and their development partners should forge public-private partnerships;
• Educational systems and policies should provide adequate and practical opportunities to all, in particular young people;
Continued..

• Governments should promote the *legal empowerment* of the poor by ensuring pro-poor property rights and labour protections;
• Successful empowerment strategies, including those targeting various social groups, must be created within — or adapted to — *specific national or local contexts*;
• Appropriate measures should be taken to broaden basic rights and to develop effective policy frameworks for empowerment through interventions and programmes that promote inclusive and participatory growth.
• Enhanced efforts should be made to address the *root causes* of poverty, inequality and social exclusion, rather than the social consequences of economic or political processes, and the *social drivers of structural change*, in order to progress towards inclusive and sustainable development;
• More concerted efforts are required to boost smallholder productivity;
• In formulating the *post-2015 development agenda*, inequality, social inclusion, empowerment and participation, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social protection should be given priority attention.