

High-level dialogue on Linking Istanbul Plan of Action with Post-2015 Development Framework

8 May 2013
Hotel Annapurna, Kathmandu

Background Note

Background

The 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is fast approaching. Amid the possibility of many of the MDGs being unmet by the deadline, and also to take care of the challenges facing the world today, MDGs are going to be continued beyond 2015 in one form or the other. There are several initiatives going on at the national, regional and international levels to devise a development agenda for the post-2015 landscape.

The MDG approach for development is lauded for its simple framework with limited goals and targets that are measurable in many instances. With the core focus on poverty reduction, MDGs have been partly successful in that they have played an important role, among others, in getting countries focus on national development efforts and making development strategies more results-oriented. However, they are also criticized for not fully reflecting national priorities, and at times emphasizing the quantity of outputs over the quality and sustainability of outcomes.

Devising the post-2015 development agenda offers an opportunity to contemplate on the strengths of MDGs to devise more inclusive development approaches for addressing the pressing development challenges of our time. It is undoubtedly important for any such development agenda to further the progress made on the three pillars of sustainable development—economic development, social development and environmental sustainability, while keeping poverty eradication at its core. The issues pertaining to “human capital formation”—such as health and education—should be continued, while it is high time the new issues, for example, “technology” and “migration” be given rightful space. At the same time, it is important to cater the special needs of the developing world, especially the vulnerable countries.

Countries with special development needs

It is being discussed in the development circle that the post-2015 development agenda should give special attention to the concerns and issues of the vulnerable countries, mainly the least-developed countries (LDCs), where poverty is pervasive and deep-rooted. That includes not just focusing on their human and social development, but also enhancing their productive capacity to ensure their meaningful participation in the global economy.

The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the LDCs drawn up for the decade 2011-2020 during the Fourth UN Conference on the LDCs, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 9-13 May 2011 lists out the strategies for the sustainable development of LDCs. The goals and objectives set-out by the IPoA focus on reducing vulnerabilities of LDCs by tackling the problems that include food security, energy, economic crises and climate change, with a strong focus on structural transformation through increasing productive capacity. The IPoA also aims at generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, particularly for the youth.

The overarching goal of the IPoA is intertwined with the MDGs in that it envisages overcoming the structural challenges faced by the LDCs through poverty eradication, and also aims at achieving sustained, equitable and inclusive economic growth in LDCs at least at a level of seven percent per annum. By doing so, it aims at enabling the graduation of half of the LDCs from the LDC status. The role of the international community in realizing IPoA—that includes the UN system, international and regional financial institutions, donor countries, developing countries, parliaments, the private sector and the civil society—has been put on the forefront by the IPoA.

Concurrently, MDG Goal 8 calls for a global partnership in making MDG a reality. Barring some exceptions, the rich countries have not fulfilled their commitment of providing 0.7 percent of their gross national income as official development assistance to poor countries. The commitment of rich countries in helping poor countries overcome their financial and technological needs, and increase their share in international trade by providing special support measures, have not been fulfilled due, among others, to the non-binding nature of the commitments and a lack of objective criteria for the measurement of progress. Complying with these and similar other commitments should be strongly reemphasized in the new development framework. Moreover, the goal on global partnership should be devised through proper assessment of the resource requirements of poor countries, and gaps in aid commitments and disbursements should be bridged. In doing so, the IPoA and its initiatives so far should be given due consideration.

The high-level dialogue

To translate the post-2015 vision into a reality, it is imperative to obtain the commitment and ownership of national governments to adopt the ongoing review process of the MDGs. In that regard, local think tanks can provide independent analysis to inform national policy from a global perspective, and encourage their governments to move in this direction. Moreover, while think tanks in the North are already playing that role, those in the South should also leverage this opportunity to make the voices of the poor and the vulnerable heard in the post-2015 development agenda formulation process.

SAWTEE is organizing a high-level dialogue on 8 May 2013 to put forward the concerns of the LDCs in general and South Asian LDCs in particular in the post-2015 development framework in line with the IPoA. The dialogue shall bring together experts, government officials, academics, practitioners, media personnel and various other stakeholders to provide inputs to be included in the post-2015 development landscape. It is also hoped that the high-level dialogue would provide some concrete recommendations, which could be submitted to the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

Date and venue

The high-level dialogue will take place on 8 May 2013 at Hotel Annapurna, Durbarmarga, Kathmandu, Nepal.

[For further information, please contact:](#)

Mr. Asish Subedi

Programme Officer

SAWTEE

Tel: +977 1 4444438, 4424360

Fax: +977 1 4444570

Email: asish.subedi@sawtee.org