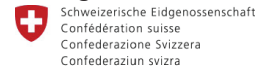




Post-2015 Development Agenda Bulletin

A Briefing Note of the Side Event “From MDGs to SDGs: How Can Multi-stakeholder Partnerships Contribute to Financing the Post-2015 Development Agenda”

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FROM MDGS TO SDGS: HOW CAN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS CONTRIBUTE TO FINANCING THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: 23 JUNE 2014

The side-event “From MDGs to SDGs: How Can Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships Contribute to Financing the Post-2015 Development Agenda” took place on 23 June 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Organized by the Government of Switzerland, with support of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the side event took place on the margins of the 2014 Annual Session of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), which is taking place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 23-27 June 2014.

The side event was organized in the format of a dinner reception and included an opening panel and eight informal roundtable discussions. Approximately 80 participants attended the event, including representatives from UN agencies in Geneva, the Global Fund, World Economic Forum, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), Sustainable Finance Geneva, the South Centre, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, private sector, civil society, and academia.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

OPENING STATEMENTS

The event opened on Monday, 23 June. Sally Fegan-Wyles, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Acting Executive Director of the UN Institute for Training and Research, opened the reception, welcoming participants and thanking the Government of Switzerland for organizing the event. She noted that foreign direct investment (FDI) is today six times more than official development assistance (ODA), and highlighted the need for better thinking on how to effectively channel these resources.

Peter Thomson, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the UN and President of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board, introduced the evening discussion. He underlined that the overarching goal of the event is to stimulate discussion on partnerships for financing the post-2015 development agenda,

which ultimately needs to combat extreme poverty. He encouraged participants to think about innovative means to finance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, highlighted the importance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) experience, saying that only a clear and focused agenda can bring effective results. She underscored that the SDGs should be easy to communicate, time-bound and limited in number.

Clark asserted that multi-stakeholder partnerships will be fundamental for the implementation of the SDGs and affirmed that public finances can be a catalyst for innovative funding sources for the post-2015 development agenda.

Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA Executive Director, highlighted the challenge of changing mindsets regarding the need for a new development paradigm. He further stressed that, given the new geo-economics reality that differs significantly from that during the MDGs phase, it would be a mistake to look only to the current multilateral scene to foster partnerships.

Osotimehin noted that ODA remains very important for several least-developed countries (LDCs), but that it is largely insufficient for an ambitious development agenda. He underscored the role of taxation, transparency of public finance and South-South cooperation in enhancing funds for the post-2015 agenda.

Vitaly Vanshelboim, Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, UNOPS, highlighted the expertise of UNOPS in dealing with multiple stakeholders, particularly multinational companies and wealthy individuals. He gave the example of social bond schemes, in which private investors contribute finance to projects dealing with social issues and are paid if the projects succeed, stating that pilot projects are currently being developed in collaboration with Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Martin Dahinden, Director-General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, said the real challenge of the post-2015 development agenda is to hold stakeholders accountable, and reaffirmed the importance of more effective ways of engaging the private sector in the SDGs process. He underscored the importance of fostering an entrepreneurial culture in developing countries and ensuring that business practices are in line with social and environmental goals.

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Dahinden concluded noting the need to move beyond “traditional ODA” towards a global partnership encompassing the expertise, potential, comparative advantage and complementarity of all.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Following the opening statements, Fegan-Wyles invited participants, distributed across eight roundtables, to continue discussions informally during the dinner, with the assistance of facilitators representing different partners of the International Geneva, namely:

- Lea Stadler, University of Geneva;
- Petra Demarin, World Economic Forum;
- Sofie Flensburg, ICTSD;
- David Vivas, UN Conference on Trade and Development;
- Ximena Escobar de Nogales, Bamboo Finance;
- Rabab Fayad, World Business Council for Sustainable Development;
- Manuel Montes, the South Centre; and
- Robert Shelburne, UN Economic Commission for Europe.

The informal roundtable discussions were guided by specific themes, including:

- the forms of partnerships with the private sector that should be considered to finance the post-2015 agenda;
- how the potential of trade can be better leveraged to finance sustainable development and what partnerships are required to help deliver this potential, especially in LDCs;
- the new important innovations in financing for sustainable development and how they can be public or private initiatives, or a mix of both; and how such initiatives can be brought to scale in the post-2015 era;
- how sustainable development financing can effectively target the post-2015 agenda and what forms of partnerships are required for this, given the requirement to balance the financing needs of the poorest countries with the continued financing needs of middle-income countries; and
- the lessons learned about financing for development from the MDGs experience that would be useful for the post-2015 agenda.

Following the discussions in the different roundtables, the roundtable facilitators provided short summaries and reported the main points made during the discussions, including:

- the need for the UN to improve communication and speak the “language of business”;
- the need to identify the main gaps in current development financing schemes and develop a portfolio of different partnerships, such as volunteering approaches, pro-poor public-private partnerships and sustainable value-chain approaches;
- the need to build trust among institutions;
- the importance of ensuring that investments remain founded on human rights and development procedures;
- the crucial role of public actors, including UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, in ensuring an enabling environment for

- new investments in the post-2015 era, such as by providing technical assistance to local governments;
- the ability of trade to support the SDGs and the need to scale up initiatives, such as Aid for Trade, that can ensure additional and predictable finance to improve developing country capacity for investments in trade-related areas that are supported by ODA;
- the relevance of trade to several elements of the post-2015 agenda, notably climate change, sustainable energy and food security;
- the role of the private sector in contributing to the assessment of the true value of natural capital;
- the need to encourage South-South trade platforms;
- the need to phase out perverse incentives, notably in the agriculture sector, and to conclude the Doha Development Round;
- in the context of multi-stakeholder partnerships, the importance of improving the governance of funds in order to ensure effective distribution of resources;
- the possibility of creating a global lottery in support of the SDGs, to raise awareness and generate new funds for the post-2015 development agenda;
- the importance of assessing the true costs of natural capital when fostering economic growth, and the need to change development paradigms based on the lessons of the MDGs;
- the need to improve FDI rates in developing countries;
- the urgent need for new investments in governance in order to improve the reliability of domestic sectors;
- the importance of ending a North-South perspective;
- the need to enhance trust between foreign investors and local governments;
- the fact that MDG 8 on promoting a Global Partnership was “too general”;
- the role specific partnerships goals could play in ensuring finance for each SDG;
- the relevance of middle-income countries in combating poverty;
- the need to encourage private sector development and its engagement in the post-2015 agenda;
- the need to adapt UN rules and regulations to enable UN organizations to further collaborate with the private sector; and
- the need to remember, during discussions on raising new financing, that net capital flows in developing countries are still negative.

CLOSING SESSION

Fegan-Wyle thanked the rapporteurs for efficiently convening the key points of the informal discussion. Thompson expressed satisfaction with the suggestion that more transparency in financing mechanisms is required and restated that the overarching goal of events like this is to end extreme poverty. He concluded saying that the UN is not the only tool for innovative financing.

The event concluded at 10:10 pm.