Accountable and effective development cooperation in a post-2015 era

Issues Note

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Background

The post-2015 development agenda – to be agreed upon by United Nations Member States in September 2015 – has great potential to end poverty and to put the world on a sustainable pathway. Its success will depend on how the lessons learned from the MDGs are harnessed and new issues of global concern are addressed.

A shared understanding has emerged that a strong sense of ownership and leadership, solidarity, cooperation and accountability must underpin the post-2015 development agenda. This can be supported by demonstrating the effectiveness of development cooperation and its ability to respond to changing development needs. Governments, civil society, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, parliamentarians, local governments and international organizations and others, increasingly work in unison to deliver sustainable development results and support an enabling environment for such outcomes.

Progress on the implementation of this ambitious common agenda will also require a renewed global partnership for development that catalyses long-term finance and effectively monitors different actors and holds them answerable to their promises and pledges. The wealth of experience of development actors to strengthen accountability to deliver on development cooperation commitments – of a quantitative and qualitative nature – can provide critical lessons for the design of a multi-stakeholder monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation.

The Symposium will provide an opportunity to explore how to engage the diverse range of development actors in a monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation for the post-2015 era. This will include the assessment of how lessons learned on enhancing the impact of development cooperation can be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda. The Symposium will build on key messages from the Ethiopia and Switzerland symposia and make a contribution to the discussion on how a renewed global partnership for development can be implemented in a more coherent, effective and legitimate manner.

The DCF Germany Symposium will serve as the final preparatory event for the 2014 high-level meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), to be held in New York on 10-11 July 2014, New York. The Symposium will contribute to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. The key messages of the symposium will also inform the discussions at the first ministerial meeting of the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, which in turn will present its outcome to the 2014 DCF.

I. What has worked to make development cooperation more effective and accountable, and why?

The session will collect concrete experiences and achievements in advancing the effectiveness, coherence and accountability of development cooperation and demonstrate how these are mutually reinforcing. The session will also benefit from the findings of the DCF Global Accountability Survey on national mutual accountability and the Global Monitoring Report of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

Discussion questions:

1.   Which policies and practices for effective and coherent development cooperation have gained most traction? How can limited progress in some of these areas be addressed?

2.   What are examples of good practices by parliamentarians, civil society organizations, the private sector, foundations, Southern partners and multilateral organizations in delivering effective development cooperation?

3.   What are the successes of national mutual accountability in promoting effective development cooperation? What are obstacles to making more effective use of such mechanisms?

II.   How can quality and effectiveness in development cooperation be usefully featured in a post-2015 development agenda?

This session will assess which policies and practices to enhance the quality (of the practices and policies applied) and effectiveness (in terms of development outcomes) of development cooperation should be featured in a post-2015 development agenda and how this can be done. It will take into account the changing development landscape and the evolving understanding among different stakeholders of development cooperation for a post-2015 era.

Discussion questions:

1.   How will national policy-making and monitoring of development cooperation need to adapt to the changing global development narrative?

2.   Which policies and practices for effective development cooperation should feature in a renewed global partnership for development; and how can this be done?

3.   How can such policies and practices reflect the increasingly diverse range of actors in development cooperation, and the various degrees of legal enforcement across the issues to be addressed in the post-2015 development agenda?

4.   How can the impact of such policies and practices by different actors be coherently measured, including on the neediest and most vulnerable populations?

III.   Global monitoring and accountability for development cooperation post-2015: what are the key conceptual and contextual issues?

This session will review the implications of the broader post-2015 development agenda and a more diverse set of actors for a comprehensive monitoring and accountability architecture for development cooperation. It will engage the range of stakeholders in discussion on key principles of such a global architecture for development cooperation.

Discussion questions:

1.   How can a global monitoring and accountability framework be designed to support the renewed global partnership for development and an enabling environment for sustainable development?

2.   What are the implications of a universal and unified post-2015 development agenda for a global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation?

3.   How to reflect the growing diversity of actors, with differing circumstances, capacities and priorities, in this framework?

4.   What principles should underpin a global monitoring and accountability architecture for development cooperation that covers the broader agenda and the growing diversity of approaches and actors in development cooperation?

IV.   Global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation post-2015: what are the key contours and how will it work?

This session will focus on questions related to the monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation at global level post-2015, as part of the multi-level architecture to help ensure delivery on development cooperation commitments and sustainable development results. It will draw from previous sessions and analysis and anticipate how the framework can be optimized to bring the best value added to all actors in development cooperation, encourage their engagement and ownership, and lead to sustainable development results.

Discussion questions:

1.	How can the global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation engage all actors on an equal footing?

2.	How can such a framework be designed to best serve the purpose of strengthening engagement and ownership by all actors?

3.	How can a framework be integrated in a results-based management approach, setting incentives for behavioural change?

## V.	Towards a coherent and inclusive global architecture: How to ensure coherence between accountability mechanisms at all levels?

This session will examine how to ensure coherence between accountability mechanisms at different levels. It will review how the global monitoring and accountability architecture for development cooperation can draw upon and reinforce existing national and regional mechanisms and experiences. It will also discuss how the framework can be effectively anchored at global level.

Discussion questions:

1.	How can it be ensured that the framework draws upon and reinforces existing accountability mechanisms and data sources at the national, regional and global levels?

2.	How can new and existing accountability mechanisms at the various levels help promote engagement of the full range of actors through a "bottom up" approach?

3.	How can the global monitoring and accountability architecture be more people-centred, aligned and transparent, tapping the potential of technology and the data revolution?

DCF WORKSHOPS

Workshop 1 – "Purpose of accountability"

Accountability in development cooperation includes both the processes of reporting and assessing compliance with commitments as well as knowledge sharing and mutual learning of the actors included, with the ultimate goal of ensuring sustainable development results. It can foster multi-stakeholder dialogue and trigger actions across all levels. One of the main shortcomings of the MDGs has been the weak design of, and only limited accountability for, implementation of MDG-8, on the global partnership for development. In order to enhance delivery on development cooperation commitments

post-2015, a robust monitoring and accountability framework can create a trustful environment and engage all stakeholders.

This workshop will discuss why a better global accountability framework for development cooperation is needed to support implementation of a renewed global partnership for development in the post-2015 development agenda and how to ensure that such a framework is effective.

Discussion questions:

1.   How to ensure that all commitments encapsulated in a post-2015 accountability framework for development cooperation are being met?

Workshop 2 – "Different actors"

For a renewed global partnership for development to be truly transformative, it must not only rely on a traditional North-South framework. It should engage and benefit all stakeholders, especially the poor and most vulnerable. It should build on existing accountability mechanisms at all levels and the evidence they have produced. Global and regional mechanisms should be designed to better feed into national mutual accountability mechanisms, reinforce national level dialogue and promote best practices. This will, in turn, be essential to trigger behaviour change and achieve lasting impact on development results. National and domestic mutual accountability mechanism should likewise feed into and serve as ballast for global accountability in development cooperation.

This workshop aims to discuss how development cooperation commitments by different actors should be covered in an umbrella framework and how several accountability frameworks for development cooperation commitments should anchor into this framework. It will also examine stakeholder engagement in national mutual accountability.

Discussion questions:

1.   How can a global accountability framework reflect the role of multiple actors and multi-stakeholder partnerships, or should there rather be an aim for multiple frameworks anchored in one umbrella framework?

2.   What practical steps are needed to ensure that all development actors at national level are engaged in national mutual accountability and this is anchored in global MA?

Workshop 3 – "Scope of the framework"

A unified post-2015 development agenda will have to monitor progress on poverty eradication and sustainable development challenges alike. This broadening of focus has implications for the scope and design of both development cooperation commitments and an accountability framework for development cooperation. Such a framework will be expected to address the development cooperation aspects of addressing global challenges, including, for example, climate change, food security or inequality and

vulnerability. There will be a need to monitor both how developed countries are supporting developing countries in reaching internationally agreed goals on poverty eradication and how they are supporting developing countries' efforts in addressing these global challenges. Developed countries will also need to review how their actions impact both poverty eradication and the efforts of developing countries in responding to global challenges.

This workshop will elaborate on how a global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation can support stakeholders to monitor progress on the broader range of cross-cutting priorities and global sustainable development challenges.

Discussion questions:

1.   How will an accountability framework for development cooperation commitments at global level be affected by the broadened scope of the post-2015 development agenda?

Workshop 4 – "Structure and process"

The successful engagement of all actors in development cooperation, based on their different histories, mandates and rationales for engaging in development cooperation, requires an enabling dynamic environment that is conducive to their activities and provides incentives to support mutual exchanges and build trust. Horizontal (e.g. peer reviews) and social accountability (e.g. independent monitoring of governments by civil society) have proven effective in promoting voluntary compliance and behavior change, especially given limited effects of vertical accountability measures. There is a need to move away from monitoring/surveillance to two-way, balanced and inclusive accountability frameworks, including a broad range of actors as well as a broader range of issues. Such frameworks can play a critical role in promoting behavioral change, mutual learning and knowledge sharing, even more when combined with a more effective use of data and new technologies.

This workshop aims to elaborate on the enabling factors for full and pro-active engagement of all actors in an umbrella framework that is oriented towards promoting sustainable development results.

Discussion questions:

1.   How can an umbrella framework for development cooperation and various frameworks anchored into it, be dynamic and motivate mutual learning and progress at different levels towards a shared agenda?

2.   What incentives could be provided to stakeholders to engage within these frameworks, allowing for frank and open exchanges and encouraging behavior change?

Workshop 5 – "Data and technology"

Robust monitoring and accountability in development cooperation depends on the availability of performance information that is reliable, coherent, timely, of high quality, publicly available, accessible and comparable over time. Disaggregated data at all levels will be critical to formulate effective and well-targeted policy responses. The "data revolution", as described in the High-level Panel Report on Post-2015, called for smart ways to: i) make use of the big amounts of data that are already being collected; ii) tap on new avenues of collecting information via e.g. crowd sourcing and co-creation of data by various stakeholders by making better use of modern technologies; and iii) aggregate and analyze collected information to produce knowledge products. Data co-creation, however, can only be a complement to official data collection and statistics. Hence national capacity in data collection and analysis needs to be strengthened further.

This workshop will explore how the data revolution and the potential of technology can be used most efficiently to enhance monitoring performance of development cooperation actors and their compliance with commitments, and thus increase transparency and engagement of all actors.

Discussion questions:

1.   What structures need to be established/strengthened to effectively gather and share data on development cooperation in a timely, accessible and reliable way beyond systems already in place?

2.   How can innovations help to achieve this?

3.   How can use of existing data be enforced/supported?

4.   How can quality issues (in terms of the data) be tackled at the global level?