

Effective Development Partnerships for the SDGs: What does it take for more integrated action?

30 March 2016 - OECD Headquarters, Paris, Conference Centre Room 7

Background

The side event advanced discussions on the role of partnerships in the 2030 era in preparation of the Second High-level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) (Nairobi, Kenya, 28 November – 1 December 2016). The meeting generated messages for the 2016 OECD Global Forum on Development and the [2016 ECOSOC Partnership Forum](#).

The meeting reaffirmed the need to invest in inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships, across sectors and actors, to achieve the SDGs. Presentations and the ensuing interactive discussion identified specific practices, lessons and principles that can help in making development partnerships more effective.

Speakers included: H.E. Mr. Ahmed Shide, State Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Ethiopia; Ms. Nina Blackwell, Executive Director, Firelight Foundation; Mr. Darian Stibbe, Executive Director, The Partnering Initiative; and Ms. Izabella Toth, Senior Corporate Strategist, Cordaid. Representing the co-chairs of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), the Mexican Ambassador to the OECD, H.E. Mr. Dionisio Pérez-Jácome Friscione, Mexican Ambassador, and Mr. Arjan Schuthof, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands provided introductory remarks. The side event was moderated by Ms. Brenda Killen, Deputy Director, Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD.

Key messages

- Partnerships are at the forefront of successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They are critical to mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in developing countries.
- Effective partnerships depend on a clear vision and strong leadership. Dedicated policies and strategies are needed to enable different actors, for example governments and the private sector, to work together. This can incentivise the delivery on the SDGs in an integrated way – addressing economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- Many successful examples of cross-cutting partnerships exist and can be built on. Different stakeholders increasingly engage in partnerships that address causal relationships of inequality and poverty, spanning sectors and actors. There is renewed energy to get on with implementation through such multi-actor, multi-dimensional partnerships at all levels.
- Partnerships anchored at local and community levels are best fitted for collaborative action. They should be developed in areas with strong energy, interest and leadership around issues of common interest. Partnerships at local and sub-national level should empower and engage local civil society, local foundations

and the local private sector. Structured engagement of decision-makers may be needed at field and head-quarter level.

- Effective development partnerships rely on trust and a strong sense of responsibility. Experience shows that results-based approaches, structured citizen engagement and other forms of mutual and social accountability tools are essential to boosting trust between citizens, government and service providers. Trust-based partnerships depend on longer-term project cycles and funding envelopes. A shift towards more systemic funding approaches was also recommended.
- Development partners must find ways to collaborate better, building on their specific strengths. This is particularly important in complex situations, for example when addressing systemic issues in fragile contexts, building resilience and strengthening long-term capacity support.
- The diverse support of external partners remains indispensable, but must be channelled. Financial contributions, capacity building, knowledge transfer and the power of mobilising actors to address specific solutions are all critical contributions different partners can make. Coalescing partners around issues that catalyse systemic change should be a greater priority.
- Development effectiveness is essential for effective development partnerships. Shared ambitions and adherence to key principles for effective development co-operation – ownership, alignment, focus on results, predictability and transparency and accountability should guide development partnerships. With demands for holistic solutions and impact increasing, more structured guidance on how to make multi-stakeholder partnerships more effective towards achieving the SDGs is important.
- A responsible and inclusive business sector is vital to bringing partnerships to scale. Governments should broker relationships with businesses – from multi-national corporations to small-holder farmers – and emphasise the merit of investing in core business practices that are conducive to development. This requires an apprehension of each other’s objectives, mind-sets and language used, through dedicated dialogue.

The second High-level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) in Nairobi, Kenya (28 November – 1 December 2016) will provide an open and inclusive policy platform to assess, among others, how multi-stakeholder partnerships can work better to implement the SDGs. The monitoring framework of the GPEDC provides evidence to inform SDG Indicator 17.16 on the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships towards achieving the SDGs. Participants expected the HLM2 to provide new opportunities to engage with different actors, in particular the private sector and foundations at national and local levels, to review progress, set new priorities and forge partnerships that work for people and planet.