

CONCEPT NOTE: SPOTLIGHT SESSION 12

Effective Multilateral Support at Country Level

14 December 2022

10:00 – 11:00 AM

Background:

The disruptions left behind by the pandemic and the impact on our shared development efforts are only just beginning to reveal themselves, and this is coinciding with the onset of yet another major conflict, threatening food and economic supply chains, and the on-going fall-out from the climate crisis, with disastrous consequences for millions.

As we deal with these issues, maintaining a principle-led, evidence-based dialogue on our development cooperation efforts, focused on how we work together and build trust through these challenges, remains essential. The need for an effective multilateral system – one that offers both a convening space and a policy space which provides partners with new options and solutions for navigating issues collectively that they cannot contend with individually – is more important than ever to address the urgency and the complexity of the challenges we face.

While the past two and a half years have shown, through multi-stakeholder initiatives such as COVAX for instance, that the multilateral system stands at its strongest when crises hit, it is also clear that not all countries are emerging from the COVID crisis at the same pace. With the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at stake, effective development cooperation requires moving beyond business-as-usual approaches to fully harness the power of partnerships, leveraging the role and value of the multilateral system, and deliver results at the country level.

Enhancing the effectiveness of the multilateral system, however, requires a shift in behavior - both by the development partners that fund multilateral organizations, and by these multilateral organizations themselves. To this purpose, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) has undertaken substantive analytical work across different types of partners to promote mutual learning and contribute to the global discourse on an effective multilateral system, based on the effectiveness principles of country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability - and on how bilateral partners can most effectively support the multilateral system, as we work towards the 2030 Agenda.

In this session, representatives from partner country governments, development partners/bilateral donors, civil society, multilateral organizations, and financial institutions will present key evidence on the expectations and added value of the multilateral system through the lens of the effectiveness principles:

1. Key trends in current funding modalities, including Funding Compact commitments and how these can help scale and leverage potential to make the system more effective (drawing on joint

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work by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (DHF) and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, as well as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency).

2. Partners perspectives on engaging with the system, delivering at the country level and linking to the effectiveness principles; main challenges to overcome and benefits of working within the system as a policy space to navigate priorities.

3. Impact on development when the system is delivering at the country level and multilateral agencies are aligning to country priorities; positive experiences of coordinated approaches by development partners and multilateral actors to better support countries in achieving the SDGs and prompt partners to Deliver as One (drawing from lessons learnt and case studies from key collaboration initiatives, such as the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All, bringing together 13 multilateral agencies active in health and coordinated by the World Health Organization; as well as the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation's key stakeholders' consultations around shared responsibilities, leadership and opportunities of the Funding Compact at country level).

Objectives:

- Drawing from key evidence and through the lens of the effectiveness principles, the session will aim to highlight the comparative advantage of the multilateral system, reflect on how partners might more effectively support multilateralism, and build political commitment for quality funding towards quality results.
- The session will advocate for a shift in behaviour to ensure that commitments and responsibilities translate into leadership and practiced change at all levels of development cooperation.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the added value of working with the multilateral system?
2. Based on current funding trends and modalities, as well as on existing frameworks and commitments to supporting the multilateral system, what challenges are development partners facing and what opportunities do they see to contribute to strengthening the effectiveness of the system?
3. What is needed for the multilateral system to function as an inclusive policy space, where partners can navigate dilemmas and trade-offs between different needs and/or priorities?
4. What are the key mechanisms, instruments and incentives that the multilateral system can use to drive alignment and collaboration across partners to achieve tangible results on the ground?



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