

# 22<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee Meeting

## Summary

15-16 December 2021  
Virtual meeting

### Objectives

- Agree on the **political strategy and contours of the outcome document** of the [2022 Effective Development Co-operation Summit](#);
- Agree on how Steering Committee members can **lead engagement, communication and outreach efforts** as part of the “Road to the Summit”;
- In response to the independent **GPEDC Review**, discuss the Co-Chairs’ proposals to improve the implementation of the Partnership’s mandate and ways of working; and
- Discuss key elements of the **revised monitoring framework and process** and their implications, as well as the milestones to relaunch the exercise in early 2023.

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*For background documents and presentations from this meeting, please visit [this page](#).*

*For a full list of Steering Committee members, please visit [this page](#).*

## Decisions and actions arising

### The Steering Committee has:

[Summit]

- ✓ Agreed on a political ambition for the Summit – **to underscore the urgency of using the effectiveness principles to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda** – and the need for a narrative that drives greater political will by focusing on how to ensure no one is left behind in a changing context with diverse demands and challenges;
- ✓ Agreed that the **power of the outcome document lies in it being concise and action-focused**, based on member-led, inclusive and transparent exchanges that avoid heavy negotiations;
- ✓ Pledged to lead events, consultations, and communication and advocacy efforts to **build political momentum** for the Summit among their respective constituencies and engage them at the highest political level; and
- ✓ Underscored the need for measures that **enable all interested actors to participate in the Summit** despite format and COVID-related restrictions and in view of different time zones.

[GPEDC Review]

- ✓ Welcomed the **independent GPEDC review and its recommendations, commended the consultative nature of the review and considered the Co-Chairs' proposed response.**
- ✓ Requested the Co-Chairs to further develop their response to the review recommendations by providing more detail in the action plan on how the recommendations will be implemented in practice.
- ✓ Recognised that demonstrably improving the implementation of the GPEDC's mandate and ways of working is critically important for the mobilization effort needed for the Summit in 2022;
- ✓ Concurred that GPEDC's 'global light, country-focused' approach, together with its unique, inclusive and multi-stakeholder nature, must be preserved and strengthened; and
- ✓ Signaled an interest in initiating necessary reforms, in particular on governance challenges and how to institutionalize the Action Dialogues and providing more leverage for actors at country level, noting the need for the Action Dialogues to inform the Summit preparations.

[Monitoring]

- ✓ Agreed to move forward with preparations to resume the monitoring with an **open waves approach and the inclusion of [Action Dialogues](#)** as part of the process;<sup>1</sup> and
- ✓ Agreed with the four focus areas of the [revised framework](#), and that work on the framework will move forward without dropping any existing core measurement areas.

### The Co-Chairs:

- ✓ Encouraged members to share **evidence related to development effectiveness** they are producing in ways that are in line with Summit preparations to support mobilization efforts;
- ✓ Proposed to table a **zero draft outcome document** by the end of February 2022 as a basis for stakeholder-led exchanges, with the opportunity to make specific commitments and announcements in annexes;
- ✓ Reflected on the title following the Steering Committee and propose '2022 **Effective Development Co-operation Summit**' to ensure visible focus on development effectiveness;
- ✓ Stressed the need for **additional resources** and expressions of interest to lead parts of the

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<sup>1</sup> This agreement takes into account the Co-Chairs' pledge to discuss, with relevant members, potential measures to address concerns related to protecting accountability and meeting needs for ongoing support with the new approach.

organization of the Summit (see budget);

- ✓ Invited members to provide any **comments on the Co-Chairs' response to the GPEDC review**, especially on governance arrangements, within 2 weeks of summary circulation; and
- ✓ Invited members to discuss their **representation in the Committee** within constituencies and, in case of rotation, identify senior replacements well ahead of the Summit.

## Session Summaries

### Session 1: The Political Strategy for the GPEDC 2022 High-Level Meeting

(Moderated by H.E. Mr. Thomas Gass, Switzerland)

#### Main takeaways:

- ✓ Members welcomed the proposed roadmap for the High-Level Meeting (“Summit”) and many expressed a preference for **linking the effectiveness principles more directly to current global challenges that must be addressed to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda**, including climate finance and adaptation, COVID-19 response and recovery, leaving no-one behind, shrinking democratic and civic space, fragility and inequality. This will instill a sense of urgency and relevancy, and elevate the political interest and buy-in, while recommitting to the SDGs.
- ✓ Several members highlighted the **importance of local engagement and demonstrating the impact of effectiveness at country level**, including by exploring how to strengthen local systems and build capacity sustainably to make partnerships more locally grounded, credible and relevant. This focus could facilitate meaningful involvement of actors from national and local governments, the private sector, civil society, foundations and others to solve specific problems in low- and middle-income countries. It also underpins the primacy of inclusiveness and demonstrating SDG results, based on evidence and data from different sources.
- ✓ Members agreed to **develop the political outcome document in a way that demonstrates how effectiveness can address these priorities and topics** and keep it short, with annexes providing space for extra detail where necessary. Members also committed to help support inclusive dialogue around this document and follow a pragmatic approach that avoids lengthy negotiations of new commitments.

#### Other key discussion points:

- The following **perspectives and examples of dilemmas and trends**, raised by members, demonstrate the variety and convergence of critical topics that could inform and sharpen the narrative and make for attractive political debates at the Summit:
  - The **impact of the COVID-19 pandemic** on operating models and how adhering to effectiveness principles can help strengthen capacity and deliver on national development plans and targets in partner countries;
  - The **premise of leaving no one behind** to deliver for those most in need in line with effectiveness principles;
  - The need for all types of **partnerships to better model the spirit of the people-driven 2030 Agenda** to be engines and enablers for inclusion;
  - The degree to which efforts to **mobilize financing for sustainable development**, including through Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs), can be improved by ensuring that the effectiveness principles are adequately reflected in INFFs, notably by better involving stakeholders and strengthening government leadership;
  - How applying **the effectiveness principles to funding for global public goods, in particular for climate action or global health security, can ensure that vulnerable countries and populations are not left behind, and that funds are allocated and accessed** by stakeholders at the country level in ways that are conducive to inclusive country ownership and leadership;

- The **differences and commonalities in understanding, defining and tracking progress on effectiveness**, between DAC members, Southern providers and others;
- The **implications of the rise of autocracies, shrinking civic space, and decline in democracy for country-led approaches**, assuming that they are driven by the state, and potential alternatives if governments are not committed to the 2030 Agenda;
- What the **development, humanitarian and peace nexus** means in practice to support sustainable development in fragile and conflict-affected situations;
- How mindsets must shift further to **'decolonize' development co-operation**, disrupting deeply-rooted hierarchies and asymmetric power structures;
- How to **work with the private sector in ways that uphold accountability and unleash the potential of partnerships** without undermining roles of other partners;
- The tendency to **move away from sub-national systems which undermines the premise of greater alignment** and how to use decentralized co-operation better to transform systems and instruments to deliver on the 2030 Agenda locally;
- A perceived **lack of transparency of information relevant for partner countries'** budgeting and planning cycles;
- With these examples, members also concluded that an updated narrative of the Global Partnership should demonstrate how the effectiveness agenda can contribute to the **acceleration of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs**. In this context, members highlighted how the Global Partnership can support:
  - **Multi-stakeholder approaches**, including through evidence and actions arising from Action Dialogues and outputs from Action Areas;
  - **The effectiveness of diverse modalities and instruments**, including South-South and triangular co-operation and effective civil society, multilateral organizations, private sector, and philanthropic partners;
  - **Tracking of progress and promoting accountability** by highlighting the relevance of the new monitoring framework and process; and
  - **Its own renewal by demonstrating readiness to reform the Global Partnership** by responding and acting on the recommendations put forth by the independent GPEDC Review.
- Some members indicated that they will **produce their own evidence and reports** on the state of affairs on development effectiveness as inputs to the Summit;
- Members agreed to stick to a **concise outcome document** with the following priorities:
  - **Make it a short political document** that galvanizes the spirit of Busan and fosters renewed commitment to effectively deliver the 2030 Agenda with a sense of urgency;
  - **Frame the document around broader policy considerations** including the impact of other policies on development (policy coherence for sustainable development);
  - **Respond to the development challenges of our time** with practical and concrete actions and practices that are easily identifiable as 'effectiveness' actions;
  - **Advance the pace of delivery** by generating political momentum around these priorities that are attributable to members (in annexes), show the priorities and contributions of different actors and strengthen credibility and accountability;
  - **Facilitate member-driven and inclusive exchanges to develop the document**, enabling the diversity of actors to inform the process and express their political support to the future of the Global Partnership.

## Session 2: Responding to the GPEDC Review recommendations

(Moderated by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Bangladesh)

### Main takeaways:

- ✓ **Members welcomed the GPEDC Review and discussed the Co-Chairs proposed next steps.** The discussion on the Co-Chairs' six priority responses highlighted the importance of progressing reforms in alongside the preparatory activities foreseen for the Summit. One member requested the Co-Chairs to further develop their response in order to provide more details on the practical implementation of the review recommendations.
- ✓ **A significant part of the discussion focused on how to implement the Global Partnership's slogan of 'global light, country focused'.** Members stressed the potential of the Action Dialogues (ADs) to strengthen the Global Partnership's impact at country level, and noted the need for all stakeholders to mobilise their constituencies to support these dialogues. Members noted the need to ensure that the findings from the ADs are an input to the Summit.

### Other key discussion points:

- While members generally welcomed the GPEDC Review process and the Co-Chairs' draft response they deliberated mainly on **how to concretize the response to the GPEDC Review**, noting the need to link it with the efforts to build momentum for the Summit.
- Members pointed to the **heterogeneity of the Action Dialogues (AD) and to the lack of progress** exemplified by the relatively low number of ADs that have taken place thus far. One member mentioned that the AD they organised provided a practical model to better link global discussions to national priorities. In response, the Swiss Co-Chair took the opportunity to remind all Steering Committee Members that the ADs are a collective effort and responsibility, and called upon renewed support to mobilize constituencies to actively engage in and support ADs.
- The non-executive Co-Chair raised that the aid architecture established before **Busan has weakened or disappeared. He stressed that, if the country focused concept is to have meaning, the GPEDC must be clear how it will support countries to strengthen national aid architectures, especially dialogue and coordination processes.**
- There was **broad agreement to strengthen country-level engagement.** Members signaled the need to support a whole-of-society approach, by working with CSOs and other actors as interlocutors and partners. Other suggestions included further leveraging the UN system to better anchor the GPEDC country-level work and ADs within national processes, such as the Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs) and other international financing networks. One member explained how its Action Area pilots aim at empowering country-level counterparts by emphasising capacity development. Much stronger communication efforts by all stakeholders and joint messaging at the country level, supported by the development partners, will be necessary to make a difference.
- **Members mentioned the need to further institutionalize the work of the Action Areas (AA), cognizant of the additional resource requirements that this would entail.** One member disagreed with the review's finding that the private sector does not engage much with the GPEDC and stressed that PSE happens more meaningfully at the local level than at headquarter level. One member commented that the review insufficiently addressed some of the shortcomings of the institutional arrangements of the Secretariat and could have added value by reflecting on a more unified oversight of the executive function.
- In conclusion, the Swiss Co-Chair welcomed the offer to engage with the UN system more strongly and called upon members to provide their written comments on the Co-Chairs' response in order to ensure it is fully supported across the Steering Committee members.

## Session 3: The Global Partnership Monitoring Reform

(Moderated by Mr. Vitalice Meja, Non-Executive Co-chair)

### Main takeaways:

- ✓ **Members welcomed the proposed changes to the monitoring process:** a shift to an open waves approach and the inclusion of Action Dialogues that would focus specifically on monitoring results as part of the monitoring process. Some members raised concerns about the potential implications of the open waves on accountability; momentum and visibility of the exercise; and on efforts needed to mobilise and support stakeholders on a rolling basis. Co-Chairs will initiate a dialogue with relevant members to discuss and address these concerns. With this, preparations for the resumption of monitoring will move forward in 2022.
- ✓ There was **agreement among members on the four focus areas of the revised framework.** Members acknowledged that the revised framework will not be leaner in terms of reporting scope. Members welcomed assurances that there would be an opportunity to be informed and engaged in the ongoing work on the framework in 2022.
- ✓ **Members acknowledged that the increased ambition of the new monitoring exercise will require a scaled-up effort to mobilise stakeholders.** There was emphasis on securing, through the collective efforts of members, strong partner country commitment to participate in the next round. Members agreed with the roadmap and key milestones for 2022, both towards preparations for the Summit and a re-launch of the monitoring in early 2023, including that the Steering Committee would need to review and take a decision to finalise the monitoring framework by mid-2022. The risks of any slippage of the timeline which could lead to a delay in the re-launch of the exercise were also well noted.

### Other key discussion points:

- There was **extensive appreciation for the efforts of the Co-Chairs and JST to conduct the monitoring reform in an inclusive and transparent manner.** Members also appreciated that the pace of the reform had accelerated significantly, evidenced by the recent issuance of a draft monitoring proposal covering elements of both framework and process.
- The **majority of members agreed with the proposal to shift to an open waves approach,** highlighting expected benefits of a more flexible approach. Members representing **partner countries particularly welcomed this shift,** anticipating opportunities to institutionalise the monitoring with national planning and VNR processes, as well as relevant regional processes. Entry points to concretely leverage the waves approach with the HLPF cycle were also noted. Several **members articulated a preference for four-year rounds,** in order to allow for adequate time for action on results, as well as to ensure adequate support to [fewer] countries participating in each wave.
- **Some members reiterated concerns about the potential implications of the open waves approach** on global accountability, data comparability, and momentum of the exercise, as well as for the efforts needed to mobilise and support stakeholders on a rolling basis. **Co-Chairs will initiate a dialogue with relevant members** to discuss and address these concerns. With this, preparations for the resumption of monitoring will move forward in 2022.
- Members **agreed on the inclusion of Action Dialogues as an integral part of the improved monitoring process.** A range of benefits were cited, including how such a country-level dialogue on monitoring results could provide additional opportunities to mobilise stakeholders, as well as institutionalize the monitoring exercise into country-level processes. Members noted the diverse nature of the Action Dialogues currently being implemented and encouraged – and indeed confirmed the intent of the monitoring reform proposal – that Action Dialogues as part of the monitoring process, while learning from the current initiative, will be focused on the monitoring results and identifying practical measures to address challenges raised in the results. In this connection, the prospect of re-naming them was raised. Members also encouraged that future work on the monitoring process emphasise other important elements, such as the phases of partner country sign-up, inception, and follow-up to the Action Dialogues.

- Members acknowledged that the increased ambition of the new monitoring exercise will require a scaled-up effort to mobilise stakeholders and support the exercise, both at country and global levels. There was emphasis on the importance of securing strong partner country commitment to participate in the next round, by the time of the Summit. Several **members, including those representing regional partner country constituencies, pledged to work actively within their spheres of influence/constituencies** to mobilise partner countries. Members also noted that preparations to re-launch the exercise should start as soon as possible, and at least six months in advance.
- Members **agreed with the four focus areas of the revised framework**. Some members pointed to the relevance of the focus areas for regional and country priorities. Further work to develop the framework, based on [stakeholder feedback](#) (some of which was re-stated by members during the session), will advance based on these four focus areas. Members **acknowledged that the revised framework will not be leaner in terms of reporting scope**, with some members advocating against dropping any core measurement areas and others raising the prospect of adding indicators and/or nuance to existing data points.
- Members **agreed with the roadmap and key milestones**, both towards preparations for endorsement of the new monitoring proposal at the Summit and for a re-launch of the monitoring exercise in early 2023. They welcomed assurances by Co-Chairs of continued transparent and inclusive process, with opportunities for members to weigh in on the ongoing work to develop elements of the framework. One member proposed multi-stakeholder technical workshops to advance this work. There was discussion of how piloting could be an opportunity to mobilise partner countries to participate in the next monitoring round; members also shared ideas on how distinct elements of the framework could be piloted in different countries to make it more feasible given the limited timeline.

## Session 4: The Road to the 2022 GPEDC High-Level Meeting

(Moderated by H.E. Mr. Christian Mwando Nsimba, Democratic Republic of Congo)

### Main takeaways:

- ✓ Members **committed to lead or engage in key global, regional and constituency-specific events in 2022 as part of the “Road to the Summit”** to advocate for the Summit;
- ✓ Some members raised **concerns about the inclusiveness of hybrid events** and asked Co-Chairs to reflect on how to ensure active participation of the main constituencies;
- ✓ Co-Chairs encouraged members to **contribute to the successful Summit organization**<sup>2</sup>;
- ✓ Co-Chairs invited members to **reflect on their role as members of the Steering Committee** ahead of the Summit within their respective constituencies.

### Other key discussion points:

- Members re-iterated their **commitment to engage in or lead key events in run-up to the Summit and to facilitate exchanges within their constituencies** to identify topics for the outcome document and mobilise their constituencies to the event. Some of the key events mentioned included the Fifth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (now postponed), UN Financing for Development Forum, European Development Days, UN High-Level Political Forum, and key private sector, sub-national governments and CSO forums and conferences in 2022.
- **Members highlighted the need to advocate for the GPEDC’s added value as a multi-stakeholder platform in major milestone events.** They stressed that the GPEDC’s ‘offer’ should be built around how the new substantive narrative and the main components of the Global Partnership’s work (monitoring, Action Dialogues, Action Areas, recommendations from the GPEDC Review etc.) can be meaningfully used by different actors. Concrete practices and examples from the Action Areas and Action Dialogues will be useful to do so.
- **Members agreed that a critical mass of people need to be present in person for a ‘real political debate’.** Several members raised concerns over a hybrid event and the need to manage the technical aspects in a way that allows for easy interaction between those attending in-person and those online. Time zones and COVID-related restrictions need to be considered to ensure that the Summit is truly an inclusive meeting. The host country will take into account lessons learned from various hybrid events, including the recent UN World Data Forum.
- **Members welcomed the support of the SDG Action Campaign on communications and advocacy.** Several communication products and activities will be developed in consultation with the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee members, and thereafter disseminated and amplified through a broader ‘communications network’. Members are invited to express their interest in joining the HLM3 communications network by e-mailing [info@effectivecooperation.org](mailto:info@effectivecooperation.org). A [Summit page](#) has been launched, with more information to be added in due time.
- Co-Chairs presented **the funding gap for the Summit**, including for travel facilitation, organization of pre-meetings and production of communication products. The Republic of Korea and European Commission pledged to provide additional financial contributions and other members are encouraged to indicate how they will support the organization of the Summit.
- Co-Chairs encouraged members to **reflect early on in 2022 on whether they intend to remain in their current role as Steering Committee member** after the Summit or whether their constituency will appoint another representative.

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<sup>2</sup> See [Funding Note](#).