

POVERTY POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

What's next for the GPEDC in the post-2015 world?



A student at a primary school in Bangladesh.

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In the run-up to its second high-level meeting in Kenya next year, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation will need to consider some difficult questions on what to focus on for the post-2015 world.

The second high-level meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) will take place in Kenya in 2016. In the run-up to the event, the GPEDC will need to consider some difficult questions on what to focus on for the post-2015

world. Basically the choice is between being selective and making a big difference, or continuing with an expanded agenda taking in just about every development theme. If it opts for the former, then it will be a matter of identifying where it can really make a difference and strengthen the global partnership for sustainable development? The GPEDC was launched at the fourth high-level forum on aid effectiveness in Busan in 2011. The aid effectiveness journey through previous high-level forums in Rome (2003), Paris (2005) and Accra (2008) established principles to improve the quality of aid for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These principles were primarily seen as applicable to OECD-DAC providers of official development assistance (ODA) and developing countries. Multilateral development banks have also been closely associated. The results of implementing these good principles are becoming visible:

- Countries are increasingly taking a leadership role in determining their priorities, and articulating these effectively to the development providers.
- Transparency and the accountability for results of development assistance have improved.
- International institutions like ADB have mainstreamed these principles, and are scaling up efforts to align their strategies and assistance with country policies, priorities, and systems.

In parallel, the global aid architecture has been changing rapidly, and becoming more complex. The share of ODA in total global development assistance has declined. Funding from nontraditional partners, including emerging donors and philanthropic organizations, and non-aid sources—such as remittances and foreign direct investment (FDI)—has increased. In Asia and the Pacific, for example, ODA is estimated at around only .004% of the potential amount of development finance that could come from combining private savings, remittances, and FDI.



ADB Vice-President Wencai Zhang participating in the first GPEDC high-level meeting in Mexico City in 2014.

Recognizing changes in the global aid architecture, the GPEDC's agenda has continued to expand. In its first high-level meeting in Mexico in 2013, the GPEDC brought together key stakeholders to discuss a number of development themes such as importance of domestic resource mobilization, support to and from middle-income countries, south-south cooperation, triangular cooperation and knowledge sharing, the private sector as a partner in development, and climate change. The messages on traditional principles of aid effectiveness such as country ownership, focus on results, transparency and accountability were reaffirmed, but a bit subdued. Moving forward, the GPEDC Steering Committee, at its September 2015 meeting, needs to take a candid view on the comparative value-add of staying with an expanded agenda. Similar issues—like the importance of partnerships for mobilizing knowledge and resources from all sources (both public and private), role of new players and institutions, and addressing climate change issues—are being discussed at major international development fora. The recently concluded #Fin4Dev conference in Addis Ababa has established new commitments on financing for development. By the end of 2015, two other major international agreements are expected to establish post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and a path for future action on climate change. Proposed SDG 17, seen as a successor to the MDG 8 on global partnerships, is directly

linked with the GPEDC's agenda on global partnerships. It calls for action to "strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development." It focuses on three specific areas—financing for development, technology and trade, and data monitoring and accountability—identified as key enablers for the post-2015 global partnership agenda. If adopted in September 2015, SDG 17 is likely to be central to all other SDGs and applicable to all countries, unlike the MDG 8 on global partnership that targeted only developed countries.

The GPEDC can play an important role in supporting the implementation of the SDGs to strengthen global partnerships for sustainable development. GPEDC's efforts in monitoring the quality of aid and its effectiveness principles are acknowledged in the Addis outcome document. This is an achievement. However, is that enough? In order to add value, the GPEDC needs to be selective, develop its niche in monitoring key aspects of quality of aid, and be a part of a formal post-2015 SDG monitoring mandate. This will also avoid duplication and help keep the transaction costs low for developing countries. The GPEDC's Advisory Group on monitoring should do a critical review of the existing GPEDC global monitoring framework in light of its agreed priorities and the proposed SDGs, and recommend a relevant post-2015 global monitoring framework, that the GPEDC will focus on.



Children cooling off with clean, piped water in a Lao PDR village.

Kenya will provide an excellent opportunity to facilitate focused discussions and make a big difference. However, this will only happen if a precise set of issues are prioritized in light of the SDGs, based on the GPEDC's niche and comparative advantage. Such clarity on the GPEDC agenda is also necessary to energize its stakeholders to participate in a more meaningful way in the future.

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