



Public Consultation

## **Towards a post-2015 development framework**

### **Introduction: the changing landscape**

In 2013, a UN special event will follow up on efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and will likely raise the issue of what might follow after the target year of 2015. Following the decisions taken at the review meeting in 2010, the UN Secretary General has started preparatory work.

The global political and economic landscape has significantly changed over recent years. Growth in emerging economies has become the key driver of global growth. Disparities within and between developing countries have increased and the GNI per capita of a few upper middle-income countries has outscored some European member states. Likewise, new actors have emerged in the development sphere, including private actors. Some of these were also acknowledged in the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, agreed at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011<sup>1</sup>.

Recently, discussions on the formulation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been held in the context of the Rio+20 Conference. The outcomes at Rio will influence the process for any post-2015 development framework.

The Millennium Declaration<sup>2</sup>, affirming the "collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level" remains relevant in many aspects. But we must take into account new global realities and trends – political economy, major macroeconomic shifts, climate change and depletion of natural resources, crises and volatility, population dynamics, governance issues and human development challenges, migration, mobility, among others.

This debate gives rise to different options and scenarios to be considered for post-2015. None of them can be excluded at this early stage. Options could either be designed following the logic of the MDG framework with new time-lines, with or without new goals, targets or indicators, or proposing a more fundamentally revised approach to development.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3746,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_46057868\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html#agreement](http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3746,en_2649_3236398_46057868_1_1_1_1,00.html#agreement)

<sup>2</sup><http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

The post-MDG agenda is being discussed in many quarters. Governments, international institutions, think-tanks and non-governmental organisations are starting to debate a post-2015 framework. The number of workshops and recent publications confirm a growing interest in this issue.

The EU, which continues to actively support the MDGs, is engaging in this debate. In parallel, the independent European Report on Development (ERD)<sup>3</sup> 2013 will consider some of the main challenges for the next 15 years and reflect on how the international community could help address them, including through a potential post-2015 development framework.

The Commission in consultation with the EEAS is currently preparing a basis for the EU's initial contribution to the forthcoming international discussions, setting out principles for an EU position on a post-2015 framework.

**The objective of the current Public Consultation is to inform the preparation of an EU contribution to the UN process.**

*This public consultation is published on the Commission's website (<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/>). The consultation will run from 15/06/2012 to 15/09/2012 and is open to any interested stakeholder. Individuals, organisations (governmental/non-governmental, parliamentary, academic, private sector etc) and countries are invited to send their contributions, in the form of answers to the questions presented in the document and/or as general comments on the issues raised. Contributions received will be published, possibly in a summarised form, unless the author objects to publication of their personal data on the grounds that such publication would harm his/her legitimate interests. In this case, the contribution may be published in anonymous form. Otherwise, the contribution will not be published nor, in principle, will its content be taken into account. Furthermore, since the launch in June 2008 of the Register for Interest Representatives (lobbyists) as part of the European Transparency Initiative, organisations are invited to use this Register to provide the European Commission and the public at large with information about their objectives, funding and structures. It is Commission policy that submissions from organisations will be considered as individual contributions unless the organisations have registered.*

**Contributions should be sent to:  
EuropeAid-POST-2015-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu**

**Enquiries about this consultation can be sent to the same mailbox, or to the European Commission, DG Development, Unit DEVCO.A1, Office 11/41, B 1049 Brussels, Belgium.**

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<sup>3</sup> The ERD is a research initiative supported by the Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden and the UK. It will provide an independent academic contribution to the post-2015 debate.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

The consultation seeks stakeholders' views on four aspects of the debate on the post-2015 development agenda:

- A. The MDGs: benefits and limitations**
- B. Feasibility of a future framework**
- C. The potential scope of a future framework**
- D. The potential shape of a future framework**

Below a brief explanation of each of these issues, followed by a set of questions to which to respond.

*(Please limit your responses to max 2 pages per issue)*

### **A. The MDGs: benefits and limitations**

It is generally recognised that the MDG framework has been powerful in catalysing political momentum for development and that it has been instrumental in supporting an increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA) after a period of decline following the end of the Cold War. The MDG-framework has put the global spotlight on poverty eradication as the central objective of development cooperation and made it an important objective of international relations in general.

As far as the EU is concerned, the MDGs have been key priorities of EU development policy since their inception in 2000. With the adoption of the European Consensus on Development<sup>4</sup> in 2005, they became EU commitments in a politically binding document agreed by the Commission, Council and Parliament. The second revision of the Cotonou Agreement<sup>5</sup> (2010) and the EU's financial instruments for external action<sup>6</sup> all refer to the MDGs as shared objectives. The MDGs have therefore played an important role in driving and focusing the development policies and practices of both the EU and its Member States. Similar policy impacts have also been observed among other donors and development actors.

As an example of an MDG targeted initiative, and as part of the EU's continuing effort to support progress towards the MDGs, €1 billion of extra financing was mobilised in 2010 for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries through the EU MDG Initiative. This Initiative focuses on countries that have high quality policies to achieve results in the areas where progress is most needed: hunger, water and sanitation, maternal health and child mortality.

<sup>4</sup> Official Journal of the European Union 2006/C 46/01

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/european-consensus/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/european-consensus/index_en.htm)

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/overview/cotonou-agreement/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/overview/cotonou-agreement/index_en.htm)

<sup>6</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/index_en.htm)

Through the Agenda for Change<sup>7</sup> the EU has reaffirmed its focus on reducing and eventually eradicating poverty, as mandated in the Lisbon Treaty, and committed itself to increasing the impact of its development policy on poverty and the MDGs. This is to contribute as much as possible in the global effort to achieve the MDGs by 2015, an aim from which the EU has not wavered.

Yet, at the same time, the MDG-framework has not been without criticism. Firstly, most of the MDGs are based on desired social outcomes (such as poverty and hunger eradication, health, education, gender). The importance of issues such as growth and quality jobs, equity and social protection, governance and human rights, conflict and fragility, population dynamics or environment and climate change in eradicating poverty and hunger may, some have argued, not have been emphasised sufficiently. Secondly, the MDG indicators are monitored using country averages and they often hide growing inequalities within countries, between regions and groups of the population, and between women and men. Thirdly, it has sometimes been difficult to translate the global goals into specific national targets and hence into national programmes of action and there has been criticism of it being a donor-driven approach. At country level, there is no real certainty that the MDGs have transformed policies deeply.

**While the Millennium Declaration should remain the basis to drive future actions in development, options for any future agenda should recognise both the strengths and limitations of the MDG framework.**

*A: The MDGs: benefits and limitations*

1. To what extent has the MDG framework influenced policies in the country/ies or sectors you work in/with?
2. To what extent has the MDG framework been beneficial for the poor in the country/ies or sectors in/with which you work?
3. What features and elements of the MDG framework have been particularly valuable in the fight against poverty?
4. What features and elements of the MDG framework have been problematic, in your view?
5. In your view, what are the main gaps, if any, in the MDG framework?

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<sup>7</sup> Commission Communication: "Increasing the impact of EU development policy: an Agenda for Change" COM(2011) 637 final of 13 October 2011 - [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news/agenda\\_for\\_change\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news/agenda_for_change_en.htm), on which Council Conclusions were adopted on 14 May 2012  
[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf)

## **B. Feasibility of a future framework**

While the first and overriding political priority is to ensure that the MDGs are met by 2015, in as many countries and regions as possible, the debate is also beginning on "what happens after 2015."

Looking to the future, we can begin to identify both opportunities and challenges associated with formulating a framework to follow on from the current MDGs after 2015.

From a development perspective, some of the advantages of having a post-2015 framework could include:

- A framework could give a positive signal that the international community is coming together as one to solve some of the global challenges. This could lead to a real partnership of nations and a new vision of the future of international cooperation.
- A framework could bring *all* countries (developed, developing, emerging) and all actors (traditional and new donors, developing country governments, the private sector, NGOs, social partners, etc.) into a coherent and inclusive process where responsibility is shared. Such a framework could therefore go beyond the current concept of public action and aid.
- A framework could provide a more comprehensive approach to poverty eradication, placing it in a broader political and economic context, and in particular could better encompass the three dimensions of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, as well as promote rights-based approaches.

While it may seem appropriate to seize the opportunity to boost poverty eradication globally, nationally and locally, there are also challenges and costs associated to developing a post-2015:

- The relevance and credibility of designing a post-2015 framework with new or more goals could be challenged if important parts of the existing MDG-framework have not yet been achieved.
- A set of representative goals – particularly if they are global goals - might be difficult to negotiate: too many actors, too many conflicting interests, too hard to quantify, with a possible risk of failure.
- There are already numerous frameworks, initiatives, agreements and consensus documents that guide international relations (UN Declarations and Conventions, Human Rights Law) and help international actors deliver development cooperation (e.g. Global Partnership on Effective Development Co-operation, the European Consensus) or address global challenges (e.g. the G20 Seoul consensus, Energy for All, Education for All, L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, the UNFCCC and Kyoto processes). In this light, the Millennium Declaration could prove sufficient, on its own, to guide development policies and international cooperation.

**A post-2015 framework has the potential to play a catalytic role in addressing important development and other global challenges and could help to fulfil individuals' rights and needs. It could also foster a new approach to equitable access to, and protection of, global public goods.**

***B. Feasibility of a future framework***

6. In your view, in what way, if at all, could a future framework have an impact at global level in terms of global governance, consensus building, cooperation, etc.?
7. To what extent is a global development framework approach necessary or useful to improve accountability with regard to poverty reduction policies in developing countries?
8. What could be the advantages and disadvantages of a global development framework for your organisation/sector, including how you work effectively with your partners?

**C. The potential scope of a future agenda**

Given the changing political-economic landscape and the importance of global challenges, some suggest the need to shift towards the principle of "universality" – i.e. a future framework should be applicable in all countries (developed, emerging, developing, fragile), spelling an end to the donor-beneficiary approach. A broad post-2015 framework could help consolidate the shift away from the increasingly irrelevant North-South discourse that up until recently has dominated international development thinking and practice.

A framework could be an opportunity to make real progress on policy coherence for development (PCD)<sup>8</sup>. Some of the underlying causes and factors affecting poverty lie beyond the remit of development cooperation and of Official Development Assistance (ODA), relying on integrated policy agendas, and these could be better included and addressed in a future framework. PCD could become a key element at partner country level, as well as at the level of international institutions and donors. In this way, we could also see an increase in development effectiveness.

The post 2015 debate should be an opportunity to reflect on the need to develop an integrated and comprehensive approach to development financing, building on the Monterrey Consensus as well as interrelated policy areas (e.g. Trade, Climate change, Environment).

It could therefore question the nature and role of ODA and of other innovative sources of financing.

**Any future framework should be designed in such a way as to recognise that political, economic, social and environmental challenges are linked and need to be addressed at the global level, requiring all countries to take on**

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<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/policy-coherence/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/policy-coherence/index_en.htm)

responsibilities, irrespective of their level of development. At the same time it must not overlook national challenges as well as individual issues, including the special needs of the poorest.

*C. The potential scope of a future agenda*

9. In your view, what should be the primary purpose of a future framework?
10. In your view, should its scope be global, relevant for all countries?
11. To what extent should a future framework focus on the poorest and most fragile countries, or also address development objectives relevant in other countries?
12. How could a new development agenda involve new actors, including the private sector and emerging donors?
13. How could a future framework support improved policy coherence for development (PCD), at global, EU and country levels?
14. How could a new framework improve development financing?

**D. The potential shape of a future agenda**

If a positive decision is taken to formulate a post-2015 development framework, what should it look like? The options include:

- continuing the existing MDG framework *without* changing the goals, targets, indicators and instruments, but setting a new time-line;
- continuing on from the existing MDG framework but *with* new goals, targets, indicators and instruments;
- a new approach to development, for instance going beyond development policies, development cooperation and ODA, towards a more comprehensive international agenda.

When defining the shape of any future framework, many decisions will need to be taken, including:

- What sectors or areas the framework should focus on;
- How the framework should be structured – e.g. goals, targets and indicators as with the current MDGs or a more general framework of commitments?
- How the framework could be implemented and resourced.
- How the framework should be monitored and progress measured, including the need to adapt and strengthen statistical capacity;
- How the partners to the framework should be held accountable;

**When designing the framework, an important consideration will be to strike a balance between ambition, comprehensiveness, achievability and accountability.**

D. The potential shape of a future agenda

15. What do you consider to be the "top 3" most important features or elements which should be *included* in or ensured by any future development agenda?
16. What do you consider to be the "top 3" features or elements which must be *avoided* in any future development agenda?
17. Should it be based on goals, targets and indicators? If any, should goals have an outcome or sector focus? Please give reasons for your answer.
18. How should implementation of the new framework be resourced?

**You and your organisation**

Are you or your organisation preparing a position on the post-2015 development agenda? Are you working with specific partners on it? If so, it would be much appreciated if you could **share your thinking (e.g. think-pieces etc) with us**, in addition to your responses to the above consultation questions.

**Thank you in advance for your contribution.**