



BACKGROUND PAPER 3

Regional Perspectives on a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

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IRF2015 is a collaboration of 11 leading research institutes from across the globe that responds to the need for independent, rigorous and timely analysis to inform the evolution of the post-2015 development agenda and the concurrent intergovernmental process on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed to at Rio+20. IRF2015 partners envision a post-2015 development agenda that is universal in scope, takes an integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of global development challenges, and can lead to more sustainable and equitable development outcomes for all.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of IRF2015 partner organizations.

Introduction

This background paper provides an analysis of the regional perspectives on global partnership for sustainable development. The paper is aimed at highlighting key messages and priorities identified by each of the five UN Member State regions (Asia-Pacific, OECD, Africa, Latin America and Small Islands Developing States), particularly in relation to Goal 17 (*Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*) as proposed in the Outcome Document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG SDG). The means of implementation which are highlighted in this background paper include; general messages on collective action for global public goods; finance; technology; capacity building; trade; policy and institutional coherence; multi-stakeholder partnerships; and data, monitoring and accountability.

The key messages are drawn from review of OWG discussion documents and speeches from each of the five regions, as well as issues raised in regional consultative forums involving civil society organizations, governments and private sector.

General

- There is broad agreement that a renewed Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (GPSD) is needed to foster stronger global collaboration and collective responsibility and action towards the implementation and realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Global collective action and partnership(s) to implement the SDGs must reflect national and regional contexts, priorities and action. This will help to ensure the alignment and incorporation of the sustainable development agenda into existing regional frameworks and national development plans.
 - Relatedly, while the SDGs are a universal agenda, implementation must reflect the principle of differentiation and the specific characteristics and capabilities of each country.
 - A strong message in this regard has emerged from Small Island Developing States and the LDCs which have called for the recognition of their unique and particular vulnerabilities.
- A new GPSD must also build on and support other relevant international agreements, particularly with respect to the needs of LDCs and SIDS and delivering global public goods.
- There needs to be greater emphasis on multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize the private sector, civil society, scientific and knowledge institutions, parliaments and local authorities – in addition to national governments, regional institutions and international development agencies. This is critical in order to build collective ownership, responsibility and shared roles among state and non-state actors to achieve the goals.
- The international institutional environment needs to enable action by SIDS and LDCs in terms of finance, trade, technology, etc.
- Efforts to reform the international finance institutions and the UN system need to be aligned with ('fit-for-purpose') the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

Finance

- There is broad agreement that sustainable financing mechanisms will be critical to meet the ambitions of the post-2015 sustainable development goals. Emphasis has been placed on the need to develop a multi-pronged approach beyond an aid agenda which takes into account domestic resource mobilization as well as the role of the private sector.
- Financing for development must address three key issues:
 - the adequacy of financing to provide for sufficient (inter)national public expenditures to meet desired social, economic and environmental investments and objectives;

- the adequacy of long-term financing to enable economies to grow and develop to their full productive capacities, including increasing competitiveness;
- aid effectiveness and equitable access to available development finance is crucial.
- Development finance needs to be drawn from public, private and philanthropic sources and official development assistance (ODA).
- Need for new measures of development progress - GDP alone is not adequate and need to include measures of vulnerability.
- ODA remains a crucial instrument for financing development. Funding commitments need to be met and complemented by coherent and strong multilateral organizations.
- Provision of new and expanded forms of finance, particularly financing instruments that SIDS and LDCs can access directly; debt relief and restructuring, concessional financing, reducing cost of remittances and addressing the problem of 'vulture funds'.
- Regulation and reform of the international monetary and financial system is needed in order to promote stability and create an equitable financial system, such as reforming of the international financial architecture, including financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank.
- To accompany domestic resource mobilization and innovative finance, financial and market reform is needed in the following areas:
 - Increased tax cooperation between developing and developed countries to remove constraints to resource mobilization;
 - A critical area identified for the post-2015 agenda is the need to curb illicit financial flows through practices such as transfer pricing, tax havens and secrecy laws;
 - Improving governance, strengthening accountability to citizens as well as rule of law and improving the investment climate at a national level;
 - Improving public revenue collection, tax administration and strengthening the governance frameworks for the revenue authority and (sub) national governments as a whole.

Technology

- General agreement on the need to ensure mutually agreed terms and conditions in voluntary transfer of technology, and that it is imperative to build on existing mechanisms such as the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building adopted in 2005.
- It is important that technology transfer and knowledge sharing be affordable, easy to access and environmentally friendly to enable developing countries to exploit these in implementing

their SDGs, particularly relevant to renewable energy and addressing climate change.

- Establishing mechanisms for knowledge-sharing and knowledge management and sharing best practices between countries will play a crucial role in the success of the post-2015 development agenda.
- There was also a general agreement at Rio+20 in support of the Global Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the UN, and it was further recommended that it should be operational by 2016, including mechanisms to facilitate regional technology-sharing.
- LDCs view the proposed Technology Bank as a key enabler and driver for the post-2015 development agenda. However, there is still a need to address the operationalization of the proposed bank.

Capacity Building

There is a general consensus that capacity building is critical for successful implementation of the SDGs. Developing capacity building strategies will be especially critical for LDCs and SIDS. There is wide agreement that capacity building needs to go beyond training individuals to include building institutional capacities.

- The international community (UN System) can provide capacity support to LDCs and SIDS in the following key areas:
 - Human capacity: Skills (i.e. data collection and generation);
 - Institutional capacity of national and regional institutions (i.e. organizational and institutional frameworks);
 - Developing local stakeholder capacities (communities, civil society organizations and the private sector).
- Capacity building process should be coordinated across scales and should focus on all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Trade

Trade systems can play an important role in poverty reduction and sustainable development. Areas of emphasis relate both to the level of sound domestic policies and reforms as well as the international trade architecture.

- An open and fair sustainable trading system is needed to give countries better opportunities for new sources of sustainable income in the medium and long-term.
- Global trade reforms are needed to eliminate restrictions and distortions and to redress inherent inequalities that have undermined SIDS/LDCs competitiveness, including through

financial and technical assistance, extension of trade preferences, more flexible rules of origin and other forms of special and differential treatment.

- The global partnership needs to recognize the importance of reducing barriers to north-south, south-south and regional trade which are essential to integration into the global economy.
- Reduction of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers is seen as being central to poverty reduction strategies and will in particular benefit LDCs and SIDS, especially cooperation between south-south countries.
- Increased financial and technical assistance is needed to strengthen the capacity of SIDS and LDCs to effectively participate in multi-lateral trading system. Additional support is needed to improve institutions and business environment to better facilitate the participation of these countries in free trade agreements.
- Developing new export market for environmental products such as renewable energy is an area that requires attention especially in SIDS and Asia-Pacific regions. However, support is required from the international community to develop the necessary infrastructure.

Policy and Institutional Coherence

Policy and institutional coherence is crucial to the implementation of the SDGs.

- Parties are encouraged to review their policies in order to ensure consistency with efforts for poverty reduction and sustainable development as an important contribution to the implementation of the global framework and also encourage participatory governance approaches at all levels.
- Need for a more democratic and coherent international development cooperation system, where SIDS and LDCs are effectively represented and they can influence international cooperation, including:
 - UN reform, in particular the UN Security Council, to strengthen transparency, accountability, and response capacity;
 - Enhanced multilateralism, with monitoring of efficiency and consistency.
- Developed countries need to pay attention to the development impact of policies that are likely to affect developing countries. These include debt policies, international and domestic financial systems, and the intellectual property rights regime among others.
- SDG targets should be incorporated into existing national planning frameworks and processes such as five-year plans, national development strategies and poverty reduction strategies:
 - Importantly, the SDGs should take into consideration the political structure and integration within existing policies at the national level;

- It is imperative that SDGs form part of the national development discourse and enable other non-state actors to hold governments accountable for lack of progress in implementing SDGs. Such responses would ensure continuation and consistency throughout different political regimes.
- SDG need to be aligned to longer term national and regional policy frameworks for development (i.e. Africa Vision 2063 Agenda).

Multi-stakeholder Partnership

Multi-stakeholder partnerships (communities, civil society organizations, women organizations and youth formations) and effective participation of all stakeholders is central to ensuring collective ownership and enhancing national and global efforts to achieve the SDGs.

- The process of implementing SDGs should be led at the highest level of political leadership at local, country and sub-regional levels in a manner which reflect the circumstances and contexts they operate in.
- Mechanisms for the involvement of CSOs and NGOs need to be strengthened.
- Coordination and cooperation of multi-stakeholder initiatives and partnerships with government and inter-governmental efforts for achieving the SDGs needs to be promoted at all levels (local, national, regional and global) – particularly to address issues affecting the global commons (climate change, oceans) and trans-boundary issues like terrorism, transnational organized crime, terrorism, the global drug problem, corruption, traffic in persons, sexual exploitation, trafficking of children and adolescents, smuggling of arms, infectious diseases.

Monitoring and Accountability

- Mutual accountability through transparency and a clear division of roles and responsibilities at both national and international levels will be central to a global partnership for sustainable development. A strong monitoring framework that covers both domestic and international actions will be equally vital, as will mechanisms for participatory monitoring and accountability.
- Reporting frameworks should include actions which significantly increase the ability of people to participate in policy choices that affect them and to hold the various actors and governments to account.
- The collection, publication and assessment of easily accessible data and information on the pace of delivery at all levels will be key to promoting transparency in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.
- Support should be provided to developing countries to ensure coherent monitoring and

tracking of progress, compliance and accountability through the provision of timely resources and other mechanisms.

- Regional review mechanisms need to include measures for assessing whether programs and policies are consistent with sustainable development.
- It is important to ensure consistent reporting on the progress of SDGs in a manner which reflects the circumstances and priorities of each country.
- Reporting requirements need to be harmonized so as to reduce the burden of reporting on LDCs and SIDs.