



GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER
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In focus: Looking Ahead. The UN system starts charting the road map for the post- 2015 agenda.

Business as usual cannot be a viable option and transformative change is needed—that is one of the key messages of the first report prepared by the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda called “Realizing the Future We Want for All”. The Task Team, launched in January 2012, brought together senior experts from over 50 UN-system entities and other international organizations, representing a genuinely collaborative effort of the UN family organizations to review the progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and identify the contours of the post -2015 UN development agenda. The terms of reference of the Task Team envision not only assessing ongoing efforts within the UN system and defining a system-wide vision and road map on the post-2015 agenda, but also foresee broad-based consultations with various stakeholders, representing civil society, academia and the private sector as to how to chart the future course in a better way.

The central challenge of the post-2015 UN Development Agenda is seen by the authors of the report to be ensuring that globalization becomes a positive force for all of the world’s people of present and future generations. That is not an easy task. While the cross-border flows of trade, investment and finance have made national economies ever more closely integrated, offering many new opportunities unseen before-- amid a technological revolution in transport and communications that has decreased the significance of time and distance barriers-- the benefits of globalization continue, however, to be distributed and shared in a very uneven way. The report tackles the existence of persistent inequalities and struggles over resources among “key determinants of situations of conflict, hunger, insecurity and violence, which in turn are key factors that hold back human development and efforts to achieve sustainable development”. In the absence of a radical shift towards more sustainable patterns of consumption, production and resource use, the continuous striving for improvements in material welfare might become a factor that exceeds the limits of the natural resource base.

Taking the core values of human rights, equality and sustainability as points of departure and acknowledging that “an agenda format based on concrete end goals and targets, one of the key strengths of the MDGs framework, should be retained”, the report puts forward four key dimensions of a more holistic approach that are required to address highly interdependent existing challenges. These dimensions, consistent with the principles of the UN Millennium Declaration, are as follows:

1) inclusive social development; 2) inclusive economic development; 3) environmental sustainability; and 4) peace and security.

Emphasizing the transformative power of global goals such as the MDGs, and their role in galvanizing development efforts globally and nationally, particularly with regard to poverty eradication, the authors of the report also acknowledge the shortcomings of the MDGs framework. In the words of the report, the MDGs did not adequately address “issues of productive employment, violence against women, social protection, inequalities, social exclusion, biodiversity, persistent malnutrition and the increase in non-communicable diseases, reproductive health and complexities related to demographic dynamics, peace and security, governance, the rule of law and human rights. In focusing on end objectives, the MDG framework provided little guidance as to the means to achieve them”. As a result, several of the goals and targets related to the global partnership for development were defined “rather imprecisely, thereby weakening accountability for the promised international support for the implementation of the MDGs framework”, and eventually many of the commitments made by the international community have remained unfulfilled. The report identifies some important constraints to sustainable and inclusive development in developing countries, such as “insufficient access to predictable development finance, export markets, technologies and medicines”.

The Task Team also acknowledges some shortcoming in the inception of the MDGs, first of all, an insufficient consultation process during the initial stages of their conceptualization and formulation. Accordingly, “a more inclusive process might have led to a better understanding of the need to adapt the global goals and targets to country contexts”. Given the lessons learned, those shortcomings should be avoided during the ongoing work on the post-2015 agenda.

In the context of existing global interdependence, setting collective goals and targets to be pursued by the world community does make sense, provided that there is the necessary degree of flexibility in tailoring targets to local conditions, which is done best through a participatory process. In the words of the report, “the post-2015 UN development agenda should maintain the focus on human development and the eradication of poverty as the ultimate objectives of any development agenda”. Yet, the agenda should also respond to several challenges of the modern world, such as fighting persisting inequalities, promoting peace and security, good governance and accountability, addressing population ageing and international migration, global urbanization and environmental degradation, promoting greater knowledge-sharing, and other challenges. The proposed road map is anchored to a two-step approach geared at supporting Member-States in their efforts to develop the post-2015 UN development agenda. The first step is to promote an open, inclusive and transparent consultation process aimed at taking stock and encouraging contributions from a wide range of stakeholders. The second step is to intensify efforts to achieve intergovernmental consensus on the post-2015 agenda, while sustaining an open and inclusive process.

For more details, please go to the full text of the document available at:

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/realizing-the-future-we-want/>

Forum on Development Policy: European Development Days, October 16-17 2012

Organized by the European Commission, European Development Days (EDD) has become the European Union flagship forum on international affairs and development cooperation, bringing together in mid-October in Brussels thousands of development advocates, decision-makers and practitioners. The EDD assumed the role of an important platform for a yearly debate and exchange of ideas, benchmarks and best practices, facilitating networking and building new partnerships within the development community, in particular participants wishing to meet other stakeholders involved in North South or South –South cooperation. This year’s two-day conference centered on three priority themes: *food and nutrition security, inclusive growth, and engaging the private sector*

for development. Several panels explored a wide range of issues on the agenda and beyond, putting forward fresh ideas and examining options and trade-offs. For more details on the agenda and panels go to: <http://eudevdays.eu/>

Priority themes discussed.

Food security figures prominently on the agenda of EU development cooperation. According to the background note on sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security prepared by the organizers for the discussions, the situation is critical in many developing countries. About 16 per cent of the world population suffers from hunger and lives in poverty. Most of these people live in rural areas, where agriculture, mainly small-scale farming, is the predominant economic activity, subject to the vagaries of climate, intense competition for land and water and rising prices for fertilizers and fuel. Disaster risk management should be a clear priority in the war against hunger, but in many cases that has not been the case. Achieving universal food security is of paramount importance from many standpoints, as it underpins political stability, social welfare and economic growth. There is much untapped potential for scaling up production in developing countries. Evidence shows that investments in the small holder sector often yield the best returns in terms of poverty reduction and growth, also building resilience of communities. For further details: <http://eudevdays.eu/edd12/topic/food-security>

Inclusive and sustainable economic growth is closely linked to achieving long-term poverty reduction. To that end, the development policy of the European Union aims at promoting more inclusive growth, characterized by people's ability to participate in, and benefit from, wealth and job creation. Empowering people for inclusive growth requires a number of prerequisites, including political stability, good governance, and security, the respect for human rights, a conducive regulatory and business environment and a well-educated, healthy and creative population. Some other factors include the sustainable use of scarce natural resources, economic infrastructure, implementation of core labour standards, and effective and beneficial participation in international trade. Confronting persistent inequality is essential, along with promoting access to finance by poor and vulnerable groups, enhancing social protection and fighting corruption. Given a particularly alarming situation in many countries with regard to youth unemployment, education and training programmes should be combined with schemes that ensure that young people have a say in their future. For further details: <http://eudevdays.eu/edd12/topic/inclusive-growth>

The private sector can be a driving force in making growth inclusive. This goal is achieved in a multitude of ways, starting from generating productive and decent job opportunities along with investing in innovation and business models that are targeted to the needs of the poor. Engaging the private sector as a development partner is a relatively new concept for national and donor governments and multilateral organizations. Given that the foundations of private sector development are weak in most developing and least developed countries, it is imperative for national and donor governments to undertake reforms in the legal sphere, promoting public-private cooperation and partnerships and encouraging the development of business models that can be successfully replicated and that are commercially sustainable. For more details: <http://eudevdays.eu/edd12/topic/private-sector>

Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: Report sheds light on progress towards implementing international commitments.

"Population ageing can no longer be ignored" –says the Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon, in the preface to a new comprehensive report called "Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge" produced jointly by the United Nations Population Fund and HelpAge International, and the Secretary-General's observation does a good job of capturing the gist of its content and the discussion: population ageing is one of the most significant trends with global implications.

The report seeks to raise awareness about the speed of population ageing, and more generally, about the experience of being old in the contemporary world. Fertility and mortality rates have decreased world-wide. Increasing human longevity is undeniably one of the greatest achievements of modern societies, and the opportunities associated with people living longer and healthier lives are numerous. But those welcome opportunities need to be maximized, and ageing requires multiple development responses.

This evidence-based report highlights crucial aspects related to population ageing: human rights, income security, health issues, age-friendly environments, social exclusion and many others. The results of a global survey on ageing are also presented and analyzed.

The executive summary is available in following languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

The full text of the report can be found at: <http://unfpa.org/ageingreport/>

Useful resources and links **African Development Forum**

The eighth **African Development Forum** (ADF VIII) has concluded in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the adoption of a Consensus Statement suggesting ways to aid African countries in using their natural resources to promote people-centered development.

<http://new.uneca.org/adfviii/AboutADFVIII.aspx>

Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly

Inter-Parliamentary Union members at the IPU's 127th Assembly convened in Quebec City, Canada, have committed to a comprehensive and ambitious [Plan of Action](#) on gender-sensitive parliaments, aimed at radically transforming the way national institutions address gender equality. The action plan, a potentially far-reaching outcome of the 127th IPU Assembly, not only tackles women's access to parliaments through affirmative action, but also gender parity in roles and ranks inside parliaments; legal frameworks; the gender infrastructure and culture within parliaments, as well as the need to engage political parties on the issue.

<http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/127/res-plan.htm>

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