

Outcome Document: Toward an African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

During the period 15th-16th November, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in collaboration with the Africa Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP/RBA) convened a workshop in Accra Ghana to begin the process of articulating an African position on the post 2015 development agenda. The workshop was hosted by the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana and attended by 47 representatives from 19 African countries¹ representing government, civil society and academia.

The perspectives of the post-2015 development agenda were informed by the following reflections on the MDGs. The MDGs as currently constituted:

- ◆ have limited focus on economic growth and transformation;
- ◆ do not sufficiently emphasise the role of domestic resource mobilization in Africa's development agenda;
- ◆ tend to neglect issues relating to the quality of service delivery;
- ◆ are silent on inequality including spatial and horizontal inequality; and
- ◆ disproportionately focus on outcomes with limited consideration of the enablers of development and thereby exclude the role of factors such infrastructure and peace and security in facilitating socio-economic advancement.

In response to these issues, participants stressed the need for the post-2015 development agenda to reflect an appropriate balance of development outcomes and enablers. Participants also noted that effective economic and social development planning that is informed by country experiences and aspirations is vital for a successful development agenda. In this regard, they called on regional institutions in Africa, to play a critical role in implementing the new agenda, and to promote coherence between national and regional development priorities.

Furthermore, participants called for the post-2015 development agenda to focus on economic growth and transformation and to re-orient the development paradigm away from aid and externally-driven initiatives toward domestically-funded development initiatives that are driven by developing countries. Moreover, the post-2015 development agenda should prioritize equity and social inclusion and measure progress not only in terms of access to services but also in terms of quality of services delivery.

Finally, they concluded that assessment of performance in the post 2015 era should take into account initial conditions and recognize the effort countries have made towards achieving the goals as opposed to exclusively measuring how far they fall short of global targets.

¹Burkina Faso, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cote d'Ivoire Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Morocco Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, The Gambia, Togo, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Participants identified the following as critical enablers of development and proposed them for adoption in the post-2015 development agenda:

- *Institutional capacity development:* To achieve agreed-upon goals, countries must have the capacity to implement various initiatives of the post-2015 development agenda. Without guidelines and a concerted effort to increase institutional capacity, it will be difficult to achieve agreed-upon goals and targets.
- *Domestic resource mobilization:* The post-2015 development agenda should de-emphasize aid and external sources of financing, and encourage domestic funding. Domestic resource mobilization will also enhance ownership and accountability.
- *Participation and ownership at the community, national and global level:* Participation by a broad range of actors is a necessary precondition to achieving development goals and targets. The post-2015 development agenda should encourage participation and ownership from all levels of society.
- *Social inclusiveness and equality:* The MDGs as currently constituted do not account for equality or inclusiveness. The post-2015 development agenda should have social inclusiveness as a backbone of any goals or targets.
- *Governance and leadership:* Strong leadership, good governance, and political will are necessary to achieve development goals. Good governance and leadership should be preconditions for implementing a post-2015 development agenda.
- *Peace and Security:* Economic and social development cannot be achieved without the basic preconditions of peace and security. Thus, political stability and security must be highlighted as enablers for the post-2015 development agenda.
- *Regional integration and trade:* To encourage economic growth and transformation, regional integration and trade networks must be in place. Africa should place a strong focus on intra- and inter-regional trade.
- *Infrastructure development:* African countries must have adequate infrastructure (roads, electricity, water supply, etc.) in order to implement the goals and targets of a post-2015 development agenda.
- *Global cooperation and partnerships:* Finally, strong global cooperation and partnerships are essential. As has been seen with the current MDGs, political will and international cooperation are necessary to move forward an international development agenda.

It was noted that in creating a new development agenda, these enablers must have more specific targets in order for them to be measurable and attainable.

In addition to the enablers, participants agreed that the post-2015 development agenda needs to be led by economic growth and assessed by indicators of performance in the following areas:

Economic Transformation

- Prioritize employment creation
- Promote inclusive growth
- Promote value addition of primary resources
- Ensure food security
- Promote and expand trade, markets and regional integration and investment
- Prioritize sustainability and support green economy initiatives

Education and technology

- Strengthen the quality of education
- Invest in secondary, tertiary and vocational education
- Promote technology transfer
- Invest in research and development

Human development

- Promote gender parity/empowerment of women
- Ensure equitable and quality access to healthcare, drugs and medicines
- Protect human rights
- Assure justice and equality
- Promote access to social protection
- Empower the disabled
- Prioritize disaster risk reduction

In conclusion, the deliberations called for a post-2015 development agenda that: takes into account both outcomes and enablers of development; is underpinned by economic transformation as well as social development; sustained by credible national ownership and; is assessed not only by the quantum of service delivery but also by the quality and access to such services by broad segments of society.