

What should we measure, and how?

Consultations on the Global Partnership Monitoring Exercise

March-May 2021

Background and context

The original vision of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) monitoring exercise was to: (i) drive behaviour change towards more effective development co-operation; and (ii) support global accountability for implementation of Busan commitments. Over three rounds, the Global Partnership [monitoring exercise](#) has generated unique evidence, acting as a key tool for global accountability around effective development co-operation commitments, and is the source of evidence for three SDG targets. While the vision remains valid, the development co-operation and partnership landscape have changed significantly in the past decade. Furthermore, stakeholder feedback suggests that the monitoring exercise has not been implemented such that both its country- and global-level aims have been fully met. Against this backdrop, the Global Partnership has embarked on an [ambitious reform](#) of the monitoring exercise with the aim of ensuring it delivers on its original promise while meeting the evolving needs of its stakeholders and producing evidence relevant to the effectiveness challenges of today. The scope of the reform includes both a review of the framework (“what we measure”) and an improvement of the process (“how we measure”).

In order to guide the reform of the monitoring exercise with the views of stakeholders, the GPEDC Co-Chairs initiated a series of virtual stakeholder consultations in the lead-up to the 21st Steering Committee meeting (7-8 July 2021). These consultations focused primarily on the **monitoring [indicator] framework**,¹ which tracks development actors’ progress on their commitments to more effective development co-operation, in line with the four agreed principles of effective development co-operation: focus on development results, increase partner country ownership, create inclusive partnerships for development, and strengthen transparency and mutual accountability. The aim of the consultations was to gather stakeholders’ views on:

- **how the Global Partnership monitoring framework can better reflect what the effectiveness principles mean to them in today’s context;**
- **how the monitoring framework can better generate evidence that will spur behaviour change, action, and learning.**

Based on the premise endorsed at the [20th Steering Committee](#), that a revised indicator framework needs to more accurately and fully mirror the multi-stakeholder make-up of the Partnership, the Co-Chairs, also drawing on leadership from Steering Committee members, led a **constituency-based² consultation**

¹ A first round of consultations for the reform took place in 2020 and focused on the monitoring process (summary [here](#)).

² During March-May 2021 the Co-Chairs, together with Steering Committee members, led 15 virtual consultations with GPEDC constituencies. Organised by the Joint Support Team, these were, with partner countries (six consultations: organised regionally and with G7+ countries); development partners (five consultations: held with Arab providers, DAC members [two time zones], MDBs, UN entities); civil society; parliaments; trade unions; and philanthropic actors. Monitoring of private sector engagement in development co-operation and the Global Partnership’s Kampala Principles were discussed during some of the 15 consultations

process on the monitoring framework between March-May 2021. This approach helped bring out the diverse views and expectations across stakeholder groups, which are vital to improve the relevance of the monitoring exercise, the evidence it produces, and ensure it resonates widely. Additionally, discussions explored how country-level systems, policies, and co-operation architecture that are important for partnerships to reach their full potential, and should be tracked in a revised monitoring framework. Rather than focus on specific indicators and technical aspects, participants were asked to “take a step back”, to consider how the monitoring framework could be improved from a more strategic and overarching point of view, based on several **reflection points**³:

- the degree to which they [*a given constituency*] are now represented in the monitoring exercise;
- to what extent, and how, they wish to see themselves reflected in a revised monitoring framework;
- what actions they consider most impactful for implementing their respective effectiveness priorities and commitments to the effectiveness principles and that they are willing to be held accountable for;
- to what extent, and how, their priority actions and commitments vary by country context;
- what specifically they will prioritise and could be held accountable for in addressing systemic effectiveness issues⁴;
- what they think other constituencies should be measured against and held accountable for to ensure stakeholder actions continue to be guided by a strengthened accountability mechanism.

The recent consultations on the monitoring framework also addressed some challenges concerning the monitoring process. These issues were discussed specifically in consultations in follow-up to the round of stakeholder consultations on the monitoring process that took place in 2020. These discussions helped gather additional thinking on process-related issues, including possible solutions to these challenges.

This document is a consolidated summary of these consultations, and has been a key input to the Co-Chairs’ [proposal](#) on the reform of the Global Partnership monitoring for discussion at the 21st Steering Committee Meeting. This thematic summary outlines issues raised in the consultations related to 1) improving the monitoring framework, and 2) improving the monitoring process.

Consultation format

Nineteen virtual consultations were held with various stakeholders of the GPEDC between March and May 2021. Each consultation brought together a group from a specific constituency and was facilitated by a consultant⁵. The Co-Chairs oversaw the consultation process with the support of Steering Committee members and participated in the discussions, both as observers and participants [as members of their respective constituencies]. The Joint Support Team (JST) supported the Co-Chairs in framing and providing substantive inputs, as well as in all communications and logistical organisation of the consultations; and attended all discussions.

The following stakeholders participated in the consultations and/or submitted written input⁶:

and complemented by two more focused consultations organised with the Action Area 2.1 multi-stakeholder PSE Working Group, the GPEDC Business Leader Caucus and with a small number of additional experts. Action Area 2.3, led by Colombia, provided input for the contour on monitoring South-South Co-operation (SSC), based on initial findings from piloting work with seven countries, and will organise consultations that will inform the more technical work on monitoring the effectiveness of SSC following the 21st Steering Committee Meeting. Steering Committee members representing sub-national governments proposed to engage their constituency on relevant emerging contours as part of a parallel ongoing process, led by UCLG, to develop a policy paper on *Development Co-operation and Local Government*. An additional two consultations focused on the monitoring process were organised with a small group of, respectively, development partners and non-executive stakeholders.

³ These reflection points were agreed in the 20th Steering Committee meeting.

⁴ Systemic issues refer to the core systems, policies, and co-operation architecture at country-level which facilitate co-ordination, dialogue and mutual accountability, and are fundamental for partnerships to reach their full potential.

⁵ Two consultations were facilitated jointly by the Joint Support Team and Co-Chairs.

⁶ Participants were identified under the guidance of the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee focal points.

Partner Countries: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Benin; Burkina Faso; Cambodia; Central African Republic; Comoros; Colombia; Costa Rica; Cote d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of Congo; Dominican Republic; Fiji; Germany; Guatemala; Republic of Guinea; Haiti; Honduras; Kenya; Lao PDR; Liberia; Malawi; Mauritania; Mozambique; Nepal; Niger; Papua New Guinea; Paraguay; Peru; Philippines; Sao Tome and Principe; Sierra Leone; South Sudan; Sudan; Timor-Leste; Togo; Tonga; Uganda; Vanuatu; Yemen; Zimbabwe.⁷

Development Partners (DPs): Abu Dhabi Fund for Development; Australia; Austria; Belgium; Canada; Finland; Germany; Iceland; Ireland; Korea; New Zealand; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; United States; Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa; Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development; AsDB; European Commission; IADB; IsDB (including ICD); Kuwait Development Fund; Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC Fund; Saudi Fund for Development; UN agencies (IFAD; UN Women; UN FAO; ILO; UNDP; UNEP; UNDCO; UNCDF; UNDESA); World Bank.

Non-executive stakeholders: AidWatch (Canada); TechSoup; CAF America; WINGS; Nepal Center for Philanthropy and Development; Hispanics in Philanthropy; Philanthropy Circuit (Nigeria); Union of Trade Unions (Chad); East African Trade Union Confederation (EATUC); Union Nationale des Syndicats Autonomes du Sénégal (UNSAS, Senegal); Rwanda Workers' Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR, Rwanda); Union nationale des travailleurs du Mali (UNTM, Mali); ITUC-Africa; General Confederation of Labour (CGT-A, Argentina); Argentine Workers' Central Union (CTA-T, Argentina); Unified Workers' Central (CUT, Brazil); Federation of Free Workers (FFW, Philippines); International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC); Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU); parliamentarian representatives (Bangladesh; Canada; Democratic Republic of Congo; Pakistan; Togo; Trinidad and Tobago;); CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) and CPDE-Youth; Action Aid; European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad); Nash Vek (Kyrgyzstan); Reality of Aid; Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (Nigeria); National Association of Youth Associations (NAYO, Zimbabwe); Africa Youth Trust; Council for People's Development and Governance International (CPDG, Philippines); Childolescent And Family Survival Organisation-Women's Rights Action Group for Development (CAFSO-WRAG Nigeria); Lanka Organic Agriculture Movement (Sri Lanka); Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Digital Opportunity Trust; Total Impact Capital; Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry; SAP Government Affairs; MOV Investimentos; Business Call to Action (BCtA).

A promise of anonymity was given for all consultations in order to encourage open discussion; therefore the points below are not attributed to individuals, countries, or institutions/organisations.

⁷ The g7+ Secretariat; the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC); and AUDA-NEPAD also joined respective partner country consultations.

1. Improving the monitoring framework

Assessing the evidence produced by the existing monitoring exercise in providing an accurate and comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of development co-operation

Participants indicated mixed views on the extent to which the monitoring framework provides an accurate and comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of development co-operation. Many participants considered that the monitoring exercise provides useful comparative country-level evidence that can generate peer-learning and behaviour change and further the commitment of stakeholders to the effectiveness principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, some development partners and non-executive stakeholders have included monitoring indicators into their own reporting frameworks.

However, while the monitoring provides useful comparative data on several aspects of development co-operation, many suggested that it falls short on the depth of the information provided. Overall, most constituencies noted that the “quantitative” outlook of [many of the indicators of] the monitoring framework misses out on useful qualitative information that may help assess the drivers of stakeholders’ performance, and the roles of multiple actors in bringing about performance improvements. For example, there were mixed views on the extent to which the indicators relating to country ownership provide information that is relevant to different country contexts. Additionally, for some partner countries and development partners, the framework provides an indication of alignment to partner country development priorities (i.e. national development plans) but could better capture alignment at the implementation level, including by providing more comprehensive information at the project level. Conversely, according to some development partners, the monitoring framework does not provide enough relevant qualitative information to account for differences in the use of country systems across country contexts. More broadly, several constituencies underlined that the current framework does not make explicit linkages between the effectiveness principles and development impact.

For all constituencies, improving transparency and mutual accountability is crucial going forward. All constituencies called for improved information-sharing across all stakeholders. Most constituencies for example mentioned that the monitoring framework could track the extent to which development co-operation data are made readily available and understandable to the general public. On the one hand, partner countries and non-executive stakeholders recalled that access to data at country level from development partners on co-operation funding is extremely important (including for off-budget disbursements), even more so because of gaps and weaknesses in some partner countries’ statistical systems. On the other hand, development partners and non-executive stakeholders mentioned that useful information-sharing from partner countries (such as capacity-building plans; key needs, etc.) would strengthen delivery of development co-operation on the ground. **Mutual and collective accountability also should feature more prominently and strategically in the revised monitoring framework.** Partner countries and non-executive stakeholders, and also a few development partners, asserted that development partners are insufficiently held accountable for delivering on their effectiveness commitments. To change this, they suggested that benchmarks/ratings could help incentivise development partners to deliver better. Conversely, development partners and non-executive stakeholders recalled that partner country governments have a responsibility to deliver on their national priorities, but also in ensuring mutual accountability among various country-level actors – including through institutionalised country-level dialogues - which could be tracked in practice. Non-executive stakeholders and some development partners argued that the framework should track the institutionalisation and use of mutual accountability mechanisms (including anti-corruption measures) along the different stages of effective development co-operation – including implementation.

Constituencies agreed that the revised monitoring framework should continue to track the predictability of aid. Predictability is considered key to support development planning, budgeting and implementation by partner countries, and its importance has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was some convergence regarding ways to overcome limitations of the current monitoring framework: both development partners and some partner countries wish to include additional qualitative information to contextualise development partners' performance, especially when disbursements are delayed or funding commitments unrealised. One development partner offered that the monitoring could also measure the extent to which previous funding commitments have been disbursed, as this would inform where, when and why challenges have occurred. Partner countries also made additional suggestions to refine measures of predictability by distinguishing resources on- and off-government budget and to measure the level of government execution of funds once they are disbursed by development partners. They also remarked that better predictability of aid increases accountability – e.g through budget planning and, in turn, parliamentary oversight.

Capturing alignment with partner countries' development priorities remains paramount for all constituencies, but how it is measured needs further thought. As mentioned by some development partners, alignment is one of the prerequisites to engagement. Some partner countries underlined progress in the alignment of development partners with national strategies, while several development partners and partner countries called for more upstream dialogue to enhance a shared understanding of national priorities and facilitate alignment thereafter. In practice, the framework could for example capture the extent to which development partners engage with partner country governments at the strategic level, and support multi-stakeholder national dialogue prior to the formulation of national results frameworks.

For most constituencies tracking **alignment with government priorities is necessary but not sufficient** and at times misrepresents shifting policy priorities on the ground (e.g. in fragile contexts). Development partners noted that capturing alignment could be extended to partners beyond the government. For instance, capturing alignment of the private sector with national results frameworks (and more broadly, alignment of development objectives and business interests) was raised as a key consideration looking ahead (see also paragraph on private sector).

The use of country systems remains an important commitment across constituencies. Questions were raised by some on whether the revised monitoring framework should embrace a broader understanding of how country systems are defined and how to track their use. While partner countries and development partners agree that the monitoring framework would benefit from more country-specific information on the use of country systems in various contexts, their proposals differ. Some partner countries and development partners suggested to tailor and/or develop specific indicators to country contexts (e.g fragile countries). Other development partners and partner countries stressed that the monitoring should capture both the extent to which development partners strengthen *and* use country systems.⁸ Development partners, on the other hand, considered that the framework is missing a measure to account for the varying robustness of country-level systems across partner countries.

Upholding country ownership by untying aid was also raised by several constituencies. Participants expressed different views, including among development partners, as to how untied aid – and its various forms – could be best tracked under the revised framework. For example, some CSOs suggested to expand this measurement to capture aid that is formally untied but, through procurement processes, is disbursed to donor country-based companies.

Constituencies also pointed to the need to improve the reliability and coverage of the data produced by the monitoring exercise. This is due in part to the lack of available information as a result of the uneven level of participation by partner countries and development partners (especially when the latter are do not have a presence at country level). Additionally, the absence or limited entry points of other important non-governmental actors - undermines the collection of comprehensive monitoring data. Most constituencies, including partner countries, development partners and civil society organisations (CSOs), also agreed that another issue is the quality of the information collected. However, constituencies diverged to some extent

⁸ For development partners and partner countries alike, the revised monitoring framework could draw from existing rankings of donor performance developed in several partner countries.

when assessing the reasons behind this shortcoming. Partner countries pointed to the lack of information-sharing and difficulty in obtaining information from development partners; some development partners underlined that unreliable data arises from inconsistencies in reporting time-periods as well as reporting standards across development partners and partner countries; and non-executive stakeholders criticised the opacity of both development partners and partner countries as well as the lack of robust country systems to collect and process data.

Monitoring the inclusiveness and range of development co-operation better

Consultations underlined that the new monitoring framework must live up to a number of strategic expectations. On the one hand, several participants among partner countries and development partners recalled that **some important Pre-Busan commitments are not currently tracked in the monitoring exercise** – including issues of harmonisation, donor co-ordination, and joint planning, the absence of which impedes the delivery of effective development co-operation. On the other hand, **all constituencies agree that the monitoring framework will remain relevant only if it better reflects the evolution of the development landscape** since the landmark 2011 Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan. To varying degrees, stakeholders suggested that the monitoring framework insufficiently reflects the diversity of actors (and their distinct roles and modalities for co-operation); partnerships; financial flows and aid modalities; country contexts (in particular fragile ones); all of which impact the picture presented by the monitoring exercise of the progress on implementing the effectiveness principles.

First, the monitoring could capture a broader range of finance flows and co-operation modalities. Participants noted that Official Development Assistance (ODA) is shrinking as a proportion of wider development finance flows and that the monitoring framework might be providing *more and more about less and less*. Improving the relevance of the monitoring requires better capturing how development co-operation is disbursed today. Some development partners suggested that the monitoring framework should include the effectiveness of bilateral support to and through the multilateral system based on good donorship practices, for example as related to the provision of core or earmarked funding. Other development partners cautioned that this could shift the original country-level focus of the monitoring exercise and possibly be duplicative of other existing international frameworks. For some partner countries too, tracking a more comprehensive set of development co-operation flows would make the monitoring framework relevant across both lower-income to middle-income countries and potentially help to address some of the different effectiveness challenges they face. Other suggestions included capturing budget support; as well as flows that are not targeted at/channelled through the public sector (CSOs, private sector, etc.). In particular, it was suggested across constituencies to better document the effectiveness of the different modalities used under private sector engagement (i.e. blended finance), though reporting on private flows may pose specific challenges. In addition, several constituencies recalled that the monitoring exercise should continue to expand its global reach, including to capture co-operation from Southern providers and in dual-role countries, to reflect how the effectiveness principles relate to the principles and practices of South-South Co-operation.

Second, constituencies agreed that the monitoring should capture a broader ‘whole-of-society’ picture of effective development co-operation at the country level. For many, this reflects the multi-stakeholder nature of the Global Partnership and would help strengthen the monitoring exercise as a driver of, and platform for, inclusive dialogue at country level. However, many also recognised that the ‘whole-of-society’ approach is not well reflected in the existing indicators, which disproportionately focus on the roles and commitments of partner country governments and traditional development partners.⁹

⁹ In addition to the various stakeholders detailed below, several constituencies also suggested to also foster and track partnerships with academia and research institutes; as well as to maintain dialogue with Southern providers to discuss possible entry points.

There was general agreement among stakeholders to retain and/or strengthen the inclusion in the monitoring framework of:

- **“Whole-of-government”**: while all stakeholders recognised the lead role partner country governments play in improving the effectiveness of development co-operation, some development partners would see value in the monitoring capturing their engagement with sectoral ministries, as well as better highlighting the co-ordinating role of the government in effective development co-operation efforts.
- **Sub-national governments**: most constituencies underlined that given the various stages of decentralisation in partner countries, the framework should better reflect engagement with sub-national levels of government. For instance, the monitoring could include development partners’ alignment with sub-national priorities. Conversely, the framework could also track the co-ordinating role of partner country governments *vis-a-vis* sub-national actors’ development co-operation priorities. More broadly, the monitoring could reflect how/the degree to which development partners/actors structure their co-operation in line with partner countries’ relevant policies, mechanisms, and co-operation structures based on the type of government system .
- **Private sector**: There was a high level of agreement that business has an increasing role in the financing of SDGs, which is inadequately reflected in the framework and could be enhanced.
 - Constituencies welcomed drawing on the Kampala Principles to better track private sector engagement in development co-operation. While all principles matter to effective development co-operation and need to be reflected in their essence, it was suggested that at this stage the GPEDC could prioritise those most conducive to behaviour change, such as focus on results and development impact, leave no one behind (LNOB) and transparency.¹⁰ It was suggested to further explore how monitoring the Principles could relate to existing areas of Global Partnership monitoring, including national development co-operation strategies, mutual accountability, co-ordination and dialogue, the oversight role of parliaments, and/or untied aid. For example, development partners offered to track their support for an enabling environment for businesses to engage in development co-operation; and track whether development actors have a strategy/policy on private sector engagement in place. This initial exploration is aimed at determining whether aspects of the Principles should be tracked as stand-alone indicator or integrated across the revised framework.
 - Guidance from the consultations also suggested improvements to the current tracking of private sector engagement and the quality of public-private dialogue. While maintaining a focus on dialogue,¹¹ it was suggested that the new monitoring approach could be simplified and adapted to focus on inclusive dialogue and learning among all key actors on the qualitative aspects of private sector partnerships. Several non-executive stakeholders offered to be involved in this dialogue in order to enhance the transparency of development co-operation flows and hold the private sector more accountable. The new monitoring approach could also address alignment to host governments’ development priorities, simplifying donor procedures when collaborating with businesses at country level, and have a greater focus on results and impact for workers and beneficiaries of development co-operation.
- **Civil society**: There was widespread support to continue measuring the engagement of CSOs in the effectiveness agenda, especially given that concerns in the face of the shrinking civic space in many countries. CSOs (as well as philanthropic actors) advocated for a greater representation of their broad portfolios across various dimensions of the framework. Some CSOs supported including measures related to youth in the revised monitoring framework. Development partners also suggested to track their support to build CSOs’ capacities in partner countries.

¹⁰ Kampala Principle no. 2 on *Results and targeted impact* - Realising sustainable development outcomes through mutual benefits; no. 4 on *Transparency and accountability* - Measuring and disseminating sustainable development results for learning and scaling up of successes; and no. 5: *Leave No One Behind* - Recognising, sharing and mitigating risks for all partners.

¹¹ This is reflected in Kampala Principle no. 3 on *inclusive partnership* - Fostering trust through inclusive dialogue and consultation

- **Philanthropic actors:** There was broad support to increase their representation in the framework. Philanthropic actors suggested that they could be held more accountable on their commitments to the principles of alignment (ensuring that their programmes fit partner countries' priorities); ownership (ensuring due diligence when working with local partners; and providing support to build local partners' capacities); and inclusiveness. Pointing to the shrinking civic space in many partner countries, philanthropic actors also offered a refined understanding of what an enabling environment entails, in particular related to the conditions that enable them to exist, to grow, and to focus on delivering impact, all of which could be tracked under the monitoring framework.
- **Trade unions:** Strengthening the representation and engagement of trade unions in the monitoring was raised. While trade unions considered that the monitoring framework does not reflect adequately their priorities and concerns – enhancing social dialogue among others - they considered it could nonetheless provide an opportunity to improve mutual accountability in partner countries. It was emphasised that the limited representation of trade unions in the monitoring framework adds to their low inclusion in country-level dialogues on development co-operation, which the COVID-19 pandemic and shrinking of civic space in many countries, have only aggravated. Trade unions expressed interest to feature more prominently in the framework by measuring the actions they take to fulfil the SDGs; their efforts to improve collective accountability (in particular of the private sector), as well as to use monitoring results.
- **Parliaments:** parliamentary representatives mentioned that they have limited oversight over development co-operation in both donor and recipient countries. They pointed to several aspects of their role that could be relevant to reflect in the monitoring framework, such as in budgeting (including by creating independent parliamentary budget offices), or to a lesser extent, in parliamentary committees and in development planning.

However, it was recognised that while it is important for the monitoring framework to be inclusive of new partners, it is as important to hold all actors to account. There was some convergence among stakeholders that the monitoring could reflect the extent to which partner countries put in place legal/regulatory frameworks to involve citizens, private sector and civil society (among others) in development co-operation policy-making, and the extent to which they succeed in engaging these actors through formal partnerships (i.e. national dialogues for planning and monitoring), as well as the role of development partners to support these processes. While partner countries and development partners considered that all actors should be held accountable for acting in accordance with the effectiveness principles, a number of constituencies, in particular among non-executive stakeholders, emphasised that private sector actors could be prioritised given their increasing importance in financing the SDGs and providing some non-executive stakeholders (philanthropic actors and CSOs in particular) with the means to operate in partner countries. Development partners suggested a more differentiated monitoring of private sector and CSOs' activities against the effectiveness principles - for example, while non-executive stakeholders could be required to follow the same reporting standards as governments for certain areas of the framework (e.g indicators related to a focus on results) their monitoring should be differentiated in others (e.g indicators on ownership). Furthermore, tracking the commitment of non-executive stakeholders to effective development co-operation should take stock of already existing international frameworks.

There was also agreement that all actors should use the monitoring results to change their behaviour and that it could be explored whether the monitoring framework could track if and how monitoring results are used, and to what end. For several partner countries and non-executive stakeholders, accountability beyond government-to-government co-operation is key and should include non-executive stakeholders which stakeholders suggested often engage directly with development partners. It was suggested that the monitoring framework could reflect whether these actors' strategies and development interventions align with those of the government, and the extent to which they share data with other actors, especially partner country governments. For example, philanthropic actors recognised that as their reporting is by and large voluntary, they could make data more systematically available to their working partners, including partner country governments.

Relatedly, **most constituencies agreed that reflecting the whole-of-society approach in the monitoring framework is one way to better capture the commitment to *leave no one behind* (LNOB).** Several stakeholders reasserted the importance of continuing to include (and potentially expand) the element on gender in the monitoring framework. **Although most stakeholders agree that LNOB is insufficiently reflected in the existing monitoring framework, most agree that more thinking is needed to revise the framework to capture this more adequately.** Cautious of adding complexity to the framework and of duplicating what some development partners are already tracking, development partners in particular suggested to either mainstream LNOB across the entire framework (by examining whether for key indicators/elements of the framework, all relevant stakeholders do target first and foremost the most vulnerable) or to develop a standalone LNOB indicator. As mentioned above, private sector representatives also proposed to prioritise the monitoring of the LNOB-related Kampala Principle.

Monitoring the effectiveness of development co-operation in different country contexts

There was a high degree of agreement that the revised monitoring framework should continue to provide evidence to drive global accountability (by providing a global picture), while also generating evidence that is relevant and usable in different country contexts (which also supports accountability). There was strong support across development partners, partner countries and non-executive stakeholders to consider in the revised monitoring framework the different development trajectories of countries, especially fragile ones. Overall, rather than developing a separate set of indicators for various country contexts, **most participants thought that the framework could look to generate comparable and reliable data but also aim to refine/adapt indicators to better provide context-specific information.**

For development partners and partner countries the monitoring could provide a more nuanced understanding of country systems, and their use, in fragile contexts. Measuring development partners' support to improve systems and processes is relevant in fragile contexts as these systems often require strengthening to use available development co-operation efficiently and generate reliable data. For development partners, it would also be useful to be able to report on where and when they have used country systems in fragile contexts, and how they have adapted their delivery modalities in different situations thereof. For some partner countries, the monitoring could go deeper to consider the resource and capacity challenges they face, specifically related to development co-operation, and taking into account the various shapes of country systems across fragile contexts.

For partner countries that identify as fragile, tracking alignment and mutual accountability remains a priority. For these countries, alignment with key country priorities is critical to ensure effective development co-operation. Alignment remains however often difficult to track by partner country governments, especially when support does not come through government channels (see paragraph on alignment). For some development partners, the monitoring could provide a more nuanced assessment of alignment in fragile contexts, as monitoring results may misrepresent their efforts to support important policy priorities that are not included in country results frameworks formulated by national governments (whose authority/representation of citizens' interests may be contested). Constituencies however converged around the idea that increasing alignment and improving transparency go hand-in-hand in particular in fragile contexts. Increasing information-sharing would help partner countries understand where and how development actors are active, while it would also enable development partners to better understand – and align with - the shifting policy priorities of partner country governments. Some development partners also underlined that the monitoring framework could make them more accountable, especially in the most vulnerable contexts, by measuring efforts to improve donor co-ordination and reduce aid fragmentation.

Additionally, **several constituencies discussed the monitoring framework in the context of building synergies along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.** In particular, it was suggested that fragile contexts challenge the effectiveness of development partners' engagement and it could be useful for the

monitoring to potentially reflect to what extent development co-operation in fragile contexts is mobilised effectively, including by humanitarian, non-governmental and/or multilateral/multistakeholder initiatives. Some partner countries went further and underlined that development co-operation results frameworks alone cannot reflect the development efforts given how interlinked these are with reforms of the security sector, or how the effectiveness principles could apply when addressing humanitarian crises. In addition, several participants stressed that strengthening linkages between the monitoring exercise and the SDGs should also be considered in the context of fragile contexts i.e by tracking development partners' support to peace-building and state-building processes.

Consultations raised other considerations on the need to tailor the monitoring framework to various country contexts. Broadly, the monitoring needs to reflect to what degree development actors structure their co-operation in line with the relevant policies, mechanisms, and systems of the countries in which they operate. The monitoring could also better reflect country-specific challenges, such as climate change in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), or sub-national engagement on effective development co-operation in decentralised partner countries.

Monitoring improvements to national development co-operation systems and processes of partner countries and actions to address systemic issues¹²

There was broad agreement among constituencies that use of country-level systems is a priority. Partner countries, as well as some development partners, welcomed an emphasis on the monitoring of the *use*, rather than the support, to country-level systems. For development partners, a related issue is that the current monitoring framework lacks any measure of the technical support mobilised to strengthen country systems and does not hold development partners to account to explain why they have or have not used country systems. Some participants raised that the understanding of what is included as a country-level systems and processes under the current monitoring framework is too narrow. The current monitoring framework is focused on public financial management and procurement systems and some development partners consider that this is helpful to avoid that they support multiple or incoherent systems. However, the monitoring framework could better capture other important features such as partner country systems for strategy development, program planning, management, monitoring and reporting (and information management systems more broadly), evaluation, as well as development partners' support to those through technical co-operation. Building on concerns around the lack of mutual information-sharing and data reliability, there was in particular widespread support across **constituencies to track the strengthening and use of partner country data and statistical systems.** This included holding both partner countries and development partners accountable for this endeavour, while several non-executive stakeholders also committed to be held accountable for contributing credible data to national systems.

Most constituencies supported the idea that measuring support to, and use of, country-level systems and processes should reflect a “whole-of-society” approach. Several partner countries highlighted ongoing national dialogues (including with CSOs and private sector) to strengthen domestic partnerships for development. Development partners and some non-executive stakeholders also argued that the monitoring should capture not only the extent to which development partners use/participate in country-level systems and processes for development co-operation, but also how they support the participation of other actors (civil society, private sector, etc.) in them. Tracking this inclusiveness of country systems and processes could take place at country level as well as upstream in the country-specific strategies of development partners. Similarly, CSOs wished to open up government-driven country-level systems and processes to other stakeholders, and track the extent to which various actors are engaged in budget formulation, national audit processes, procurement, etc.

¹² Systemic issues refer to the core systems, policies, and co-operation architecture which facilitate co-ordination, dialogue and mutual accountability, and are fundamental for partnerships to reach their full potential.

2. Improving the monitoring process

Participants' insights on how to improve the monitoring process also emerged during the consultations on the framework, during which there was a focused effort to seek inputs from partner countries on the monitoring process. In addition to consultations on the process in 2020 to identify the main issues and challenges, two follow-up consultations were organised in May 2021 with development partners and non-executives. These consultations provided an opportunity to dig deeper into the priority issues (see Figure 1) concerning the constituencies as well as allowing for discussion on all process-related issues encompassing the monitoring exercise.

The following summary includes views from all constituencies, including partner countries from a combination of sources, counting discussions on the monitoring process integrated into the six [partner country] consultations focusing on the framework during March-May 2021, as well as from previously existing inputs such as the 2020 consultations and the exit survey with National Co-ordinators following the 2018 round.

Figure 1: Issues A by main constituency



Streamlining and simplifying the monitoring exercise

All constituencies supported streamlining and simplifying the monitoring process to facilitate better ownership of the exercise by partner countries, and to incentivise participation of diverse actors. This would entail reducing, or at least avoiding increasing, the complexity of the framework, even while anticipating the possible inclusion of new actors in the revised framework. Stakeholder inputs, received across the consultative processes, have called for simplification of data collection in a way that retains data comparability, is balanced with requests for the monitoring to provide more qualitative information to better explain results and promotes inclusive dialogue to facilitate the use of results. Another important suggestion was to simplify and improve the accessibility of monitoring tools and materials.

Addressing gaps in development partners' engagement in the process and providing more customised support to partner countries and their partners

Many stakeholders agreed that partner countries - in particular those with limited capacities and/or contending with fragility - would benefit from more tailored support and clearer guidelines on how to collaborate with different stakeholders to participate fully in the exercise. This would include more support and guidance (in the form of capacity building and increased resources), to understand better what is needed in the data collection and validation phases of the exercise. This would not only help improve the reliability of data but also provide a clearer understanding of the broader monitoring exercise at a more strategic level. Development partners raised concerns as to ensuring the support provided does not hinder the country-led focus and ownership of the exercise. Partner countries raised the need for development partners to provide more timely information in the preparation phase of the exercise. Suggestions were made for more effective collaboration between HQ and country offices as well as for specific focal points or external support at country level to support partner country governments to co-ordinate the process, but also that support is needed for other stakeholders (parliaments, trade unions, philanthropic actors and their local implementing partners, etc.) to prepare for and participate in the monitoring exercise. At the global level, these other stakeholders also would benefit from external support, which would help improve

communication, build momentum, reduce transaction costs throughout the exercise and have a stronger impact on behaviour change following the exercise.

Use of results and linking evidence to behaviour change

Stakeholders agreed that while the monitoring exercise and the associated products are useful i.e. the Global Partnership online monitoring dashboard and its related products (country profiles and global progress reports), there is an urgent need to use the results better and more effectively. Constituencies noted that this could be due to the lack of accountability on the use of results or limited official recommendations or follow-up once the monitoring is complete.

Equally important, most discussions raised the issue of better linking evidence to action. Some development partners and partner countries argued that a different level of reporting – i.e. regional – could also give the monitoring exercise more leverage. Partner countries and development partners underlined that political leadership and buy-in is key to support the National Co-ordinator and relevant bodies at country-level (e.g. other ministries that have a role in development co-operation), to roll out the exercise and to encourage stakeholders to use the results across levels of government. Some constituencies suggested that a dedicated, country-specific action plan and/or roadmap is needed following the completion of the monitoring exercise, in order to enhance use of results. Some partner countries have undertaken this process, not only including elements at country level but at the regional/global level to boost more open knowledge sharing, behaviour change and to share their progress on the effectiveness commitments. This in turn requires that quality data is shared among all stakeholders, especially between and by development partners, non-executives and partner country governments, and that all relevant actors are included in the process.

Institutionalisation of the monitoring process

Several stakeholders have emphasised that the use of monitoring results, to drive behaviour change, is more easily facilitated if this voluntary exercise is embedded in country-level processes and systems. While the availability of periodic data is useful, several constituencies underlined that flexibility and more time to conduct the exercise¹³ could help institutionalise the process at the country level, by (i) reducing time inconsistencies between the monitoring exercise and domestic processes (such as for national planning and review); (ii) allocating time to adequately inform and prepare all stakeholders through induction and validation workshops – building on successful past experiences; and (iii) building synergies with other domestic and global processes (budgeting, Voluntary National Reviews,¹⁴ etc.). Such efforts to institutionalise the process at the country level would also need to be balanced with the need to continue to maintain and further strengthen global political momentum for effective development co-operation. Stakeholders reiterated that increased political leadership could favour a ‘whole-of-government’ and ‘whole-of-society’ uptake of the monitoring exercise.

Varied views emerged among partner countries as to the domestic institutional set-up needed to successfully engage in the monitoring exercise. Considering the challenging country contexts and inadequate development co-operation architecture in some countries, suggestions were made to adopt a flexible approach to country-level institutionalisation of the exercise. These included designating a focal ministry rather than a focal point to co-ordinate inputs across stakeholders; naming several focal points across various government ministries and agencies; underlining the need for a dedicated monitoring and evaluation unit to co-ordinate the process across the government; and engaging with senior levels of government, all of which should help address the issue of staff turnover between monitoring exercises.

¹³ See the analytical paper on the [occurrence](#) of the monitoring exercise.

¹⁴ See the analytical paper on the monitoring and [linkages to the 2030 Agenda](#).

Inclusiveness of the monitoring process (whole-of-society approach)

Improving the use of the monitoring results can also help increase the participation of all stakeholders, by advocating for monitoring data to be included in national plans and dialogues. Strengthening the engagement of non-executive stakeholders in the follow-up phase concerning use of results to promote behaviour change, was also raised in the follow-up consultations on the monitoring process. It was noted that for several constituencies – such as parliaments, philanthropic actors, trade unions, and sub-national governments – the monitoring exercise either provides few entry points or is not understood well enough to incentivise their participation. For more seasoned monitoring participants such as CSOs, governments are the drivers of an inclusive process and have the responsibility to engage all actors in the process. The importance of institutionalising the monitoring exercise at the country level to incentivise wider participation was also highlighted. Stakeholders called for strengthening capacities and ensuring the consistent involvement of country-level focal points identified (by global-level constituency leads) among different development actor groups. At the end of the day, all constituencies recognised that the monitoring exercise provides an important platform for inclusive dialogue at the country level on effective development co-operation.