

Note of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) for the Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Partnership in New York, July 9, 2014:

Future Priorities after the High Level Ministerial Meeting and before the conclusion of the post-2015 process

The CPDE acknowledges the efforts of the GPEDC to regain momentum on the road to and at the High-Level Ministerial Meeting (HLM) in Mexico by encouraging multi-stakeholder dialogue around key topics. We join other development actors in recognising the consensus reached on the HLM Communiqué and the support for CSOs as independent development actors.

The HLM also brought several bottlenecks, lack of commitment and overall progress since Busan to light. We welcome the Joint Support Team's initiative to outline the "vision" and future contributions of the Partnership. In particular, the notions on membership on "equal terms", ownership and common principles provide key pillars for engagement. However, if the GPEDC is set to ensure equal footing for all players in development cooperation, Human Rights-Based Approaches (HRBA), gender equality, transparency and accountability standards should be thoroughly integrated in all processes. CPDE members would like to raise several key issues in assessing the outcomes of Mexico and challenges ahead:

How to reverse the insufficient progress since Busan?

The progress we have made since Busan is not sufficient – as recognized by most stakeholders, as well as in the Global Monitoring Report. The "vision" document calls for an acceleration of country-level implementation, this would need more specification. The capacity of the GPEDC needs to be drastically improved to ensure implementation over the next 2 years. Ahead of the HLM, CSOs called for an Action Plan containing benchmarks and timetables to gauge global and country-level implementation by all stakeholders.

This effort should apply to the Partnership as a whole. We particularly highlight the need to strengthen development effectiveness in South-South cooperation (SSC) through strong national policy and institutional frameworks, which should include an enabling environment (EE) for CSOs. At the HLM, commitments remained on a voluntary basis and important standards were side-lined. While we understand the right of non-traditional donors to their own principles, a more comprehensive policy framework to hold all development actors to account is needed. It could indeed be designed as an "inclusive space for dialogue [and] mutual learning" to factor in new instances. Such accountability mechanism could become the value-added of the Partnership in the post-2015 implementation phase. This could be complemented by institutionalizing a helpdesk.

What role for the Steering Committee?

The Steering Committee should be strengthened in its role to effectively initiate and carry processes further, which was not always the case in the lead-up to Mexico with a strong role of the Co-chairs. Transparency in governance and during meetings (e.g. through webcasting) could be strengthened. In addition, to have a more clear perspective on local priorities, we recommend setting up regional

spaces for inclusive dialogue. This would have a double impact: giving more substance to the global dialogue process and in the preparation of the next HLM, and encouraging national governments to be more effective in implementing their engagements.

We welcome the proposal for a more strategic approach in regional and global meetings and to appoint champions within the SC to convey key messages and/ or prepare submissions and side events. The political momentum as referred to in the documents can only be upheld if there is strong commitment to joint and voluntary initiatives, as well as preparatory activities on a technical level on specific issues and events, as has been the case with HLM core teams.

How to reconcile 38 voluntary initiatives with ongoing processes and Building Blocks?

We encourage stakeholders of the GPEDC to support the Voluntary Initiative on the 3-year Working Plan of the CPDE as well as the one on CSO Enabling Environment, as proposed by the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness. While we support member-driven voluntary alliances, we also would like to see some of them develop into comprehensive Partnership initiatives. This also entails bringing in the work that is being done in Building Blocks to fill existing capacity gaps between the local and the global through a greater use of energy and resources.

The GPEDC has to demonstrate that it can contribute pro-active and binding policies in line with its principles. A comprehensive programme could evolve around the promotion of Inclusive Development (ID). The first session of the HLM displayed ID as a common core value. The accompanying discussion paper laid out a helpful framework that would need a follow-up in practical terms. Various stakeholder interests could be accommodated under a functional programme that would enhance cooperation and mutual learning.

Monitoring Report: How to improve coverage and depth?

The Global Monitoring report revealed most bottlenecks when it comes to implementation and commitment to the Busan. Not enough countries participated in the data collection process – which is possibly due to its short time frame. Now, more stakeholders of the Partnership should be encouraged to do so. The Korea workshop on “Progress since Busan” is a relevant step forward in encouraging implementation and enhancing knowledge-sharing activities. The creation and support of CSO networks that foster mutual learning and technical cooperation would also be useful.

Civil society organisations feel strongly about the need to improve indicators and data collection. Future discussions and the work on indicators have to be part of a participatory process – which was lacking in-between Busan and Mexico. We therefore look forward to suggestions on how to launch focused efforts. CSOs will continue to press for further progress and bring development effectiveness needs into policy discussions. The Istanbul Principles for CSOs Development Effectiveness will be carried further to ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in activities. For this, an enabling environment and global, regional and local monitoring of standards are most crucial. Therefore, the CPDE stands ready to contribute to improving Indicator 2 of the Global Monitoring Report.

How to balance out the promotion of the Private Sector in development cooperation with the lacking support in fighting against the shrinking space for CSOs?

The space for CSOs is shrinking. Stronger commitments on HRBA, gender equality and enabling environment (EE) are urgently needed but were missing from the HLM. The GPEDC and its members could facilitate the institutionalization of inclusive and democratic multi-stakeholder dialogue at country and regional level. The diversity and independence of CSOs should be strengthened through regulatory and policy frameworks to foster participation in policy debates, investment, and development programmes. The same applies to the adoption of independent human rights complaints mechanisms and the much needed enhancement of the protection of CSOs and human rights defenders, in particular working on gender issues.

Meanwhile, the HLM and the Communiqué are characterized by an unbalanced featuring of the role of the private sector, in particular of multinational enterprises. We understand the difficulty in consolidating vested interests and appreciate the attempt to secure a broad consensus. Notwithstanding, the weak accountability norms on private sector investments and actions – especially when it comes to risk-sharing in Private-Public Partnerships – remain. There seems to be a lack of support for adequate frameworks at country level to ensure respect for internationally agreed social, economic, labour, environmental, gender equality, and development effectiveness standards and democratic ownership. This waters down previous advances made in Busan, Paris and Accra, which should be reinforced. We encourage the Private Sector representatives in the SC to help operationalizing inclusive processes with full public access to project documentation and involvement of affected communities and civil society at large in the planning, design, and implementation and monitoring.

How can the Partnership contribute to the already running Post-2015 process?

If the GPEDC can “maximise the impact of development cooperation” and promote the “relevance of Busan” in the post-2015 process, it would be a value-added to the implementation of the new development goals. For now, the Partnership seems to have not moved beyond rhetoric with no proposal for a roadmap underpinning this goal. From our perspective, a post-2015 implementation strategy needs to entail a rights-based understanding of people as rights-holders and governments as duty-bearers, accountable for their human rights obligations. The GPEDC can be crucial in promoting inclusive, participatory and equitable global multi-stakeholder participation and help forge political commitment for adequate and appropriate “financing for development”. Its effectiveness principles and best practices on enabling environment can play an instrumental role in placing the post-2015 goals and financing on the right track to support communities in Partner countries. This should be promoted with a clear set of messages.

The Joint Meeting with the DCF Advisory Group can help moving towards more policy coherence. The DCF can add to enhancing mutual accountability, given the surveys it has been running for the past 6 years. At the same time, the Partnership has to be prudent to stick to its own principles, as the Busan agenda seems to be absent from UN discussions. CSOs also need to be given a greater role and voice in the post-2015 processes. As mentioned, an accountability mechanism and a programme on ID would give the GPEDC a clear mandate in the vast development policy landscape beyond 2015.