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DEVELOPMENT GROUP



# DELIVERING THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

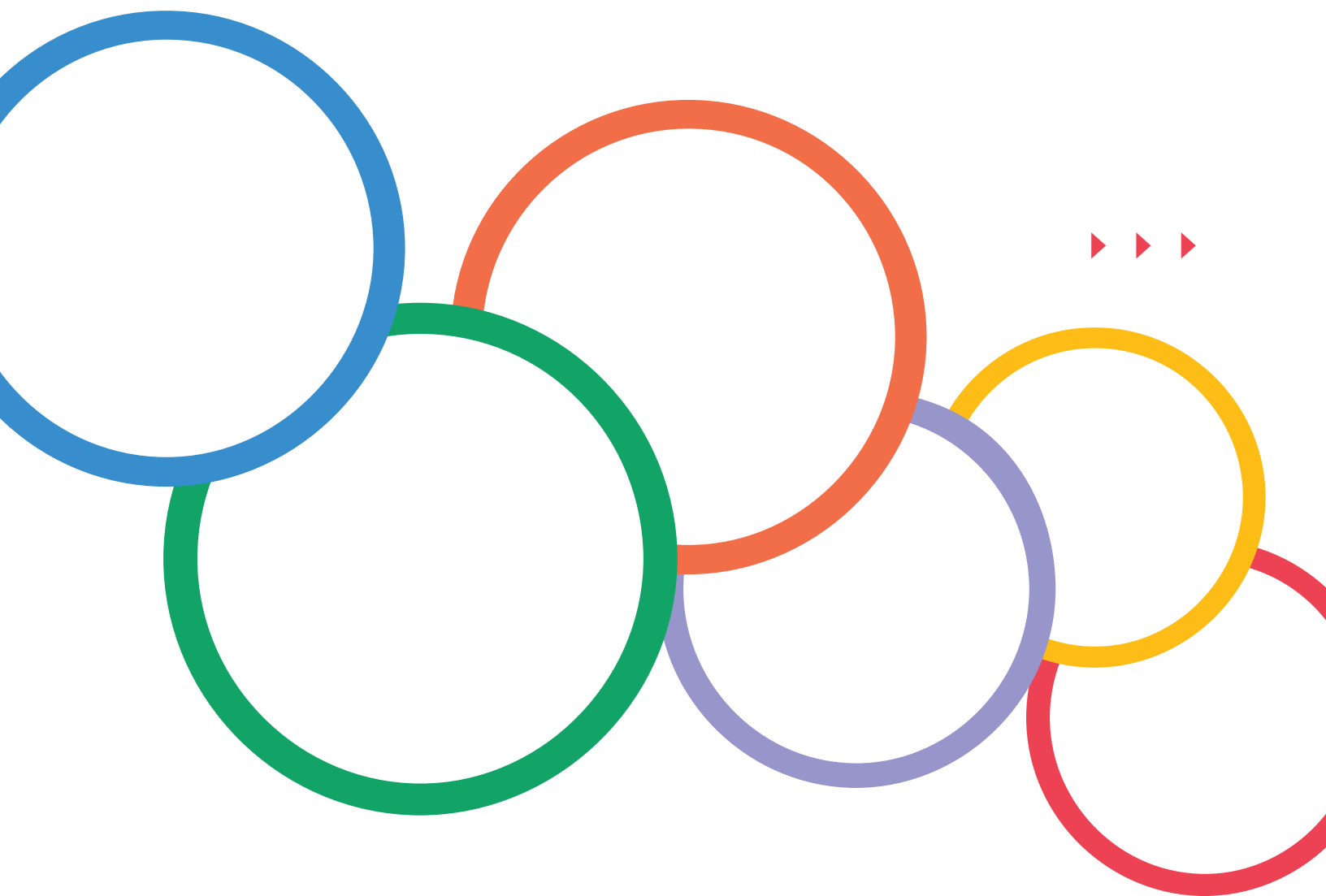
OPPORTUNITIES AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS

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# FOREWORD



Closing ceremony of the second round of post-2015 national consultations was held at ADA University in Baku, Azerbaijan (Photo: UNDP Azerbaijan)

With their clear and simple call to tackle poverty, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have helped to mobilize resources and concentrate action around the world. Now, the UN development system is helping countries to accelerate progress on the MDGs in the time remaining to 31 December 2015, while also looking ahead to the global development agenda which will succeed them.

Lessons learned from the MDG experience are relevant as the new agenda is constructed. One lesson was about the need to include a broad range of stakeholders in its design. Thus, in the past two years, the UN development system has facilitated an unprecedented outreach effort to people all over the world, and reached out to those not usually consulted in international processes. To date, nearly 5 million people have expressed their priorities for the future.

The “Global Conversation” on what the new agenda should include enabled people to express their priorities, and

showed how much we have in common in our hopes and aspirations. People in all countries have called for an agenda that is more consistent with the realization of their human rights, and which reflects the day to day reality of their lives.

UN Member States have listened to these voices as they worked on the design of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Open Working Group proposes a universal agenda to eradicate poverty and shift the world onto a sustainable development path. It includes goals on poverty reduction, education, health, and tackling the unfinished business of the MDGs overall. Goals on the environment, inequalities, and peaceful and inclusive societies feature prominently.

The Open Working Group has also emphasized the means of implementation, and proposed a stand-alone goal for that and specific targets under each of the other goals. A global agenda for development needs to be implementable. Over the next year Member States will continue to discuss the contribution

of development finance, trade, and developing and sharing technologies to implementation. The UN’s work with governments at country level is highlighting the importance of local opportunities and challenges to sustainable human development.

The dialogues recorded in this report explore the local and national side of ‘how’ the post-2015 agenda can be implemented. They consider the importance of capacities and institutions, monitoring and accountability, localizing the agenda and making it fit for context, the role of culture as a mediator of development processes, and partnerships with civil society and the private sector. As such, they contain important messages for governments to consider in their continued efforts to reach agreement on post-2015.

The main message of the dialogues and of this report is that, irrespective of income status or region, the implementation of the new agenda will depend on actions taken at national and local levels. It is there that attention will need to be focused and investments made, if we are to make the transformative shifts which advancing human and sustainable development requires.

**Helen Clark**  
Chair of the United Nations Development Group





# SUMMARY

One year ago the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) released a summary of a global consultation process on the world that people want. The report, 'A Million Voices', captured the results of nearly 100 national dialogues on post-2015, 11 thematic consultations, and a vibrant e-discussion and global survey, MY World.

The current report picks up where 'A Million Voices' left off, and looks in more depth at the factors within each country that will support or impede implementation. When negotiators refer to 'means of implementation' they are often pointing to a set of economic issues such as the availability of financing and technologies, as well as a conducive global policy environment on international trade and migration.

These important global issues can support, or through their absence constrain, the complex process of development. In the same manner, a host of local and national factors, such as capacities and institutions, are also important in the way they shape or influence development outcomes. Many of these issues were raised by people directly in the consultations so far, and so were identified by the UNDG as themes for further exploration.

As governments gather in New York over the next year, seeking to agree a new global agenda, they should keep in mind one of the key lessons we learned from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): namely, the importance of national and local contexts. The Dialogue on **localizing the agenda** emphasized the critical role of local governments, the diversity of local stakeholders and how



Children pointing at 'Post-2015 Road Show' sign, Zambia (Photo: UNV Zambia)

they relate to each other, and the need to invest in capacities and resources at the local level for ownership, implementation, monitoring and accountability.

The Dialogue on **capacities and institutions** also emphasized the importance of national-level actors, signalling that a transformative agenda requires transformed institutions. The implementation of the new agenda is likely to be more successful if the full diversity of stakeholders is captured (e.g. governments, civil society, business etc.), with policies and actions tailored to the specific national context. Processes to strengthen capacities should align with national

development plans, and efforts should be made to concretely measure progress using innovations in data sources and measurement approaches.

Embedding participation as a principle in the new agenda will help align it with human rights approaches, but will also improve the quality of policies over time, thereby strengthening implementation. Investment in statistics, as well as advances in technology and new forms of 'big' data, can be used to strengthen **participatory monitoring and accountability**. But mechanisms need to build on existing initiatives, and from the ground up.

**Culture** plays an important role in poverty reduction and sustainable development efforts. As a resilient economic sector in its own right, culture and related activities provide a myriad of livelihood and employment opportunities. Harnessing the cultural sector, as well as cultural values and culturally sensitive approaches, can mediate and improve development outcomes in education, gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, environmental sustainability, durable urbanization and in societies that are recovering from instability or conflict.

The **private sector** will be a key enabler and implementer of the new development agenda. Moving beyond financial contributions, the move to poverty eradication and sustainability will be underpinned by a change in how businesses do business. Government policies can reinforce the behaviours of progressive

companies that are taking account of their social and environmental impacts as well as their bottom line, while transparency in monitoring can help to build trust and strengthen accountability. Localizing the agenda will be important for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

**Civil society**, and its inherent diversity, can also play a fundamental role in implementing the new agenda. For this to become reality, an understanding is required of the role that civil society can play in policy development. An enabling environment needs to be created, including through legislation, which maximizes that potential. Effort and trust are needed to align multi-stakeholder priorities, but doing so will lead to more effective policies and programmes. Stronger accountability mechanisms – including for the private sector – are needed to measure implementation ef-

forts overall. Cross-sectoral partnerships and increased opportunities for civic engagement are needed to add value to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The overarching message of all these Dialogues is that 'softer' means of implementation will also require sufficient investment if the new post-2015 development agenda is to make a real difference to people's lives. Whatever the specific topic of discussion, several principles emerge again and again: participation, inclusion, and the need for strengthened capacities and partnerships.

Only an agenda that focuses on effective implementation, including through these aspects, will do justice to the aspirations and hopes of the millions of people around the world who have guided governments to this new agenda — the future they want.



Participants discussing in Buea, Cameroon (Photo: UNDP Cameroon)

# CROSS-CUTTING MESSAGES FROM THE DIALOGUES

Since 2012 the United Nations has been facilitating the largest ever ‘Global Conversation’ on the future world that people want. The first wave of consultations focused on the ‘what’ of the agenda. National dialogues were held in nearly 100 countries in all parts of the world. Alongside face-to-face meetings in many formats, which targeted those who often do not engage in development policy debates, a vibrant online platform allowed people to engage in timely discussions on poverty, health, education, governance, the environment and other topics. The largest ever global survey — MY World — has now collected votes from over 4,5 million people. The outcome of this first round of consultations is captured in the report ‘A Million Voices: The World We Want’.

One of the main messages that has emerged from the UN Global Conversation is that people would like their governments to be more honest and responsive. People have asked for a government that does a better job in representing them — delivering key services, encouraging growth while regulating markets, and preventing insecurities linked to compromising the planet and the well-being of future gen-

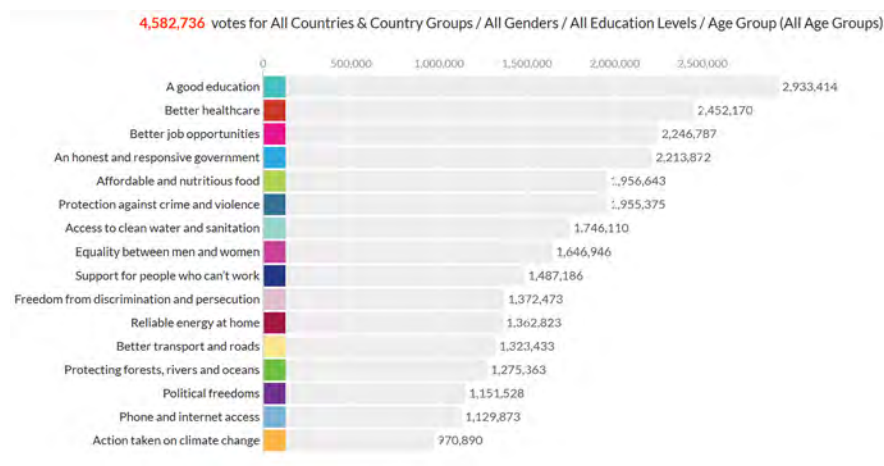
erations. Equality and non-discrimination also stand out as a key message: people are demanding justice, participation and dignity. There is no progress if people are left behind. People want to improve their lives and those of their families and ask that governments create opportunities for their full and equal participation in decisions that affect them.<sup>2</sup>

The consultations revealed this huge appetite and demand for engagement, not only in the design of the development agenda but also in its future implementation. People asked for transformation

— not just of the ‘what’ but also of the ‘how’ development is done. They asked not just for a one-off consultation but for an ongoing conversation. They want not only to articulate the problems but also to help find solutions and be involved in implementing them.<sup>3</sup>

Many of these messages coming from the UNDG-supported consultations have found resonance in other contributions to the post-2015 process, such as the reports of the High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and that of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Most importantly, many of the messages are reflected in the report of the government-led Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. Echoing the demand from people for real action, the Open Working Group’s proposal clearly acknowledges the importance of issues around implementation by including ‘means of implemen-

## THE UN MY WORLD SURVEY PRIORITIES<sup>1</sup>



“Participate in what if you don’t know about it?”

*Deputy Director of National Planning in the Ministry of Finance, Zambia*

1) Screen capture taken on 4 September 2014. (data.myworld2015.org)

2) United Nations Development Group, ‘A Million Voices: The World We Want’, United Nations, New York, 2013.

3) Ibid.



tation' targets under each goal, as well as dedicating a full stand-alone goal to it. In addition, the report includes dedicated goals on reducing inequalities within and between countries and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.

To help people the world over contribute to the debate on the 'how' of the agenda, the United Nations is facilitating a second round of dialogues. The Dialogues on Implementation, in which people are expressing their views on a number of implementation topics, will provide valuable input into the last stretch of the design process, as well as into preparing the ground for immediate implementation.

While each of the Dialogue streams will have its own set of findings — the preliminary of which are detailed later in this report — there are a number of messages that are pertinent to all.

### **PARTICIPATION — MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE REQUIRES PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT**

Possibly the most important message that people are sending is their desire to be engaged. People want to be full part-

ners in the implementation of an agenda that directly affects their lives. They are not passive recipients but active agents of change. This message came strongly from the Global Conversation in almost 100 countries and is coming out strongly again from the Dialogues on Implementation. Moreover, the Dialogues have underlined that while there is an intrinsic value to people being empowered and claiming their right to be heard, their participation and ownership is also essential to achieve successful and sustainable development outcomes.

For example, the Dialogue on localizing the agenda pointed to the need for stronger engagement of local stakeholders in the definition, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda, as the achievement of many of the MDGs depended on the work of local governments and stakeholders. In addition, the Dialogue on culture and development emphasized that community participation and ownership, rooted in local culture, are instrumental in development programmes, including for environmental protection, for sustainable urban development and for gender equality and women's empowerment. Finally, the Dialogue on partnerships with the private sector stressed that an

engaged business sector is critical for innovation, technological advancement and sustainable economic growth.

Through this process, we see that governments and civil society already have working models to tap into people's desire and capacities for engagement; but these examples are too few and not yet fully institutionalized into how public policy is delivered. Many have said that while consultations are a good start, they should not be one-off events but, rather, mechanisms that provide for a continued dialogue with feedback loops that inspire ownership from various stakeholders. The participatory monitoring and accountability Dialogue emphasized placing local actors as co-creators in the development process, as opposed to being consulted as outsiders. The Dialogue on capacities and institutions underlines this principle with its call for conferring greater voice in decision-making to people living in poverty and marginalized communities, as well as opportunities for recourse when rights are violated or discrimination is encountered.

The Dialogues call for governments to create spaces and mechanisms for engagement, not only as a way to strengthen people's basic political rights but also



Security guard voting for MY World survey in San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago (Photo: A. Warner)



"It was my first experience to be given a chance to debate the development priorities, and based on the documents on the voices of young people to be included. After listening to it and the participation, I thought, young people can change the world if they are given a chance. We have to fight for that chance."

*Mukonga Parkens, a third-year student at Mukuba University, Zambia*



Young man bringing ideas to paper at UN Youth Consultation, Cambodia (Photo: UN Cambodia)

because it helps to create better policies and generate better development outcomes. As the participants in the Dialogue on monitoring and accountability recommended: “Participatory approaches are about people, working together in an organized way, to identify and track the priority issues that affect their own communities, so that barriers to development and poverty eradication can be addressed and solved, with support as necessary from the public sector, private entities and other accountable institutions.”

### **INCLUSION — A UNIVERSAL AGENDA MEANS ENGAGING ALL PEOPLE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

The thirst for continued participation and engagement is closely linked to a second message on the importance of including

all stakeholders, recognizing the heterogeneity that exists at all levels: among people, civil society, local governments and the private sector.

The inclusion of the full diversity of stakeholders means paying specific attention to the inclusion of all voices, including women and girls, with a particular focus on marginalized groups and individuals. People living in poverty, indigenous communities and other minorities, persons with disabilities, forcibly displaced and stateless persons, children and young people, migrants and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community are some of the groups and individuals who are not necessarily included in policy- and decision-making processes. Participants in the participatory monitoring and accountability Dialogue emphasized that marginalized persons and/or people living in poverty

should be at the centre and the owners of their own development processes, with all other relevant actors accountable to them. The Dialogue on capacities and institutions suggested that there is a particular need to ensure inclusion as a procedural mechanism to both safeguard inclusive outcomes and foster accountability, ownership and trust in the policy process.

To ensure the inclusion of all stakeholders, many of the Dialogues highlighted the need to bring the global post-2015 development agenda to the local level. Localization of the agenda can help to ensure that different parts of society are included and that diversity is embraced. By adapting to and embracing a society’s cultural characteristics, development approaches can lead to more successful outcomes. Civil society can play a particular role in helping to include actors

“Fighting for equality and gender balance must not be considered a women’s activity. Everyone in the society, men and women, has to cooperate to have fruitful results in this field.

Working with families on avoiding further gender-related issues, and setting rules to create gender balance must be the actions taken during our future development goals.”

*Sahib Namazov (male, 30 years), deputy director of a school in Khachmaz, national consultation in Azerbaijan*

who would otherwise be left out. It is also at the local level that SMEs operate, representing a large segment of business and jobs.

This diversity also applies to the role different stakeholders can play. Participants in the Dialogue on partnerships with the private sector, for example, emphasized that the private sector is not only a source of financing but can also be an actor in development and a driver of sustainable and inclusive economic

growth. The Dialogue on culture and development highlighted that cultural initiatives that engage men and boys to advance women’s empowerment are particularly effective.

### **CAPACITIES — THE FUEL FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

As the report from the Open Working Group also recognizes, a third common thread in the various Dialogues is an

overwhelming need to strengthen capacities at all levels. The emerging development agenda looks set to encompass a set of goals that are more complex, transformative, interdependent and universally applicable than the MDGs. If the implementation of this kind of agenda is to be successful, capacities are at the core. Participants in the Dialogue on capacities and institutions found that strong public institutions can be enablers, but that the opposite is also true: weak public institutions can become obstacles for implementation. They emphasized that a transformative development agenda requires upgraded, coordinated and integrated institutions and capacities. Similarly, participants in the Dialogue on localizing the agenda also emphasized that strong efforts need to be made to improve local leadership, human resources and the technical and management capacities of local governments. Civil society also called for investments in building the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) to be able to play their role, while in turn sug-



Young people with disabilities discuss their participation in the decision-making process, Niksic, Montenegro (Photo: UN Montenegro, Milos Vujovic)



gesting that public servants need skills to nurture and engage non-state actors in policy development. In the Dialogue on partnerships with the private sector the need for capacity-building of SMEs was highlighted, particularly if they are to comply with new sustainability frameworks and standards. The culture and development Dialogue highlighted that culture, and in particular approaches building on cultural diversity, can play a particular role in building capacities for facing the challenges of a multicultural and globalized society.

It is clear that upgraded capacities for monitoring and accountability for the new development agenda, including for better data and statistics, are essential. Monitoring the MDGs has already posed huge challenges and data gaps. With a broader and more transformative post-2015 agenda the challenges will only grow in scale. For example, the Dialogue on localizing the agenda found that local-level data are often not readily available but are vital to support local planning and monitoring of development. The need for quality data manifests itself first as a supply issue: open data are required for people to assess how well their governments are doing and hold them to account. The other side of the coin is the need for public institutions to recognize the validity of new forms of data collected and produced by citizens, civil society and business. Meanwhile, the Dialogue on partnerships with civil society recommends that existing accountability mechanisms should be strengthened, while also building capacities and infrastructure for real-time monitoring. Transparent multi-stakeholder mechanisms for engagement can provide concrete reviews of the challenges and setbacks of implementing the post-2015 development agenda.



Participant at 'Partnerships with Civil Society and the Private Sector' workshop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Photo: UN Cambodia)

## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS — THE GLUE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A fourth message apparent across the various Dialogues is about the importance of creating multi-stakeholder partnerships for the implementation of the post-2015 agenda. This was recognized by the Open Working Group, which in its proposal for the SDGs included two targets on multi-stakeholder partnerships under Goal 17 ("strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development").<sup>4</sup> If constructed carefully, multi-stakeholder partnerships can facilitate participation and voluntary engagement and draw on the assets and strengths of different actors.

In the Dialogues it was recognized that partnerships come in a wide variety of sizes and shapes and are not necessarily

magic bullets. The participants in the Dialogues highlighted a number of criteria for a multi-stakeholder partnership to be effective and add value. For example, several of the Dialogues emphasized the need for a clear delineation of responsibilities between the various partners, and for dialogue and transparency of decision-making processes. The Dialogue on localizing the agenda also indicated that a clear division of labour is needed between different levels of government, taking into account the comparative advantage of each level and accompanied by coordination mechanisms that harmonize efforts.

Many also emphasized the need for accountability mechanisms within a partnership, including mandatory social and environmental safeguards. Both the private sector and localization Dialogues highlighted the need for enabling legisla-

4) United Nations, 'Proposal of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals', United Nations, New York, 2014.



Two boys shaking hands at post-2015 workshop in Azuay, Ecuador (Photo: UNDP Ecuador)

tion and legal frameworks as a basis for accountability. Participants in the private sector Dialogue also stressed the importance of building trust for constructing successful partnerships. Access to information, decentralized governance and an enabling environment for the independent operation of CSOs were cited as prerequisites in the Dialogue on participatory monitoring and accountability.

#### **NEXT STEPS — EMBEDDING ACCOUNTABILITY, PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITIES INTO MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE POST-2015 AGENDA**

This report presents the results of multiple Dialogues with a range of stakeholders: primarily, policy planners, civil society representatives, academics, volunteer groups, communities and private-sector leaders. These activities — which will

continue until April 2015 — have included public meetings, online discussions and literature reviews coordinated by the UNDG. The thoughts, ideas and activities of the Dialogue participants will continue to sharpen our understanding of what it will take to implement the new development agenda.

The appetite for keeping the channels of consultation open continues to grow. Inspired by preliminary results, more



countries have requested to be involved in these Dialogues, including several Small Island Developing States in the Pacific and the Caribbean. The inclusion of Portugal in these Dialogues is a telling example of the growing commitment to a universal sustainable development agenda, one where all countries need to begin putting in place the delivery mechanisms that will bring life to the commitments made at the global level.

As this process unfolds, the partners of the UNDG remain committed to sustaining this unprecedented engagement in shaping the global development agenda. This approach, together with the MY World global survey, has demonstrated proof of concept for connecting people around the world to global policy developments at the United Nations. This connection must continue during the transition from design to the implementation of the new global agenda.

In some countries the Dialogues have already triggered partnerships and implementation mechanisms, forming the foundations for delivery of the new agenda. For example, Thailand has introduced a prototype of a new application that allows people, particularly those living with HIV, to monitor and evaluate public HIV services. In Montenegro the process has allowed for a thorough 'accountability check' on existing forums for citizen participation to improve their usage. In El Salvador the Dialogues have created important links between the local economic development agencies and national planning processes. Youth Connekt, a platform for young people in Rwanda, was created to respond to the predominance of young people's issues that arose during the national post-2015 debates and the results of the Social Good Summit in 2013. At a broader level, all countries engaged in the Global



"The Government of Lesotho is very good at signing international treaties, conventions and action plans. But we are not doing anything to make sure that government follows up and implements. The consequence is that the public is not aware of all these international agreements."

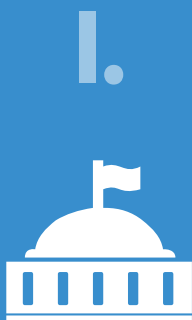
*Participant in the national Dialogue in Lesotho*

Conversation have increased their awareness of the emerging agenda, and all stakeholders are readying themselves for implementation.

As the Dialogues and intergovernmental processes continue, synergies are starting to emerge. It is encouraging to already see many of the themes reflected in the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. Means of Implementation targets are included under each goal and in a stand-alone goal. Institutions and capacities are mentioned several times, and there are two specific targets on multi-stakeholder partnerships. The preamble of the Open Working Group's proposal also cites the need for engagement by civil society and the private sector, and the report calls attention to the fundamental role of data in monitoring progress and capacity development at all levels. To deepen global discussions on accountability for the new agenda, UN Regional Commissions are organizing dialogues on the shape and form of accountability mechanisms at the regional level, with support from the full United Nations development system. All of these inputs are focusing attention on the importance of crafting an agenda that is both ambitious and achievable, and for which progress can be measured.

As the MDGs have rallied — and continue to rally — governments, non-state actors and international development agencies around a set of clear, simply formulated goals and time-bound targets to address poverty, so too will the forthcoming global framework serve as a guiding light for sustainable development. The global post-2015 and SDG framework will signal commitment and ambition, while also providing a way to measure progress across countries.

As the Dialogues on the implementation of the post-2015 agenda have highlighted, however, the global vision is not enough. We can only expect the new agenda to succeed if attention is also paid to the 'softer' side of the means of implementation: the national and local factors. Implementation will need to be participatory and inclusive, with accountability, capacities and partnerships at the heart. Not only will implementation be more effective, it will also be more legitimate. The litmus test of success will be the extent to which these important elements are built into the agenda.



# STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES AND BUILDING EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

## KEY MESSAGES

- A transformative development agenda requires upgraded, coordinated and integrated institutions and capacities.
- Inclusion should be the cornerstone of all capacity-strengthening and institution-building efforts.
- Capacity development and institution-building efforts should be aligned with ongoing national development.
- Measuring progress in capacity development and institutional improvement is feasible and important.
- Strategies, policies and solutions must be locally derived and issue-oriented without merely transplanting best practices across countries — no 'one size fits all'.

Institutions are clearly critical to policy implementation. Strengthening capacities and building effective institutions are not mentioned explicitly in the MDGs but cannot be neglected in the new SDGs. Institutions are primarily about the mechanism of effective service delivery



"Institutions need legitimacy. Institutions should be able to conceptualize the relevant issues, foster communication between disadvantaged groups, and identify actions that can be carried out for development."

*Alioune Sall, African Futures Institute*

and about how inclusion and equity are ensured to ultimately achieve sustainability. While institutional reforms alone cannot drive a transformative development agenda without other essential inputs (i.e. resources, infrastructure, appropriate leadership, human capital, political checks and balances etc.), states need the capacity to recognize the concerns of vulnerable people and to respond to them through coherent interventions. This requires, among other things, ensuring greater voice in decision-making for people living in poverty and marginalized communities, recognizing freedom of association and the right to negotiate collectively, as well as affording opportunities for recourse when rights are violated or discrimination is encountered. Beyond voice, it necessitates paying greater attention to the role of stakeholders in shaping, monitoring and implementing policies.

It also entails a long-term continual and incremental process involving many actors (i.e. line ministries, national and subnational authorities, non-governmental organizations, data collectors, the private sector, trade unions, community activists, academics and more).

## A TRANSFORMATIVE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA REQUIRES UPGRADED, COORDINATED AND INTEGRATED INSTITUTIONS AND CAPACITIES

As the emerging development agenda is expected to encapsulate a set of development goals that are more interdependent, transformative and universally applicable than the MDGs, it will require greater capacities, more responsive institutions and stronger political will for successful implementation. This is particularly important, as institutions tend to



Schoolchildren participating in an essay contest on their vision of well-being by 2030, Turkmenistan (Photo: UNFPA Turkmenistan)

be conservative and resistant to change. Hence, incentives for 'self-improvement' or transformation must be put in place to help overcome documented limits to institutional reform. In short, institutions themselves have to be designed to legitimately respond to the needs of everyone, not just the dominant or elite of society. Responsive institutions at the national level should be mirrored by an effort at the international level to support and reinforce them. Conversely, raising capacities to 'localize' recommendations made by international agreements must also be prioritized (Dialogue in Djibouti). Moreover, coordination and cooperation between agencies at the national level are required for institutions to be more responsive to the needs and priorities of citizens (Malaysia). This necessitates well-designed, integrated and coherent policies and effective coordination across different line agencies and between eco-

"The role of government needs to be re-imagined. Government needs to see itself as having a different purpose in the 21st century, and that is one of system stewardship rather than just deliverer of public services and guarantor of security."

*Catarina Tully, School of International Futures (SOIF)*

nomie, social and environmental policy areas to leverage synergies.

#### **INCLUSION SHOULD BE THE CORNERSTONE OF ALL CAPACITY-STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTION-BUILDING EFFORTS**

There are significant numbers of people and groups who are unable to access

justice or enjoy their rights due to the dissonance between legislation and policies, and between actual implementation and enforcement. An effective capacity-building process must encourage the participation and ownership of those involved and provide a non-partisan and genuinely inclusive space for stakeholder engagement. There is a particular need to ensure inclusion to both safeguard inclusive outcomes and foster account-





Focus group discussion with ethnic minorities, Osh city, Kyrgyzstan (Photo: Ibragimov Hasan)

ability, ownership and trust in the policy process. This necessitates strengthening mechanisms of inclusion and paying particular attention to the situation of people living in poverty, older persons, the private sector, youth, women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, forcibly displaced and stateless persons, and others, including people marginalized from society and development.

#### **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTION-BUILDING EFFORTS SHOULD BE ALIGNED WITH ONGOING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING PROCESSES AT BOTH THE NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL LEVELS**

Forging a long-term vision for national development entails coordinating the initiatives and priorities of different stakeholders to manage short- and long-term trade-offs which are at the core of

achieving sustainability. It will, therefore, be fruitful to integrate capacity-strengthening efforts with existing initiatives on public administration reform to enhance effectiveness and transparency (Dialogues in Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan) and to promote an integrated system-wide approach (Moldova). It may also be included as part of efforts to craft a new national development plan (Malaysia, Turkmenistan) or a national employment strategy (Costa Rica).

Furthermore, subnational capacity-building, including introducing modern management and planning technologies in public administration and local self-government, state and municipal employee effectiveness evaluations and a system for assessing the quality of government and municipal services, has been recognized as an important strategy for stimulating community involvement and participation in local development

strategies (Dialogues in Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan). Ensuring that communities are in a position to develop their resources and their capacities to respond to local problems has an important role to play in addressing the many challenges that they confront.

#### **MEASURING PROGRESS IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT IS FEASIBLE AND IMPORTANT**

There is a need to upgrade and strengthen statistics and data collection capacities, including the alignment of survey tools to collect, analyse and report data related to SDGs (Dialogue in Malaysia). Complementary to this is the creation of independent, transparent and non-partisan bodies and mechanisms for monitoring, providing feedback and evaluating the capacities and delivery of services by



government institutions (Togo). Further to this, some Dialogue participants discussed the potential development of new quantitative and qualitative performance indicators related to measuring progress in particular sectors such as health care and education (Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan). There are a variety of ways to stimulate and measure incremental change, including by collecting disaggregated data and providing quick feedback on policy impact, as well as by creating specific policy incentives.

**STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND SOLUTIONS MUST BE LOCALLY DERIVED AND ISSUE-ORIENTED WITHOUT MERELY TRANSPLANTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS COUNTRIES — NO ‘ONE SIZE FITS ALL’**

The country and local contexts are extremely important for the functioning of institutions. They are often shaped by the economic and social situation, ethnic make-up, colonial history, political realities and social norms and

behaviours. Solutions to problems must fit the local context. For instance, in Moldova, participants in the national Dialogue pointed out the need to improve personnel, research and analytical capacities as main areas of work to strengthen the capacity of their institutions. In Pakistan the focus was on strengthening subnational authorities, while in Malaysia it was on the coordination function between state and subnational levels.



Young people in post-2015 consultation, Upala, Costa Rica (Photo: UNFPA Costa Rica, G. Rodriguez)





# LOCALIZING THE AGENDA

## KEY MESSAGES

- Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) are critical for promoting inclusive sustainable development within their territories, and as such for the implementation of the post-2015 agenda.
- Effective local governance can ensure the inclusion of a diversity of local stakeholders, thereby creating broad-based ownership, commitment and accountability.
- An integrated multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach is needed to promote transformative agendas at the local level.
- Strong national commitment to provide adequate legal frameworks and institutional and financial capacity to local governments is required.

### LRGS ARE CRITICAL FOR PROMOTING INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THEIR TERRITORIES, AND AS SUCH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-2015 AGENDA

The review of the MDGs demonstrated the need to communicate the objec-

"Local strategic planning would allow a greater integration of the three pillars of development: social, economic and environmental. Likewise, further integration between urban and rural areas needs to be promoted, in order to foster greater territorial cohesion."

*Ms. Milagro Navas, Mayor of the Municipality of Antiguo Cuscatlán and President of FLACMA, El Salvador, EU Policy Forum Lima, 2014*

tive of a global agenda more efficiently to all actors, and also underlined the need for stronger engagement of local stakeholders in the definition, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda.

LRGs play a crucial role in linking key local stakeholders in territorial development. They are a key part of the State and draw their mandate from their local democratic accountability and from working on the front line, close to citizens and communities.

The active role of LRGs in international development cooperation is crucial to achieving development results, democratizing the aid effectiveness agenda and promoting inclusive ownership. Decentralized development cooperation, as well as the territorial approach to development, should be acknowledged

and used as a modality to support the implementation of the post-2015 agenda at the local level.

To ensure ownership, a bottom-up approach should be adopted for the post-2015 agenda, starting at the local level. Emphasis should be placed on communicating the SDGs and raising awareness of the universality of the agenda, to ensure full understanding and ownership by all types of governments and stakeholders. At the same time, the emerging global development agenda should be translated into national and local development plans, and linkages and partnerships with other development actors should be fostered to harmonize local development activities, avoid duplications and promote effectiveness.

The proposed SDG to 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe,



resilient and sustainable' will contribute to mobilizing local authorities and stakeholders and focus the attention of national governments and other international partners on the potential of urbanization as a key driver for sustainable development. In concert with national governments and other local stakeholders, local governments can properly plan and manage a local response to the challenges of urbanization, work to upgrade slums and enhance resilience at the local and territorial levels.

### EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNANCE CAN ENSURE THE INCLUSION OF A DIVERSITY OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS, THEREBY CREATING BROAD-BASED OWNERSHIP, COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A bottom-up approach to development will help to ensure ownership of the post-2015 development agenda at the local level. As the level of government closest to the people, LRGs are in a unique position to identify and respond to development needs and gaps and be responsible for a wide range of functional responsibilities that go beyond service provision. Local governments can address development challenges through planned public policies defined, executed and monitored with the par-



Participants presenting at Dialogue on 'Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda', El Salvador (Photo: UNDP El Salvador)

ticipation of citizens and relevant local stakeholders.

Local stakeholders play a crucial role in the promotion of the key values of culture (heritage, diversity, creativity and the transmission of knowledge) as drivers and enablers of sustainable and inclusive development. Distinctive local cultures, including of indigenous peoples, migrants and minorities, as well as traditional institutions and authorities, should be seen as a rich resource from

which development policies can draw knowledge, legitimacy, participation and enhanced effectiveness. Localization will help to ensure that diversity is embraced.

Women's political and social leadership and equal participation are essential for territorial development and the implementation of the post-2015 agenda. Electing more women at the local level will strongly contribute to ensuring women's full and effective participation in decision-making in political, economic and social development. Youth participation in development should also be a strong pillar for the future development agenda, taking into account their ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, political and socio-economic diversities.

National governments and the international development community should recognize that local governments are well placed to convene the diversity of development stakeholders at the local level (civil society, migrants, the private

"The success of the post-2015 localization requires the participation of the community at all levels of implementation. Continuous dialogues, meaningful consultations, and other forms of constructive engagements are effective mechanisms in establishing accountability, transparency and trust between local governments and their constituents."

*Participant in the Dialogues on the localization of the agenda in the Philippines*



Young woman speaking at Dialogue on 'Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda' in Buea, Cameroon  
(Photo: UNDP Cameroon)

sector, academia, national bodies and international actors) and play an important role in developing and implementing integrated cross-sectoral strategies for local development.

Governments at all levels must be held accountable for responding to social inclusion and human security challenges in their countries and cities, especially in deprived and post-conflict areas.

### **AN INTEGRATED MULTI-LEVEL AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH IS NEEDED TO PROMOTE TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDAS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

Decentralization, subsidiarity and good governance at all levels should be recognized as essential to implementing the post-2015 development agenda. The transfer of responsibilities should be accompanied by appropriate resources and finance, and local capacities should be strengthened, recognized and harnessed to implement the global agenda at the local level. Sustained inter-institutional dialogue and trust are crucial elements for success.

National governments and international partners should acknowledge and define the role of local government and local stakeholders in setting, implementing and monitoring the post-2015 development agenda to ensure further accountability and transparency. Implementation responsibilities should be clearly divided among different levels of government, taking into account the distinct comparative advantage of each level, and accompanied by effective coordination mechanisms that harmonize efforts across them. Implementation should be undertaken by the lowest possible sphere of government, in line with the principle of subsidiarity.

National plans and public investment should contribute to localizing the post-2015 development agenda. It is imperative to further connect LRGs with national policies and strategies to better respond to the demands and needs of citizens.

Constructive dialogues and partnerships between local institutions and public and private actors are crucial to promoting democratic governance and empower-

ing local stakeholders to own the SDGs. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can support development at the local level. However, enabling legislation and local accountability mechanisms are essential to their effective implementation. It is recommended to launch initiatives at the national level for the creation of a framework to build corporate sustainability policies to better fit local realities and processes.

Territorial and urban planning, access to basic services for all, including water, sanitation, health and housing, social safety nets and promotion of economic opportunities for men, women and youth were highlighted as priority areas for local governments in their quest to build more inclusive societies. A responsible use of natural resources should also be promoted to conserve the environment and local communities. A proportion of the resources generated from such activities should be reinvested locally to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of the affected localities.

### **STRONG NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IS REQUIRED**

More capacities and resources at the local level are needed for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, including for improved monitoring and accountability. Greater efficiency in the implementation of the agenda will be possible with improved intergovernmental and multi-level coordination as well as greater local participation. This will ensure stronger and more responsive accountability. Strengthening local governments is critical to foster coordination at the local level (horizontal





coordination) and at the national and international levels (vertical coordination). Stronger legal and institutional frameworks with regard to decentralization will support good governance at all levels.

A holistic approach to achieving the SDGs can be developed by defining clear means of engagement to encourage transparency and accountability (e.g. participatory budgeting and planning), and promoting collaboration between local governing bodies, CSOs, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders. Sound measures should be defined at the local level to avoid and prevent fraud and corruption. Balanced national and regional development planning should be strengthened to support the economic, social and environmental linkages between urban, peri-urban and rural areas, to secure balanced territorial development.

Financing territorial and urban development is a key challenge for local governments. Efforts must be made to ensure that they have access to sources of



"The review of the Millennium Development Goals demonstrated the need to communicate the objective of a global agenda more efficiently to all actors, and the need for stronger engagement of local stakeholders in the definition, implementation and monitoring of the Post-2015 Development Agenda."

*Participant in the Dialogue on the localization of the agenda in Portugal*

revenue, and effective fiscal decentralization should increase their ability to rely on their own resources. In parallel, national governments should ensure predictable, regular and transparent transfers commensurate to the functions and responsibilities transferred to local governments. Creative, sustainable and equitable financing mechanisms need to be explored and applied at the local level. Strong efforts need to be made to improve local leadership, human resources, and the technical and management capacities of local governments, as well as their ability to mobilize local resources,

deliver services and involve citizens in planning and decision-making, with special attention to strategies to engage the most excluded.

Local-level data are often not readily available to support local planning and monitoring of local development. Reforms to official data collection services will be necessary to assist subnational governments (for instance, with data identifying where needs are concentrated within each local jurisdiction) in monitoring progress. Local target setting will require the development of appropriate indicators taking into account the local context and environment. Localization will ensure a more accurate reflection of the well-being of populations and provide a more detailed subnational picture of progress.

National governments and development partners should ensure that the localization of the SDGs is accompanied by the localization of resources, enabling local governments to raise more local revenue and secure allocations of national and international budgets. Transparency and wider access to data and information for local government authorities and communities through information and communications technology, online social networks and community media should also be promoted.



Participants discussing at Dialogue on 'Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda', Jamaica (Photo: UN Jamaica)



# PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

## KEY MESSAGES

- Participatory monitoring supports development processes and results that are owned by the proposed beneficiaries, with all involved parties being held accountable for reaching goals and targets.
- Local development solutions and good participatory practices should be scaled up and featured more prominently in the post-2015 development agenda. This will require transparent and inclusive accountability systems that ensure full participation of all people, including women and girls.
- More space should be created for CSOs, grass-roots and local organizations and individuals to participate meaningfully in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 agenda. It is particularly critical to strengthen women's voice and influence in country monitoring and accountability mechanisms, as well as the voices of those who are often excluded from these processes, including children and youth,

minorities, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty, forcibly displaced and stateless persons, and other groups that are marginalized or face discrimination.

- Participatory accountability practices will better ensure that the agenda will be rooted in a human rights framework.
- Concrete examples of participatory monitoring do exist and should be used as a resource for future endeavours.

## PEOPLE SHOULD BE AT THE CENTRE

Overall, the findings from each component of the consultation have been largely supportive of a participatory approach, with one message standing

"People know, people discuss, people do, people verify."

*Motto of Vietnam's Grassroots Democracy Ordinance*

above all: marginalized persons and people living in poverty should be at the centre and the owners of their own development processes, with all other relevant actors accountable to them regarding progress on these development outcomes.

Participatory monitoring for accountability can take various forms. At its core, it should be about inclusive and transparent practices used to monitor the effectiveness and usefulness of local, regional, national or international policies. This provides evidence which can be used to improve the policies. Participatory approaches are about people, working together in an organized way, to identify and track the priority issues that affect their own communities, so that barriers to development and poverty eradication can be addressed and solved, with support as necessary from the public sector, private entities and other **accountable** institutions.



For better monitoring and accountability in the post-2015 development agenda we need better data. Data should be disaggregated, by gender, age, ethnicity and disability, and also be collected for issues seemingly difficult to quantify at present — for example, violence against women and girls. The MDGs have been criticized for their lack of accountability, as well as their focus on national averages and global aggregates as measures of progress, which has often masked slow or stagnant progress among the worst-off sections of societies and growing disparities at subnational levels.

Participation is critical to achieve successful and sustainable development progress, and there is an intrinsic value to people being empowered and claiming their right to be heard. The post-2015 agenda needs to feature people-led, transparent and inclusive processes for monitoring progress towards targets and indicators. This is especially critical for poor and/or marginalized people, who are traditionally left out of conversations and policymaking decisions that most directly affect them, and can result in negative, unintended consequences and unacceptable development outcomes.

### LOCAL SOLUTIONS AND OWNERSHIP OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS ARE KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

As one contributor noted, “a major shortcoming of the MDGs was the failure to localize ... A front-end investment in communication and local analysis and planning will be key.” Another participant noted that small groups “permit the formation of meaningful relationships between participants” and that “robust community organization leads to community ownership.” Similarly, the literature review suggested that a par-

ticipatory monitoring and accountability approach could offer a more sustainable development model — in that local actors gain the skills needed and are empowered to make continuing development efforts sustainable long after the framework and interventions expire.

The closer the participatory monitoring occurs to the local level, the more likely it is to impact policy and social services. For

example, the Zambia national Dialogue noted that the Citizen Voice and Action model, a local-level advocacy methodology that transforms the dialogue between communities and government to improve services (such as health care and education), has been highly effective. With support from other partners, improvements have been seen in allocations of health care staff, essential drug provisions, clinic availability and the

“People cannot participate in the monitoring process because they do not have the information they need. For example, we would like women to have more access to land rights, but if you go and talk to the women in rural areas, you’ll see that almost none even know that they have rights to have their names next to their husband’s in land registration.”

*Participant in Vietnam’s National Dialogue on participatory monitoring for accountability*



A little girl describes the world she wants, Zambia (Photo: UNV Zambia)





Focus group discussion on participation of the local population in decision-making processes in Piva, northern Montenegro (Photo: UN Montenegro, Milos Vujovic)

expedited completion of a delayed maternity wing, as well as additional desks, teachers and staff housing at various educational facilities in the three districts using the approach.

In Montenegro, findings from focus groups showed that citizens utilized various methods to present their views and opinions on topical issues to the relevant authorities. For example, students wanting to influence the choice of teaching staff wrote to the Ministry of Education, stayed away from schools and engaged the media in their campaign.

### **THE MORE EFFECTIVE INCLUSION OF CSOS WILL BE CRITICAL TO THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

Another theme that emerged was related to changing the role and impact of CSOs in the post-2015 development agenda.

CSO involvement should be collaborative — not just consultative. Notable initiatives highlighted during the consultations featured CSO collaboration that placed local actors as co-creators in the development process, as opposed to being consulted as outsiders.

The literature review noted that future consideration should be given to expanding the role of CSOs as facilitators and organizers of interactions between international aid organizations and local actors, rather than serving as the collective voice. Though this new operational paradigm represents a significant expansion of work for CSOs, the research has revealed that it is indeed beneficial in allowing people living in poverty to self-determine.

One of the points raised in the national Dialogues was that Member States should work closely with civil society

from an early stage, by setting up mechanisms for regular dialogue where organizations are given real power to decide on the processes, methods and analysis to conduct assessments.

### **THE POST-2015 FRAMEWORK MUST BE ROOTED IN A HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK**

The consultation emphasizes that the post-2015 development agenda should be embedded in human rights and that countries need to be held accountable for the commitments they make. A human rights approach to post-2015 commitments also calls for more descriptive and representative data to be collected to track and monitor progress within a larger macro-strategy of public policy at the national level in a human rights framework that holds all involved responsible.

"If data is not reliable, we cannot talk about participatory monitoring and accountability – what is there to measure and hold accountable against?"

*NGO representative in Dialogue in Albania*

### CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF PARTICIPATORY MONITORING DO EXIST AND SHOULD BE USED AS A RESOURCE FOR FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

The consultation revealed that there is an appetite for participatory approaches and that local examples already exist that can be scaled up and shared. Continued partnership and support for such approaches should be encouraged as part of the monitoring and accountability framework for the post-2015 agenda.

Coming out of the call for papers, ASED, a women's rights organization based in Albania, examined participatory monitoring for accountability on gender equality issues — empowering women in decision-making at the local level. It created the Citizen's Evaluation for Good

Governance and a scorecard for social auditing and gender budgeting. Care UK, working in Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Peru and Rwanda, also came up with community scorecards and alternative citizen oversight mechanisms for budgeting and service provision for social accountability. It found that collaboration is crucial and that participatory monitoring should be more strategic and tactical, rather than haphazard.

An example of participatory monitoring in a PPP context was given by Nielsen, the market research firm, which undertook its Focused Livelihood Intervention (FLI) project in India. FLI sought to improve the economic, employment and livelihood situations of people living in poor areas. It found that participatory monitoring and accountability methodologies yielded more community involvement, with external agencies (including the United Nations) playing the role of observers and facilitators only, rather than leading or driving the project themselves.

UNICEF Peru, in its paper 'Community Surveillance Systems for Early Childhood and Development: A participatory approach', exemplified how community surveillance systems (CSS) in Peru were essential to the growth and development of children and pregnant mothers. The CSS strategy increased the participation of communities and families where they were empowered to demand higher

quality services and mobilized on activities to reduce chronic malnutrition. It did so through an awareness campaign, as well as a monitoring system to check up on mothers for pre- and postnatal care. By establishing a relationship with the mother throughout the process, it was much easier to disseminate nutritional advice.

In the Philippines, Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits (ECOWEB) provides lessons and recommendations on how to make grass-roots participatory budgeting processes work and address poverty by instituting the participation of civil society and grass-roots organizations in planning and allocating resources for poverty reduction projects in partnership with local government.

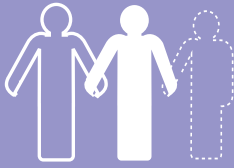
Coming out of the national consultations, Zambia noted the use of M-WASH, a mobile/web-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting system that covers 1.7 million people and advances accountability by making water and sanitation data transparent. The technological component inspires competition among districts by publishing results and maps that demonstrate which districts and provinces are making the most progress towards improved access to water and sanitation.

Thailand described how its iMonitor application for smart phones and other devices is tracking and evaluating public HIV services, as well as creating an opportunity for dialogue with authorities to address challenges. The application enables people to log 'alerts' if antiretroviral treatment, condoms and medicines are not available in health centres, and also to report discrimination in the workplace. The iMonitor also informs people of the locations of health centres for HIV testing and other health services.



UN Volunteer Taonga M'shanga facilitating a discussion among village youth, Zambia (Photo: UNV Zambia)

## IV.



# PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

### KEY MESSAGES

- Recognize and understand the role of civil society in policy development.
- Create an enabling environment by building a policy and regulatory framework that maximizes civil society's contribution towards development objectives.
- Proactively align multi-stakeholder priorities, including those of government, civil society, volunteers and private-sector actors.
- Set up and maintain accountability mechanisms that monitor partnerships and progress in implementation efforts.

### RECOGNIZE AND UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Civil society plays important advocacy and mediation roles in policy development by identifying the most critical development priorities, suggesting practical solutions and policy opportunities and critiquing impractical or problematic policies. Civil society allows people to



"Government fears CSOs due to lack of understanding of the functions of CSOs. Shared information helps to break down this fear."

*Participant in the national Dialogue in Lesotho*

concretely engage in addressing development objectives at the local and national levels. Engagement and voluntary action can strengthen ownership, build individual capacity and help to address challenges in a sustainable way. The expertise of local civil society can be more grounded in national circumstances than the expertise of international research institutions.

Civil society can make many important contributions to policy development. For example, civil society can support government in translating global goals and targets into policies that reflect the actual needs and priorities of local communities. It can also help to include actors that would otherwise be left out of policy decision-making. Finally, civil society can often take a leading role in raising awareness at the community level on new legislation, policies or important development initiatives, by reaching out in particular to marginalized groups and geographic areas.

The full participation of civil society in designing post-2015 policies is required to build functional national systems. To achieve this, national consultations should be conducted to take stock of effective civil society engagement, best practices should be replicated, and civil society capacities should be increased. In addition, public servants should be trained on the role of non-state actors in policy development and information sharing, including through online outreach.

### CREATE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT BY BUILDING A POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK THAT MAXIMIZES CIVIL SOCIETY'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

An enabling environment for civil society partnership must, at a minimum, be consistent with agreed international human rights, including among others: freedom





Young children want their voice to be heard during a consultation in Deir Alla, Jordan Valley (Photo: UN Jordan)

of association, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, the right to operate free from unwarranted state interference, the right to communicate and cooperate, and the right to seek and secure funding. Further, States must fulfil their duty to protect their citizens. Governments should build local capacity in priority areas, and engage civil society's capacity to produce credible analytical, qualitative and quantitative research.

More specifically, the Dialogue recommends that coordination and knowledge-sharing mechanisms should be developed and improved, to avoid

duplication, build alliances and strengthen capacity. Access to technology should be expanded, for example to the internet as well as to independent media and information, including by creating public media platforms. In addition, investments need to be made to build the capacity of CSOs, including by providing support for their participation in government meetings, and visa requirements should be relaxed to enable civil society to attend international conferences (which most often take place in developed countries), to exchange expertise and lessons learned.

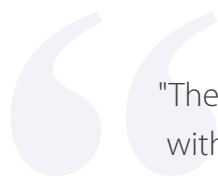
### PROACTIVELY ALIGN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE OF GOVERNMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY, VOLUNTEERS AND PRIVATE-SECTOR ACTORS

Convergence should always be managed for the mutual benefit of people and the State. To align multi-stakeholder priorities, efforts and resources must be pooled to achieve shared objectives and common results. Multi-stakeholder forums (virtual or face-to-face) can be organized to discuss priorities, ensure coordination and monitor activities. Training and guidance are needed on



how to build and institutionalize partnerships. Corporate social responsibility mechanisms should be established to foster collaborative relationships with the private sector, based on transparency and shared values.

As information sharing is essential to ensure the meaningful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, all stakeholders should develop public awareness processes. Programme data and policy documents should also be contextualized into research and publication materials that could contribute to national development. To tap into



"There is a need for institutionalization of partnerships with the private sector, government and civil society."

*Participant in the national Dialogue in Lesotho*

the potential of volunteerism, public awareness also needs to be created about its benefits. Volunteerism can be seen as a cross-cutting means of implementation, producing benefits such as capacity-building, empowerment and social integration.

#### **SET UP AND MAINTAIN ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS THAT MONITOR PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS**

It is essential for all development actors to agree on the design of sustainable



Participant at 'Dialogue on Civil Society', Indonesia (Photo: UN Indonesia)





Round-table discussion at UN Youth Consultation, Cambodia (Photo: UN Cambodia)

development policy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, to achieve an effective agenda. The formulation of the post-2015 development agenda provides an opportunity to ensure more systematic and regulatory monitoring of

government strategies and action. Existing accountability mechanisms should be strengthened, while the use of media (free press, social media) can critically contribute to more effective and responsive governance, providing tools for

assessment of strategic decisions taken by both the public and private sectors.

Multi-stakeholder working groups or forums should be formed and institutionalized to periodically assess efforts and implementation progress. They should include government, the private sector, civil society, academia and media, and be committed to the principle of transparency. Such mechanisms should draw on the expertise of collective bodies, such as municipal councils, to inform discussion. Internet portals and websites for monitoring initiatives, including real-time monitoring, should also be built to monitor progress. In addition, transparency mechanisms could be created through the development of public, private and civil society initiatives that provide a clear, concrete and democratic review of the challenges and setbacks of the global development agenda.

"Because of my disability, I was away from other children and I was made to go to the special schools for persons with disabilities. Such a childhood affected my further life, and I never considered myself an integral part of this society. I would love to see all children with disabilities going to the same schools with other children in a new development framework. A post-2015 agenda must bring inclusive education to the table."

*Murad Mammadov (male, 24 years), a trainer at the Center of Development & Aid, national consultation in Azerbaijan*

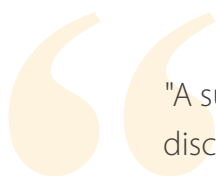
V.



# ENGAGING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

## KEY MESSAGES

- The role of business and industry in international development is not limited to mobilizing financial resources. It lies more fundamentally in the impact of their core operations on the issues covered by the proposed SDGs.
- The social and environmental impacts of these core business operations need to be monitored and reported, regardless of the country of operation.
- The most direct route to innovation, technological advance and productive capacity is through healthy, engaged businesses, industries and finance houses.
- Effective private–public dialogue builds on local capacities and defines roles and responsibilities for all partners. An inclusive format of involving business and industry in national development planning is taking place in many country settings.



"A sustainable mechanism is needed; PPPs have been discussed over the past 10 years, but implementation strategies are still lacking."

*A representative of the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

The Dialogue organized its discussions according to the following five themes:

### DEVELOP GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT DRIVE CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

The leading role of governments in driving the development agenda was recognized by participants in the Dialogue. Public institutions can scale up the contribution of business to development by shaping corporate sustainability — for example through policy frameworks and incentives, and encouraging the uptake of corporate and public–private initiatives in alignment with the SDGs. As a representative of the Caribbean manufacturing industry argued, "Governments should assist in efforts to create a unified vision about sustainable development

and provide incentives to private corporations to support them further in executing this."

As explicitly stressed in the regional Dialogue for Latin America and the Caribbean, gender equality criteria — including measures such as increasing the proportion of women in leadership positions, creating employment and decent work, and closing the pay gap between men and women — should be placed at the centre of these policies.

National governments need to provide the legal and economic tools to enable private firms to gain economic benefits while complying with social and environmental requirements. Incentives should be in place to support firms that engage in ethical business practices (e.g. designing and awarding procurement





Graphic of the Latin America regional consultation on 'Engaging with the Private Sector' in Cartagena, Colombia (Photo: Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID))

tenders and export credits according to sustainability criteria). Several consultations, including the regional ones for the Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia and for the Pacific, strongly supported putting sustainable productive capacities and value-added creation at the centre of development. There was also advocacy for transformative policies, such as shifting the tax burden away from labour and towards natural resource use and the removal of harmful subsidies.

At several events, such as in Austria, Kenya and the USA, it was suggested that public-sector bodies should promote sustainability best practices by publishing success stories on official government websites. In other events, governments were urged to lead by example through sustainable procurement programmes and increased transparency, thus also minimizing corruption.

### ENHANCE PARTNERSHIPS

The implementation of the post-2015 agenda will require the buy-in of industrialists, entrepreneurs and corporations to a more sustainable corporate landscape. Such buy-in includes the adoption of voluntary standards taking into account needs and cultural contexts.

Partnerships come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, and operate at levels from local to global. The consultation strengthened awareness of the added value and the transformative potential of PPPs and multi-sector and business-to-business partnerships. When partnerships build on the resources, capabilities and influence of a range of stakeholders to tackle complex challenges, they become powerful mechanisms to accelerate development. They can also be vital to enhancing ownership.

Commonly, mistrust between public and private actors as well as a lack of clear policy guidelines hinder the effectiveness of such partnerships (Dialogue in Indonesia).

PPPs can further economic development in some contexts, with the caveat that the category of SMEs must not be neglected (Dialogues in Mongolia, Trinidad and Tobago and regional event in Latin America and the Caribbean). Due to the flexibility, innovative capacity and large proportion of employment provided by this category of firms, SMEs are a strategic and valuable connection for reaching local people and meeting local needs.

The private sector has traditionally been the driver of scientific and technological development, representing a dynamic and powerful force in innovative capacity. Therefore, PPPs — as well as corporate



Participants at Latin America regional consultation on 'Engaging with the Private Sector' in Cartagena, Colombia (Photo: UNDP, B. Auricchio)

practice per se — are seen as instrumental in knowledge sharing and technology transfer, which are crucial to sustainability and economic development. Clear cost-benefit analysis in developing PPPs is needed to justify each stage of the process.

Potential benefits of greater interaction between the private sector and the United Nations system at the country, regional and multilateral levels were discussed in the regional events for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. A role for the United Nations as a convener and arbiter in enforcing 'the rules of the game' was also suggested. Some industry participants also expressed a desire to craft better relations with trade unions and labour representatives (raised in consultations in Washington DC). Participants in national consultations in Kenya, Mongolia, Turkey and Spain and in regional Dialogues across the globe have stressed building trust, through improved transparency and accountability, as the most vital component for constructing successful PPPs, along with the need to improve communication (Dialogues in Washington DC, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Turkey, Addis Ababa).

### **MOBILIZE PRIVATE SUSTAINABILITY FINANCE**

With the development of the corporate sustainability movement, growing numbers of investors, companies and foundations are embedding sustainability considerations in their investment decisions and seeking to deliver value for business and society. As a representative of the US Agency for International Development in Washington DC acknowledged, "foreign direct investment has also changed in nature: instead of a one-way direction, investors are now increasingly investing in a way to grow with the markets, and become stakeholders."

Access to new forms of finance, such as microfinance, responsible investment, venture capital, carbon markets and other innovative forms, can be essential for start-up firms, for maintaining investment cycles and for harnessing the dynamism of private-sector companies. Economic governance and resilience are critical elements towards this end that were cited in the consultations. Private sustainability finance should also be leveraged through a smart combination of local microenterprise and SME creation, investment promotion, adapted

financing and incentive schemes, and technology transfer. Financing needs should be accompanied by a sector- and country/region-specific agenda, as stated in the Europe and Central Asia regional consultation by a representative of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Financial resources can be directed towards sustainable development through risk-mitigating mechanisms for investments in sustainability — for example, loan guarantees on infrastructure projects that are environmentally protective, create decent jobs and benefit poor and marginalized people but require large amounts of upfront capital and have a very distant horizon for returns. Moreover, in countries with a large proportion of small enterprises, such as Small Island Developing States, export promotion strategies focusing on value-chain development are seen as essential, with clear delineation of responsibilities for each actor, and with clear linkages established.

### **LOCALIZE THE POST-2015 AGENDA FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF SMES**

SMEs play a very important role in national economies, as they account for approximately 90 percent of businesses and more than 50 percent of jobs worldwide. The consultations indicate that the engagement of SMEs in global value chains can be an extremely powerful way to channel sustainability criteria into the business fabric of developing countries. This was particularly stressed in the regional Dialogues for Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia and the Pacific. Clear communication of post-2015 objectives from the United Nations and other engaged multinational actors will assist SMEs in identifying their role in realizing the post-2015 agenda at





"New modes of accountability and transparency for businesses should take into account the size, needs and possibilities of the firm in question."

*A government representative from Colombia*

the local level. Support from large-scale corporations in whose supply chains they operate will help them to overcome a vulnerability to low productivity and take advantage of their flexibility and grass-roots network. This support could entail technology transfer, the sharing of best practices and knowledge, and engagement in partnerships that encourage the adoption of sustainability criteria and that help navigate international trade standards.

Attention was drawn in most dialogues to the specific challenges of SMEs, such as their need for capacity-building. In the words of a participant from the business community in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, "SMEs need capacity-building — not just sporadic training, but skill-based training." The capacities of the SME sector are relatively weak in most of the developing countries where Dialogues took place. Strategic training programmes that focus on, and are oriented to, skills acquisition (ranging from technical and management capacities to access to markets), market intelligence, and the use of appropriate technologies are therefore fundamental. The strengthening of local, regional and global networks also has the potential to unleash new sources of growth, competitiveness, innovation and job creation. A strong message emerged (e.g. from the national Dialogues in Spain and the regional Dialogue for the Pacific) that SMEs should not be overburdened with complex sustainability frameworks

and standards, due to their lower capacity to take on related administration and transaction costs.

### **BUILD TRUST THROUGH ENHANCED TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Representatives of private companies often stressed that public-sector and civil society bodies must be judged just as rigorously as private firms concerning sustainability. Greater transparency and better circulation of successful examples of public-private cooperation through public communication channels could

help in this regard. To foster an atmosphere conducive to transparency, it was also suggested that public bodies should publish details of their decision-making on their websites (Dialogue in Kenya).

Participants clearly highlighted the importance of streamlining measurement and stated that reporting tools need to be affordable and understandable for SMEs to increase their impact and accountability. Along this line, participants in the majority of Dialogues advocated for improved transparency and business accountability in non-financial performance with related indicators, such as contribution to poverty eradication, support for decent work, respect for gender equality and promotion of environmental sustainability, benchmarked against international best practices and business ethics. Finally, increased transparency is also viewed as the preferred tool for battling corruption in both the private and public sectors, as suggested in the regional Dialogues for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.



Round-table discussion at regional consultation for Europe and Central Asia on 'Engaging with the Private Sector' in Bratislava, Slovakia (Photo: Patrick Domingo)

# VI.



## CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

### KEY MESSAGES

- Culture can make an important contribution to poverty reduction, as a resilient economic sector that provides livelihood opportunities.
- Education strategies should aim to develop cultural literacy and equip young people with the skills to live in a multicultural and diverse society, in both economic and social terms.
- Participation in the culture sector and the engagement of cultural values provide important opportunities for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Culture-led redevelopment of urban areas and public spaces helps preserve the social fabric, attract investment and improve economic returns.
- Development programmes which take into account the link between cultural diversity and biodiversity, including traditional knowledge, secure greater environmental sustainability.
- Culture has the potential to build bridges and shape more effective reconciliation processes with full ownership of the communities.



"Understanding and considering a society's cultural aspects is critical to adapting development approaches to local contexts and ensuring successful outcomes."

*H.E. Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Vice-President of the UN General Assembly, at the Special Thematic Debate of the UN General Assembly on Culture and Sustainable Development in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*

Culture is an essential component of sustainable development and a critical element of human rights-based approaches. It represents a source of identity, innovation and creativity for the individual and community and is an important factor in building social inclusion and eradicating poverty, providing for economic growth and ownership of development processes.

To date, the consultations have shown a strong consensus on the importance of linking culture to the priorities of the post-2015 development agenda. The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals referred to the role of culture in the overarching introduction of its outcome document and within the targets of five proposed SDGs related to food security, education, inclusive and

sustainable economic growth, sustainable cities and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

### **CULTURE CAN MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO POVERTY REDUCTION, AS A RESILIENT ECONOMIC SECTOR THAT PROVIDES LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES**

The cultural and creative industries, sustainable cultural tourism and the safeguarding of cultural heritage are powerful drivers for poverty reduction, sustainable economic growth and employment, as confirmed by examples from Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Laos, Mexico, Pakistan, Samoa, South Sudan and Uruguay.



Highlights come from the consultations in Mali and Serbia. In Mali the culture sector is essential to economic growth and to addressing the social aspects of poverty. It is crucial to direct investments to target this potential. Serbia has examined culture as a strategic tool for revenue generation. Eco-tourism and cultural infrastructure are some of the main ways to reduce poverty through culture, while also contributing to better environmental awareness.

**EDUCATION STRATEGIES SHOULD AIM TO DEVELOP CULTURAL LITERACY AND EQUIP YOUNG PEOPLE WITH**

**THE SKILLS TO LIVE IN A MULTI-CULTURAL AND DIVERSE SOCIETY, IN BOTH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TERMS**

Integrating cultural elements in education programmes fosters linkages with one's roots and provides for locally relevant content, resulting in more relevant skills and better learning, as presented in case studies from Albania, Argentina, India, Jordan, Namibia, Palau, Tanzania, the USA and Uruguay.

For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, intercultural and inclusive education is a main priority for the education system, which is currently articulated around

separate, mono-ethnic schools with multiple curricula.

**PARTICIPATION IN THE CULTURE SECTOR AND THE ENGAGEMENT OF CULTURAL VALUES PROVIDE IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

Examples from Armenia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Mexico, Pakistan, Samoa and Solomon Islands indicate that participation in activities of the culture sector has allowed the most vulnerable segments



Dinka cattle camp, South Sudan *Picture from the call for papers on 'Dialogue on Culture and Development'* (Photo: Robin Denselow)





of the population, including women and girls, to prioritize schooling, ward off the pressures of early marriage, delay pregnancy and strengthen autonomy and independent income generation. In addition, culturally sensitive approaches are effective and necessary methods to foster greater social inclusion and enhanced provision of health services, including access to sexual and reproductive health. Cultural initiatives which engage equal participation from men and boys for the objective of women's empowerment are particularly effective.

For example, Ecuador's vision of culture embraces social dynamics and the transmission of knowledge and cultural backgrounds. The consultations highlight the linkages between culture and poverty reduction, education and gender. They are considering modalities to guarantee women's access to cultural goods and services, emphasizing their economic contribution in the creative and cultural industry, and the multipliers from increased women's participation in the transmission of practices that foster



"There is no reason to exclude local community and indigenous cultures from conservation initiatives in the Pacific. Involving them enhances conservation programmes, improves community capacity and reduces adverse environmental activities."

*Trisha Kehaulani Watson-Sproat and Jamaica Osorio on cultural traditions to restore degraded Pacific coastal fisheries*

education and the protection of the environment.

### **CULTURE-LED REDEVELOPMENT OF URBAN AREAS AND PUBLIC SPACES HELPS PRESERVE THE SOCIAL FABRIC, ATTRACT INVESTMENT AND IMPROVE ECONOMIC RETURNS**

Argentina, Brazil, Libya, Pakistan, Qatar, Spain and the USA presented examples on culture and historic urban environments being key for achieving sustainable and inclusive cities. Culturally

sensitive approaches in urban environments promote social cohesion and cultural pride and ownership through participation in local community and urban spaces.

For example, culture in Morocco is linked to the main issues resulting from rapid economic expansion: growing inequalities and relative poverty, access to decent work, environmental degradation and rapid urbanization. Cities are increasingly faced with the challenges of diversity and inequality, and can benefit greatly from culture to improve inclusion and promote greater social cohesion. The protection of historic districts and use of cultural facilities as civic spaces for dialogue can help reduce violence and promote cohesion.

### **DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WHICH TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE LINK BETWEEN CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND BIODIVERSITY, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, SECURE GREATER ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

As is presented by Albania, Colombia, Nepal, Pakistan and the USA, embracing cultural traditions of local communities in programming promotes optimal outcomes for environmental protection. Such initiatives boast enhanced commu-



Stages of Change performance, Solomon Islands *Picture from the call for papers on 'Dialogue on Culture and Development'* (Photo: Faanati Mamea)





Women's assembly and training in Swat, Pakistan, in 2010 *Picture from the call for papers on 'Dialogue on Culture and Development'*  
(Photo: Heritage Foundation Pakistan)

nity ownership and capacity; improved monitoring and enforcement; and a reduction in adverse environmental activities, in political opposition and in social conflict, with exponential returns on investments.

As an example, Bosnia and Herzegovina recognizes culture as a driver for development and prosperity. The environment is a source of livelihood for the poorest people in the country, and affects their vulnerability. The recent floods have shown that the loss of traditional knowledge and skills can result in very low resilience. The consultations in Bosnia and Herzegovina to date recognize culture as a catalyst for comprehensive societal change (including through education, media and youth participation) and can generate positive and sustainable transformations for economic development, environmental protection and preparedness for climate change.

"The Song and Dance Project within the Maasai community calls for the integration of cultural expressions as a tool to stimulate dialogue, participatory governance."

*Pastoral Women's Council, Tanzania*

**CULTURE HAS THE POTENTIAL  
TO BUILD BRIDGES AND SHAPE  
MORE EFFECTIVE RECONCILIATION  
PROCESSES WITH FULL OWNERSHIP  
OF THE COMMUNITIES**

Cultural rights, heritage, cultural identity and cultural life are foundational realities which provide the legitimacy for collective and participatory local governance, as showcased in examples from Brazil, Denmark, France, Libya, Mexico, Myan-

mar, South Sudan and Sri Lanka. More specifically, Mali is organizing thematic workshops focusing on reconciliation, poverty reduction and the environment. During the recent conflict, heritage and cultural expressions were deliberately attacked, and cultural rehabilitation and dialogue are considered crucial for stabilization and future development, including for their ability to foster tolerance and overcome trauma.

# DIALOGUE PROCESS

The Dialogues on Post-2015 Implementation were initiated in response to the strong demand that people expressed during the UN Global Conversation in 2012/2013 about being involved not just in the design of the post-2015 agenda but also in its implementation. The six themes (localizing the agenda, capacities and institutions, participatory monitoring and accountability, engagement with civil society and the private sector, and culture and development) were chosen because they were raised on numerous occasions during these consultations, and to balance the existing ongoing intergovernmental discussions on financing, trade and technology.

Conceptual leadership for the different themes came from various agencies of the UN Development Group. The co-leading agencies for each theme developed the concept notes and guidance for the

participating countries and organized global dialogues, regional consultation events, literature reviews, e-discussions and other forms of outreach through their networks. In addition, each participating country organized its own consultation, consisting of in-person meetings, technical papers, surveys and other activities.

The Dialogues started in April 2014 and will continue until April 2015. As such, not all activities have been concluded, and each theme will have its own final report. The results of each of these activities, as well as national concept notes and reports, are all available on the WorldWeWant website.<sup>5</sup>

For the most part, countries were selected and invited to participate by the Regional Chairs of the UN Development Group and the UN Resident Coordinators.

Some additional countries and national stakeholder groups signed up on a voluntary basis. The countries that have been involved in this initiative so far are:

Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Aruba, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Djibouti, El Salvador, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Malaysia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Moldova, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, St. Lucia, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United States of America, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia.

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<sup>5</sup>) [worldwewant2015.org/sitemap](http://worldwewant2015.org/sitemap)

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