

Post-2015 – Opportunities for EU-12 CSOs

Briefing Paper, May 2012

This paper is intended primarily for civil society organisations (CSOs) dealing with international development. It aims to encourage national post-2015 consultations in the New EU Member States (EU-12, which joined EU after 2004) and their subsequent involvement in EU-wide consultations, while bringing in specific experiences and points of view. It builds on the [Conference Advancing Beyond 2015](#) (further referred as Conference) held by TRIALOG and FoRS in Prague on 24 April 2012 not only for the EU-12, but also for the [Accession, Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries](#).

What is the current debate on MDGs?

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) established the first, simple global framework for development aid and have dominated policy documents and plans of both donors and partner countries since. The MDGs have brought enormous support from numerous stakeholders, including governments and civil society, and helped to improve lives of millions of men, women and children (see the last [MDG report](#)).

Nevertheless, this progress has been uneven. While in Eastern Asia, especially China, poverty has been reduced significantly, other regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa lag behind. The most vulnerable groups, i.e. the poorest of the poor and disadvantaged, women and girls and those living in crises, have not been reached effectively. Disparities also remain between urban and rural areas. While focusing on outputs, rather than long-term effects, interventions have often had dubious impact and sustainability.

Since the MDGs were first agreed, the distribution of power, poverty and inequality across the world has shifted dramatically and so has the international development debate. Many of the world's poorest now live in middle income economies, climate change threatens much of the progress that has been achieved and inequality has deepened significantly.

In 2012, governments, facing continuous, multiple crisis and need for reforms in different public sectors, have globally cut development aid as per OECD/DAC and have become more pragmatic to global development issues, focusing on their own prosperity and safety.

Further, emerging donors including China, India, Brazil, Russia and the Middle East countries play an

increasingly important role in international development – they develop infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa, buy land and import food and raw materials from this region and focus on economic growth, while often failing to address poverty, social and economic sustainability at home.

With the MDGs' deadline approaching fast, the focus is not only on their delivery, but also on a new post-2015 development framework. Despite the progress in many areas, the MDGs are unlikely to be fully achieved. However, in terms of their international recognition, the MDGs have achieved a great success and this momentum should not be lost.

To ensure a successful and meaningful participative process, governments, multi-national organisations and civil societies across the world are coming together to discuss and formulate a vision of a post-2015 development framework in advance of the UN MDG Summit planned for September 2013.

Why should the EU-12 be involved in the post-2015 debate?

The EU-12 countries were aid recipients just a decade back and have just lately become emerging donors. Their fresh transitional experience, strong focus on human rights and democracy, jointly with close relations with Eastern Neighbourhood and other countries are an added value that they can bring to the post-2015 debate.

The MDGs are still not very well known in their general public and are often perceived by governments as mere obligations. In any case, CSO representatives at the Conference revealed that 10 countries planned at least national consultations on the post-2015 framework and 6 others considered the same.

The MDGs influence policies and strategies of multi-lateral institutions and the development agendas of

national governments. They are also an important part of awareness raising, development education, policy and advocacy work undertaken by CSOs. By setting priorities and providing earmarked funding, donors also influence CSOs' priorities on the ground.

So it is crucial not to leave it as a top-down process and influence the post-2015 framework before it is set!

What are the current principles of the post-2015 framework?

The International [Beyond 2015](#) campaign has highlighted essential must-haves for the post-2015 process: leadership, legitimacy, substance and accountability. It underlines that post-2015 consultations must be participatory, inclusive of all stakeholders and responsive, especially to most vulnerable communities. The main principles mentioned at the conference in Prague follow.

New players, especially big corporations with strong global influence, need to be taken into consideration while talking about development in general and the new framework in particular. At the same time, global civil society needs to be strengthened as an owner of the process and a watchdog.

Before setting up the framework, root cause and context analyses of poverty and inequalities need to be undertaken, including political, social, economic, environmental and other aspects so that root causes are properly tackled by a future framework

No geographic focus has yet been determined for the post-2015 development consensus. Still, conference participants thought it should be global since it is relevant to everybody. They welcomed the opportunity to look beyond divisions, such as rich-poor or developed-developing, and underlined that the framework should be tailored to national and regional realities according to the local civil society and its organisations.

Further, the framework should be "people-centred" and "action-oriented" towards vulnerable communities (in line with the human rights-based approach).

Democratic and responsible governance is another overarching principle, together with predictability, transparency and sustainability. Mutual accountability is important rather than donor-focused reporting. Sanctions of governments not fulfilling agreements were not seen as very effective and enabling, but all stressed the importance of having a binding framework.

With respect to the form of the framework, Conference participants preferred a simple framework with both quantitative and qualitative outcome **indicators** for post-2015 goals. Methodologies, clear action plans, milestones and evaluations are needed and so is a central database with all key data.

What are the potential themes and approaches?

As the world has changed since 2000, new themes need to be considered and development should be treated in a more holistic way. It is increasingly believed that the main objective of the framework should not only be eradicating poverty, but also reducing inequality and exclusion. Below are some selected ideas for post-2015 framework identified at the Conference.

1) Development Effectiveness

Development effectiveness promotes sustainable change, within a democratic framework, that addresses the root causes as well as the symptoms of poverty, inequality and marginalization, through diverse and complement instruments, policies and actors.

[Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness](#) (2011) and [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#) (2012) provide a useful guidance for empowering the roles of CSOs in setting people-centered development that brings sustainable and transparent results for all citizens.

Istanbul Principles

1. Respect and promote human rights and social justice
2. Embody gender equality and equity while promoting women and girl's rights
3. Focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation
4. Promote environmental sustainability
5. Practice transparency and accountability
6. Pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity
7. Create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning
8. Commit to realising positive sustainable changes

Further, development effectiveness reflects the need to foster enabling environment (in which CSOs operate). It needs to be based on democratic ownership and active inclusiveness; coordination, facilitation, capacity building and mutual support; country level and concrete themes. CSO Partnership must include accountability for development

results (behaviour change and long-term impacts), and effective monitoring and evaluation systems. For more information, contact Daniel Svoboda, engaged in the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness, available at svoboda@dww.cz.

2) Human rights

Human rights should be considered both as a tool and as a goal of development.

The human rights-based approach (HRBA) as a tool generally holds powerful people and institutions accountable for their responsibilities to those with less power. Rights-based programmes support rights-holders, especially the poor, powerless and discriminated-against, to claim their rights from duty-bearers, be it access to potable water, land or quality education.

The advantage of HRBA is that human rights are universally agreed upon and binding for governments, donors and civil society. The HRBA uses this legitimacy and authority, builds participation and empowers disadvantaged groups to tackle root causes of their situation and achieve justice, equality and freedom. The conference participants concluded that rights-holders (i.e. all citizens) need to be more included in awareness raising and planning.

Human rights and democracy in the EU-12 are often promoted as specific goals for their development policies and as their added value especially while transferring transitional experiences to non-democratic countries. At the same time, human rights, as set by the [UN Charter](#), are interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Thus specific local contexts need to be taken into account while addressing human rights.

For more information, see e. g. the Integration of the human-rights-based approach into development policies: A guide for the new EU Member States. A reflection of FoRS on human rights in the Czech development policy is available [here](#). You can contact: Aurele Destree from the HRBA task-force of CONCORD at destree@glopolis.org.

3) Human security and securitability

LAPAS, the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation, stressed that people need to feel safe in order to see opportunities rather than threats and develop security strategies rather than disengage and feel helpless.

“Securitability” (resilience) is applicable to any disadvantaged community, not only in conflict prone areas.

To operationalise human security:

1. ASK the population
2. Analyse subjective and objective resilience
3. Identify and work with threats
4. Identify and work with securitability factors
5. Help individuals develop security strategies
6. Work in security constellations

One way of strengthening the factors is to look at the role of the potential security providers in circles around a person: himself/herself; family; friends; community; local government, national government etc. The security factors can include individual characteristics, positive close relations, predictable and sufficient income, the ability to network, or the ability to trust and cooperate with local communities or intergovernmental organisations. The role of CSOs as well as authorities and governments is then to help develop security strategies and create security constellations

Human security and “securitability” may be a EU Presidency theme of LAPAS in 2015. It can also serve as a different perspective to the post-2015 framework. For more information, contact: Mara Simane, the lead author of the [Latvia Report 2002-2003 on Human Security](#), at simane@lapas.lv.

4) Other themes

Sustainable development, reflecting the Rio+20 Summit, is perceived as another key perspective. It includes themes such as climate change, energy, food security as well as social and economic aspects of “development beyond aid” and gender mainstreaming.

The Conference participants believe that CSOs, having global responsibility, should create a **multi-stakeholder dialogue** and mobilize diverse actors for the same cause, from media to public, trade unions and government in order to achieve policy changes, such as the European agriculture reform (CAP) which would minimize harm of small farmers in vulnerable communities.

The concept that no policies should harm development objectives is known as **Policy Coherence for Development** and is also an important principle to be reflected in the post-2015 debate. See e.g. the [Spotlight on EU Policy Coherence for Development, 2011](#).

When and how can EU-12 contribute to the post-2015 framework debate?

- Now: Nominate a representative to join the **European seminar on Beyond 2015** on **24-25 May 2012** or join the debate at the CONCORD General Assembly on 6 June to influence a European CSO position on the post-2015 framework.
- May/June 2012: Encourage your **Southern and Eastern partners** to identify their themes and contribute to their [national consultations](#) (led by the United Nations).
- Soon: Coordinate **national consultations** using [Beyond 2015 Toolkit](#), outputs of the above mentioned European seminar on Beyond 2015 and other relevant materials.
 1. Analyse your experience and opportunities after 2015, consult your "beneficiaries", involve other actors.
 2. Identify in your national platform of development CSOs priorities for post-2015 debate.
 3. Formulate your specific policy demands.
 4. Plan: How different are your policy demands from the demands of Beyond 2015 campaign / other CSO positions? Who can be your champion on CSO and government level with respect to these priorities? Who are your allies? When and how to reach them? So what to do?
- Soon: Join the **Beyond 2015 campaign** supported by CONCORD Europe, and its working groups. Follow the news. Bring in your specific experience! Support and engage with allies as per your priorities!

- In May/June 2012: feed in the **public consultation** launched by DG DevCo on post-2015. Keep a look-out on their [website](#) and fill in the questionnaire once published.
- In December 2012: Join the **International Symposium in Cyprus** on Beyond 2015 organised by [CYINDEP](#).
- Between now and spring 2013: Influence your **government's positions** towards the EU. The Beyond 2015 campaign and CONCORD Europe will help you. You may also hold a parliamentary debate, a roundtable with main political parties or single politicians interested in international development to encourage the reflection on the post-2015 agenda. Strive to get nominated to your delegation to the UN MDG Summit.
- Continuously: Mobilise public directly or via media to generate opinions, debate and jointly influence the government.
- In autumn 2013: Join the UN MDG Summit like many other CSOs and make sure the others back home know about the negotiations!

Finally, what is key for success?

- Know **what** to contribute with. Highlight issues that other players may (want to) overlook. Be ambitious, otherwise no one will be!
- Know **when** to contribute. The earlier you join, the more you can influence!
- Know **how** to contribute. Find out the plans of your government, of CONCORD Europe and others and provide them with short and simple arguments for your cause - in time.

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FoRS - Czech Forum for Development Co-operation - is a platform of around 60 Czech non-governmental non-profit organisations (NGOs) and other non-profit subjects, involved in development cooperation, development education and humanitarian assistance. See www.fors.cz | **TRIALOG** is a project to strengthen civil society and raise awareness of development issues in the enlarged EU. See www.trialog.or.at | **Beyond 2015** is a global civil society campaign, pushing for a strong and legitimate successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals. The Beyond2015 campaign in association with GCAP (Global Call to Action against Poverty) promote a transformative, human-rights-based agenda, which combines a focus on sustainable, inclusive and equitable development with a reduction of climate, financial, food and other kinds of insecurity. www.beyond2015.org

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