Outcome Document of the Regional Consultations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

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Context

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have focused global advocacy and collective action around a core set of goals, indicators and targets to reduce poverty and human suffering. However, with the target year of 2015 fast approaching, a series of initiatives have commenced at global, regional and national levels to deliberate on measures to accelerate progress on the MDGs and to define the contours of the *post-2015 development agenda.* In Africa, the slow progress towards the current set of targets has made this an even more urgent agenda.

Cognizant of the limited role that African stakeholders played in shaping the Millennium Development Goals, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Africa Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP/RBA) initiated a series of processes, including national, regional and continental consultations, aimed at articulating an African common position on the post-2015 development agenda.

The post-2015 consultations were reinforced during the AU Heads of State Summit in July 2012, when African leaders mandated AUC, ECA, AfDB and UNDP to develop an African common position on the post-2015 development agenda through extensive consultations with all stakeholders in the region.

This outcome statement summarises views from stakeholders from a total of 53 African countries, represented by governments, Regional Economic Communities, civil society organisations including youth and women's organisations, parliamentarians, academic institutions and the private sector. To date there have been four regional and sub-regional consultations: Accra, Ghana[1] in November 2011; Mombasa, Kenya[2] in October 2012; Dakar,

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1 Participants represented 19 African countries: Burkina Faso, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.
2 Participants represented 16 Eastern and Southern African countries: Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Senegal[3] in December 2012; and Hammamet, Tunisia[4] in March 2013. These processes have been complemented by an ongoing online survey[5] initiated in 2011.

The regional consultations on the post-2015 development agenda aimed to:

(i) Identify Africa's priorities for the post 2015 agenda;

(ii) Identify enablers and critical success factors for the post 2015 development agenda;

(iii) Align the post-2015 priorities with other development programmes and agendas including Rio+20 and NEPAD; and

(iv) Determine the next steps of the consultation process.

Noting the relatively slow progress made by African countries towards the MDGs and recognising the capacity deficits and disabling initial conditions prevailing in a number of countries, participants unanimously agreed that the post-2015 development agenda should:

1. Emphasise inclusive economic growth and structural transformation

2. Re-orient the development paradigm away from externally-driven initiatives toward domestically- inspired and funded initiatives that are grounded in national ownership

3. Prioritise equity and social inclusion and measure progress in terms of both the availability and quality of service delivery

4. Pay greater attention to vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, displaced persons

5. Take into account the initial conditions of nation states and recognise the efforts countries have made towards achieving the goals as opposed to exclusively measuring how far they fall short of global targets

6. Incorporate the Rio+20 outcomes and the outcomes of Africa-wide initiatives, national and regional consultations as well as UN forums such as ICPD +20

7. Focus on development enablers as well as development outcomes.

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3   Participants represented 24 Central, Western and Northern African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, CAR, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Sahrawi, Sierra Leone, Togo

4   Participants represented 43 African countries: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, CAR, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Libya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Saharawi, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

5   The online survey received 330 responses from all sub-regions of Africa: West Africa (35%); East Africa (46%); Central Africa (7%); North Africa (7%); Southern Africa (5%).

Development outcomes

Four broad development outcomes were identified as priorities for the post-2015 development agenda:

1. Structural economic transformation and inclusive growth
2. Innovation and technology transfer
3. Human development
4. Financing and partnerships

1. Structural economic transformation and inclusive growth

Stakeholders identified sustainable and inclusive growth, agriculture, food security and nutrition, green growth, industrialization and value addition and economic infrastructure development as the primary pillars of economic transformation and inclusive growth.

Sustainable and inclusive growth
Ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth will require:

- Accelerating the pace of growth
- Diversifying the sources of growth
- Prioritizing people-centred growth for the poor, marginalized and vulnerable groups
- Investing in fiscally sustainable social protection programmes
- Reducing inequality
- Promoting decent jobs
- Promoting rural development

Agriculture, food security and nutrition
Agricultural development, food security and nutrition should be underpinned by:

- Improved food production, availability, accessibility, utilization, safety and quality,
- Agricultural modernization
- Agri-business development including agro-industry linkages
- Integration of small farm holders, including women, into agri-business value chains
- the establishment of national and regional information exchange mechanisms on agriculture and food security

Green growth
Africa must prioritize green growth initiatives that:

- Create jobs
- Facilitate investments in climate change adaptation

- Reduce deforestation, desertification and pollution
- Improve land management
- Develop and implement national and continental frameworks for governing large scale land acquisition
- Promote renewable energies
- Promote efficiency of energy production, consumption and re-use

Industrialization and value addition

Participants underscored the importance of industrialization and value addition through:

- Promotion of private sector development
- Transformation of the informal sector
- Improved distribution and reinvestment of wealth generated from extractive industries
- Development of value chains across sectors
- Promotion and implementation of local content policies in the extractive sector

Economic infrastructure development

Lastly, participants expressed the need to promote and sustain infrastructure at the regional level and within countries (i.e., rural and urban) with a focus on:

- Promoting and sustaining infrastructural development in water, energy, ICT, roads and railways
- Promoting and sustaining regional infrastructure development

2. Innovation, technological transfer and Research and Development (R&D)

Recognizing the importance of technology to development and cognizant of Africa's capacity deficits with respect to technology, stakeholders identified the following priority actions:

- Ensure technology transfer in line with each country's development needs
- Establish an African technological fund to support innovation systems within the context of sustainable development
- Increase funding for research and development
- Strengthen the science component of education curricula
- Enhance utilization of ICTs

3. Human development

Human development must be an integral part of the post 2015 development agenda. Consultations have emphasized the importance of improving the quality and access to social services. The following priority areasof human development were identified:

Eradication of Extreme Poverty
The eradication of extreme poverty in all its forms and empowerment of vulnerable groups should be a primary focus in the post 2015 agenda. To this end participants identified the following priorities:

- Improved access to social protection for: Women; Children; Elderly; People with disabilities; Rural populations; and Displaced persons and migrants
- Move all individuals above the extreme poverty line

Education and Human Capacity Development
With respect to education and capacity development, participants highlighted the importance of improving access to universal, comprehensive and quality of education, information and human capacity building. The following areas were prioritized:
Improved quality of teaching

- Access to quality primary, secondary and technical and vocational education
- Strengthened curricula for primary and secondary education to include life skills, civic, sexuality and reproductive health education
- Higher completion rates at all levels of education
- Strengthened linkages between educational system and labour market demands

They also underscored the importance of promoting:

- pre-schooling
- tertiary education
- non-formal education

Universal and equitable access to quality healthcare
Low life expectancy and equitable access to quality healthcare, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, continue to be a major concern in Africa. In this regard participants highlighted the following priorities:

- Improved maternal, newborn and child health
- Enhanced access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning
- Special focus on vulnerable groups including children, the youth, the unemployed, the elderly and people with disabilities

- Reduced incidence of communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB), non-communicable diseases (including mental health) and emerging diseases
- Strengthened health systems, including health financing
- Improved hygiene and sanitation
- Improved monitoring and evaluation, and quality assurance systems

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Improving gender equality and women's empowerment is a key priority for the post 2015 development agenda. Building on Africa's MDGs performance so far it is important to focus on:

- Improving and sustaining gender parity at all levels of education, with special emphasis on secondary and tertiary education
- Creating a positive environment for girls at school, including increased representation of female teachers
- Enhancing women's occupational mobility and eliminating wage inequality
- Increasing women's access to and control over land and other productive assets
- Eradicating violence against women and children
- Eradicating harmful practices such as FGM and early marriage
- Eliminating gender-based discrimination in political and decision-making processes

Population and youth dynamics: Realizing Africa's demographic dividend

Africa's youthful population can either be a source of economic transformation and development or a conflict risk factor. In this context, participants highlighted the importance of realizing Africa's demographic dividend through measures that:

- Strengthen entrepreneurial capacity
- Support decent and well-paid jobs for young people
- Increase access to finance
- Promote youth participation in political processes
- Eradicate human trafficking
- Eliminate child labour

Water resource management

Cognizant of the critical role of water to health, sanitation and human existence, participants called for improved water resource management in Africa with special focus:

- Enhanced access to safe drinking water in urban and rural areas
- Improved sanitation services in rural and urban areas
- Improved wastewater and water quality management systems

Disaster risk reduction

Participants recognized the absence of disaster risk reduction in the current MDGs and thus propose the following issues to be prioritized:

- Promotion of climate change adaptation initiatives
- Strengthening resilience and capacity to anticipate and respond to natural disasters
- Implementation of the African Solidarity Initiative

Access to shelter

Lastly, participants highlighted the importance of ensuring availability and access to decent and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas

4. Financing and partnerships

A post 2015 development agenda cannot be implemented without adequate financing and a conducive global environment. Nevertheless, to ensure ownership and accountability to domestic stakeholders it should be underpinned by internal resources. To this end, participants identified: domestic financing, external financing and partnerships as vital for the implementation of the agenda.

Domestic Financing

The following areas were identified as important for domestic resource mobilization:

- Strengthened financial intermediation
- Broadened tax net and improved revenue generation capacity
- Development of long-term financing mechanisms e.g. bonds
- Curtailment of illicit financial flows
- Efficient use of resources
- Improved management of insurance and pension schemes
- Promotion of innovative financing mechanisms

External Financing

Recognizing the need to ensure that external resources promote Africa's development, participants urged that the following areas be prioritized:

- Reinvestment of the proceeds from foreign direct investment
- Reduced remittance transfer costs and its effective management
- Mobilization of external non-traditional sources of financing including philanthropy, emerging partners and external innovative sources
- Facilitate access to various existing global financing mechanisms such as Education For All-Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) and Climate Finance

Partnerships

Lastly, partnerships are essential for the effective implementation of a post 2015 development agenda in Africa. Participants highlighted the need to:

- Ensure ownership, coherence and alignment of international support with national and regional priorities
- Develop a global framework that takes into account Africa's peculiarities and priorities
- Promote public-private partnerships
- Promote South-South Cooperation and partnership with emerging economies
- Boost intra-African trade
- Promote Africa's access to global markets and ensure fair trade
- Global governance: promote ownership, leadership and accountability

Development Enablers

Achieving the development outcomes cited above will require an enabling environment at national, regional and global levels. The following development enablers were identified as prerequisites for the post-2015 development agenda. These enablers will need to be prioritised in line with each country's development needs.

Peace and security: National governments and the international community must be resolute and united in their commitment to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict and support efforts to resolve this conflict through measures that promote and sustain peace and security.

Good governance, transparency and fighting corruption: Good economic and political governance are critical for promoting and sustaining development gains. National governments and the international community must put in place measures that fight corruption and promote good governance, transparency and accountability.

Strengthened institutional capacity: Strong institutions create positive norms and standards that are vital not only for ensuring continuity in policy design and execution but also for sustaining development outcomes.

Promoting equality and access to justice and information: Equality and access to justice and information are essential for social inclusion as well as the protection of the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups. Collectively, these elements promote social sustainability.

Human rights for all: Protecting the human rights of all citizens is fundamental to their effective and functional participation in society. Similarly, citizens must be encouraged to meet their responsibilities to the state and to society.

Gender equality: Gender quality and women's empowerment should be mainstreamed across all development priorities and initiatives

Domestic resource mobilisation: Domestic resource mobilisation supports accountability and economic sustainability, with the private sector having a particularly important role to play through its involvement in Public-Private Partnerships. As well as mobilising resources, it is also important to improve the way in which these resources are used through carefully targeted investment.

Regional integration: Implement the continental free trade area and the Abuja Treaty, and promote regional infrastructural development in order to enhance intra-African trade.

A credible participatory process with cultural sensitivity: A participatory process that is mindful of cultural differences and sensitivities and encourages input from all stakeholders will help to raise awareness among the groups concerned and consequently ensure success in policy implementation.

Enhanced statistical capacity to measure progress and ensure accountability: Strengthening national capacities to measure and evaluate performance is vital for assessing policy effectiveness and taking timely corrective action. The importance of reliable quantitative and qualitative data is paramount, as is the need to promote a decision-making culture based on facts and statistics.

Prudent macro-economic policy that emphasises fair growth: Macro-economic policy should aim at creating an enabling environment for inclusive economic growth underpinned by job creation.

Democratic and Developmental state: A development framework that is ably guided by the state is critical for ensuring that the short-term imperatives of growth are tempered by long-term development considerations such as equality, environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

An enabling global governance architecture: A global governance architecture that reinforces the principles of fair trade, discourages illicit financial flows and is framed by genuine cooperation and partnerships, is essential for development.

Conclusion

The outcomes of the consultations call for a post-2015 development agenda that is: convergent with Rio +20; informed by other regional and global initiatives; grounded in quality data; takes into account both development outcomes and development enablers; underpinned by economic transformation, human development and innovation technology transfer and research and development; sustained by credible national ownership, leadership and accountability; and assessed by indicators that reflect access to quality services.