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2014 Development Cooperation Forum

**Session 5: Ensuring the Quality and Effectiveness of Development Cooperation
Findings of the 3rd UN DCF Survey on Global Accountability**

11 July 2014, New York

Mr. Vice President of the Economic and Social Council,
Ministers,
Fellow Speakers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to deliver to you the key findings of the Third Global Survey on Mutual Accountability, conducted by UNDESA for the 2014 DCF, with the kind support of UNDP and UN Country Teams.

As follow-up to the survey results, UNDESA has prepared a Guidance Note for national policy-makers and practitioners, available at the back of the room.

I would also like to take this moment to express my deep gratitude to Germany for its continuous strong support for the accountability work stream of the DCF.

First, let me define what we mean by “mutual accountability”, a concept rooted in the global discussion on Financing for Development. We specifically refer to the relationship of development cooperation providers and recipients for the effectiveness of that cooperation in delivering on commitments and producing development results. There is mounting evidence of the importance of “mutual accountability”, so defined, in allocating financial resources effectively and in making development contributions more targeted and predictable.

This survey represents the third review of the status and progress of “mutual accountability” in developing countries, since the 2009 Vienna High-level Symposium called for the DCF to conduct such regular reviews.

The Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey, and, more recently, the Global Monitoring Report of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, have used the DCF survey as a basis for measuring their indicators on accountability.

In assessing progress on making cooperation more accountable, the DCF survey analysis, has also identified key enablers that: (i) solidify trust between governments and their development partners, (ii) balance the onus of monitoring and reporting to free up capacities in developing countries, (iii) and make better use of cost-effective modalities and predictable funding with limited conditionalities.

Fifty countries have participated in this third survey, with most of them engaging civil society and parliament in the exercise.

This demonstrates the catalytic effect of such global exercises, in terms of ensuring close cooperation among different partners within a country.

Overall, the findings show moderate progress:

46 recipient countries have aid policies in place and slightly less than half set targets for individual providers.

Countries with policies and locally driven results' monitoring frameworks that contain specific performance targets for individual providers have scored much better in delivering aid effectively.

Yet, despite the concept of "mutuality", reviews of progress against such targets still tend to focus on performance of recipient countries, and seldom on the performance of providers of development cooperation.

Countries reporting modest behaviour change consistently underlined the importance of sound structures and adequate capacity to monitor commitments and review progress. This requires dedicated investment from all partners.

Political leadership and ownership of national development agendas were also stressed. National coordinating ministries should try and invest more in full-time staff working on accountability, obtain cabinet support and that of parliaments, conduct annual checks to monitor improvements, commission independent evaluations and spearhead peer reviews.

Peer pressure from like-minded providers has also served as powerful incentives to change behaviour where it was applied.

The survey shows the lack of availability of useable information on the allocation, use and results of development cooperation as a major hurdle to effective accountability at all levels.

Data collection needs to be made easier, more participative and accessible. Significant gaps remain in setting gender-specific targets and tracking gender-disaggregated information on expenditures and results.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of parliaments, which need to be empowered and capacitated to carry out their oversight of development cooperation and scrutiny and passing of legislation pertaining to development cooperation.

"Mutual accountability" remains a work in progress. Most recently, discussions at the DCF Germany High-level Symposium and beyond show that global accountability for development cooperation needs to be considered as the post-2015 development agenda and its financing take shape.

UNDESA remains committed to supporting member States' and other stakeholders' wish to keep track of progress in future.

I look forward to the discussions today on your lessons on effectiveness and accountability and how we can move together to make real change happen that makes a difference in people's lives.

Thank you.
