



19th Steering Committee Meeting

Summary report

11-12 May 2020

Virtual meeting

Objectives

- Adoption and launch of the 2020-22 Global Partnership Work Programme and agreement on roles and responsibilities to support its implementation
- Strategic guidance for the reform of the GPEDC monitoring exercise



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 19th Steering Committee was held virtually over two days, with English-French translation made available to members. The meeting was chaired by the four GPEDC co-chairs and brought together 55 participants representing committee members.

CONTACTS

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For background documents and presentations from this meeting, please visit:

<https://knowledge.effectivecooperation.org/content/supporting-documents-19th-steering-committee-meeting-global-partnership-11-12-may-2020>

INTRODUCTION

Co-Chairs opened the meeting by underscoring the heightened importance of effectiveness in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This poses both challenges and opportunities in the rollout of the new 2020-2022 work programme.

H.E. Mrs. Elysée Munembwe Tamukumwe, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning of the Democratic Republic of Congo, chaired a discussion on the impact of COVID-19 and the role of the Global Partnership in this context. Madame Minister noted the grim predictions about the impact of the pandemic on developing countries' citizens and economies, and the need for adapted responses, based on changing needs and priorities, and more effective support and partnerships.

Mr. Bashar Siddique, stepping in for **H.E. Mr. Mustafa Kamal**, Minister of Finance, Bangladesh, highlighted the far-reaching support partner countries will require to 'build back better together' following the COVID-19 crisis, and that there will be 'no alternative to the effectiveness principles' in rolling out this support.

H.E. Mr. Thomas Gass, Ambassador, Assistant Director General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, emphasised that showing how investing in the resilience of partner countries and the capacity of the global community to face global challenges in the long-run is key to responding to domestic pressures of development partners to reduce their aid budgets, noting the need to go beyond a focus on immediate humanitarian needs while also strengthening country systems. Mr. Gass also informed members that Co-chairs will issue a joint statement on the COVID-19 pandemic, with the launch of the Work Programme.

Mr. Vitalice Meja, Executive Director of Reality of Aid Africa, and the non-executive Co-chair of the Global Partnership, called for greater solidarity and leadership, and to strengthen the enabling environment for non-executive stakeholders: to harness their experiences, skills and resources as part of a 'whole of society' effort to recover from the COVID-19 crisis.

KEY OUTCOMES AND SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS

The Steering Committee has:

- **Adopted the 2020-2022 GPEDC Work Programme**, an ambitious plan of action to guide members' efforts in implementing a range of action areas and strategic priorities, to build momentum for the next GPEDC High-Level Meeting (HLM) in 2022.
- **Endorsed the Co-chairs' proposal for the reform of the GPEDC monitoring exercise as part of the 2020-2022 Work Programme**, including the strategic level of ambition for the reform and the approach to manage the transition phase until the next GPEDC HLM in 2022.
- **Underscored the importance of the new Work Programme to contribute to an effective and efficient global COVID-19 response.**
- **Committed to coordination among Action Areas**, to avoid siloed implementation efforts and harness synergies, including by making coordinated and systematic offers to partner country governments.
- **Highlighted the importance of investing more in communication, advocacy and outreach**, to demonstrate how evidence, knowledge and policy guidance can be translated into action to make a difference in the lives of people on the ground, across different contexts.

Co-chairs have:

- **Issued a [joint statement](#) on the COVID-19 pandemic and the [GPEDC work programme](#).**
- **Recalled that, if the global COVID-19 situation allows, the 20th GPEDC Steering Committee meeting will be held on 22-23 October 2020 in person in the margins of the UN World Data Forum (18-21 October 2020) in Bern, Switzerland.**

I. COVID-19 response: Actions must be guided by development effectiveness

A *tour de table* confirmed the severe impact of COVID-19 on members and vulnerable populations, and the decisive role effective development co-operation can play in the collective response to the pandemic and its aftermath. Members agreed that this response will affect and shape the work of the Partnership, and noted that the way the effectiveness principles will be used at the country level is key to demonstrate progress on effectiveness at the next GPEDC High-Level Meeting (HLM) in 2022.

Members committed to using the Global Partnership to push for action in line with the effectiveness principles, to ensure collective efforts are made to ‘rebuild better together’. Many members agreed on the need to tap into the ample experience of stakeholders to ensure responses that address immediate needs with sometimes new and unconventional solutions, and are well-coordinated and in line with principles, while also focusing on building long-term capacities across priority areas. This spans from health issues to food and job security, as well as across development and humanitarian aid. Many underscored the importance of designing and delivering any support package through close dialogue with partner country governments and other local actors, ensuring transparency and effective information sharing and learning across stakeholders. This was also paired with urgent calls for renewed efforts around SDG financing and addressing inequalities and the disproportionate impact COVID-19 will have on marginalised populations and those furthest behind. This included the need to address root causes of poverty, promote civic space and workers’ rights, social protection and free access to health care, among other issues.

II. Adoption and launch of the 2020-2022 Work Programme of the Global Partnership

Members welcomed the draft [Work Programme](#) and agreed on next steps to operationalise it. Based on discussions at the [Seoul Steering Committee](#) (5-6 December 2019), and informed by a [workshop](#) with partner countries and other stakeholders (17-18 March 2020), members discussed how to meet the high level of ambition of the work programme, ensuring a ‘whole of GPEDC approach’ that goes beyond work in individual action areas (see list in Annex A) and constituencies, and how to enable the Steering Committee to review progress and address challenges in realising the work programme.

The success of the work programme will depend on the ability to bring practical benefits to partner countries. Anchoring and delivering activities in ways that attract the interest of partner countries and influence national processes and goals – including COVID-19 responses – will be key to increasing the Partnership’s impact and political momentum in run up to the next GPEDC High-level Meeting in 2022. Experience from the first work programme has shown that closer co-operation between Co-chairs, the Steering Committee and the JST, and a clear ‘effectiveness offer’ that carves out the niche and identity for the Partnership at country level, will be essential. A rigorous approach to identifying and selecting countries where activities will be taken up is vital to ensure a balanced and systematic approach across the action areas. At the same time, implementation of activities at national and local level will depend on a flexibility to respond to needs, also in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new work programme should influence how the 2030 Agenda is implemented at country level. Members agreed that they must make greater efforts to influence SDG and FfD follow-up and review processes – for example preparations of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) – but also work directly at country level, including through the UN development system working in the country, to show how effective development co-operation can help adapt policies, systems and approaches to changing requirements and deliver on agreed development priorities.

Coordination across action areas, including the reform of the monitoring exercise, will be essential. This will be particularly important in the initial phase of engaging partner-country governments and ensuring systematic engagement and ‘matchmaking’ among stakeholders in those countries. Members welcomed the idea of regular exchanges among action area leads to coordinate their respective efforts, identify linkages and work together towards activities that are inclusively designed and demand-driven, and realistic.

A great degree of realism is needed to manage expectations and ambitions, and ensure they are commensurate with resources and capacities available. With its 10 action areas and the planned GPEDC review, the work programme is very ambitious. The onus is on action area leads to rally their respective groups and partners to spearhead implementation efforts. Based on initial implementation efforts in the run up to the next Steering Committee meeting (October 2020), members will again assess delivery across action areas and how efforts could be further consolidated. Balanced engagement, including from partner countries, will be vital for a collectively owned and driven agenda.

A range of opportunities exist for more systematic learning, advocacy and outreach. Members committed to continuously ‘scan the horizon’ and build linkages to other work that is relevant to the Global Partnership’s efforts. They welcomed ideas to use online activities and virtual meetings more, including webinars, as well as the Partnership’s Knowledge Platform, to share knowledge and experiences, and collect evidence and engage local actors and relevant communities. A coherent communication effort will be essential to attract partner country governments and other stakeholders active at the country level.

Building political momentum in the run up to the next GPEDC High-Level Meeting in 2022 has to start now. Many members raised the need to translate the effectiveness principles into actionable guidance for stakeholders that are not traditionally at the heart of this agenda. A number of ideas was proposed, including annual stakeholder meetings e.g. back-to-back with the Busan Partnership Forum or the UN Development Cooperation Forum, as well as leveraging the potential of the next GPEDC HLM in 2022, reiterating the value of the effectiveness principles to help address challenges in new contexts.

The Committee will regularly assess progress of implementation with a new tool. Going forward, action area leads will contribute to a regular status update to track the rollout and implementation of activities to inform future committee discussions and decisions regarding progress and any challenges in the implementation of the Work Programme. Regular discussions with action areas are forthcoming.

The Committee will need to begin preparing a review of the Global Partnership. Based on the recommendation at the 2019 SLM, and in line with the Co-Chair’s proposal in the previous Seoul meeting, members concurred with the need to discuss the GPEDC review in earnest at the next Steering Committee meeting. Issues to be subsumed under this process include, for example, challenges related to constituency engagement, including challenges around consultations among diverse partner country governments.

The level of ambition for the implementation of the work programme hinges upon appropriate resourcing – for the institutional core support provided by UNDP and OECD, the ‘whole of GPEDC’ approach, and targeted support to action areas. A Financing Committee is foreseen to support Co-Chairs in mobilising resources. Members have voiced their concerns around potential ‘orphan’ action areas, which are inadequately resourced and may lack partner-country champions. In this sense, a pooled fund to provide seed money for action areas was proposed as a way to ensure that all action areas have the minimum resourcing needed to roll out initial activities. Members also encouraged joint activities to maximise synergistic use of resources. The capacity of the JST to provide light coordination support across action areas, to ensuring a balanced country focus, in addition to its core support role will depend on adequate resourcing from members.

III. Global Partnership Monitoring Reform – Towards a New Monitoring Proposal for the next GPEDC High-Level Meeting

Members endorsed the proposed strategic level of ambition and implementation process for the monitoring reform, which will produce a new monitoring proposal for endorsement at the next GPEDC High-Level Meeting in 2022. Given the ambitious scope of the reform, members appreciated the need for a “period of transition” in 2020-2022. During this period, in lieu of a global monitoring round, evidence on the state of effectiveness will be generated through (i) piloting elements of the new monitoring proposal and (ii) through country-level initiatives to take action on results from previous

rounds. It is crucial that the evidence produced is meaningful from a global perspective. Over three distinct phases working towards the next GPEDC HLM, the Co-chairs will lead the overall process with guidance from the Steering Committee and technical support from the JST (see Annex B).

Members reiterated the value and importance of the monitoring as the flagship of the Global Partnership. They stressed the need for continued investment to ensure it incentivises multi-stakeholder engagement, further drives behaviour change and generates political momentum to drive the Partnership agenda forward especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members encouraged efforts to further improve the exercise, noting they should reinforce and highlight linkages with Agenda 2030, while at the same time safeguarding the exercise as a unique and distinct exercise.

The focus on supporting the use of results from previous monitoring rounds, at global and national level and across stakeholder groups, received strong support. Members emphasised the importance of producing evidence for the next GPEDC HLM, suggesting that a report for the next GPEDC HLM could feature evidence in the form of actions and responses to 2018 results, and contribute to continued political momentum and visibility of the monitoring in the absence of a global monitoring round. It was noted that the forward-looking nature of the reform should not preclude the expectation that stakeholders respond and take action on results from earlier rounds. Members suggested that the proposed country-level initiatives on results (“deep dives”) maximise synergies with other country-level work under the Work Programme.

To rebuild political momentum around effectiveness, members appreciated the intention to address known challenges of the current monitoring exercise. These include streamlining and simplifying the process, improving usability of the data generated, and building more on country systems and processes while still maintaining linkages with SDG reporting. Increased flexibility in the timing of the monitoring exercise was also suggested to allow countries to align the monitoring process with other relevant country policy review and planning processes.

To ensure relevance and usefulness, it was suggested that the reform contributes to an improved understanding of core elements of the effectiveness agenda, reflecting as well different contexts and modalities (e.g. fragile and conflict affected situations; co-operation through multilateral partners, South-South co-operation). Some members recommended revisiting the work of the GPEDC Monitoring Advisory Group in the context of the forthcoming reform. Some members also suggested that the reformed monitoring should provide a comprehensive picture of individual donor performance, including a renewed focus and approach to effectiveness in OECD/DAC Peer Reviews.

Members valued the Co-chairs’ assurances that the reform would be underpinned by a transparent and inclusive process. Some members expressed the need for a targeted ways of collecting feedback from stakeholders, including through in-person exchanges (where possible). Co-chairs were also encouraged to reflect further on working arrangements. The importance of outlining clear milestones to inform the reform was highlighted, while some members also encouraged acceleration of the conceptual phase of the reform to facilitate a robust country piloting phase. It was also noted during the discussion that delivering the ambition and scope of the monitoring reform, as well as the scaled up focus on supporting use of results, would depend on adequate resourcing of the JST. This is in line with the JST’s mandate to develop, refine and implement the global monitoring methodology.

IV. Delivering the work programme together & Closing

Members concluded the meeting with a discussion on the importance of a coherent strategy for advocacy: promoting both the effectiveness principles as a basis for how we work in partnership for sustainable development, and the work programme itself. Co-chairs reflected on the need for all Steering Committee members to be well positioned and speak collectively in UN forums, to land the Partnership’s work at country level, and to communicate in a concise and effective way. Co-chairs highlighted the Global Partnership’s strength of a multi-stakeholder approach, creating policy space for

all actors to engage and contribute, as more valuable now more than ever, not least in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

Members spoke of the importance of ensuring the work programme was well presented, but also able to speak for itself: delivery would be the best advertisement. Many took the floor to reiterate their commitment to the programme they had developed, and their determination to make a often technical agenda more accessible to more partners, drawing on the open nature of the action areas, and relevant working groups. The United Nations World Data Forum, planned for October (alongside which the 20th Steering Committee Meeting is expected to be held), would be an important opportunity to reach a new community of practitioners. Different action area leads outlined their own plans for expanding outreach, and targeting efforts at particular audiences, while partners re-iterated the importance of remaining responsive to the COVID context, likely to be shaping development efforts for some time. Members lauded recent efforts to bring in new partners to action area working groups, and several committed to renewed efforts to align with colleagues and counterparts in relevant UN and international forums, in NY and elsewhere.

Finally, Co-chairs shared with the committee their [statement](#) on the COVID-19 crisis, and their commitment to the effectiveness principles, and the crucial role they will have to play in building back better.

Annex A: Action Areas

<p>Action Area 1.1 Demonstrating the impact of effectiveness</p> <p>Lead: European Commission</p> <p>Detailed proposal Contact lead</p>	<p>Action Area 1.2 Strengthening effective support to statistical capacity and data</p> <p>Lead: Switzerland</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>
<p>Action Area 2.1 Private sector partnerships for sustainable development: Translating the Kampala Principles to action</p> <p>Lead: Germany</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>	<p>Action Area 2.2 Triangular development co-operation for sustainable development</p> <p>Lead: Canada</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>
<p>Action Area 2.3 Supporting country-led development effectiveness of South-South co-operation</p> <p>Lead: Colombia</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>	<p>Action Area 2.4 Civil society partnerships: enabling civil society participation and addressing shrinking civic space</p> <p>Lead: Co-Chairs (a.i.)</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>
<p>Action Area 2.5 Reinforcing foundations' engagement for co-designing and sharing solutions through new ways of working</p> <p>Lead: WINGS</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>	<p>Action Area 2.6 Strengthening development effectiveness at subnational level to achieve the SDGs</p> <p>Lead: UCLG and ORU-FOGAR</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>
<p>Action Area 2.7 Effective multilateral support</p> <p>Lead: UNSDG and bilateral partner</p> <p>Detailed proposal Join online group Contact lead</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 3 Leveraging monitoring for action</p> <p>Lead: Co-Chairs</p> <p>Detailed proposal Contact lead</p>

JST contact points will facilitate, where needed, information flow between action area leads and interested parties, as well as with Co-Chairs, to facilitate a whole-of-GPEDC approach to planning and conducting activities under the Work Programme.

Annex B: Strategic Priority 3, “Leveraging Monitoring for Action”: Overview of Implementation Plan

