

# South-Asia Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Sustainable Development Goals and the Means of Implementation

Nagarkot, Nepal 26-28 August 2014

## Nagarkot Outcome Document

### I. Introduction and Aims

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) organized the South Asia Consultation on the *Post-2015 Development Agenda: Sustainable Development Goals and the Means of Implementation* in Nagarkot, Nepal, on 26-28 August 2014. The Workshop was attended by senior government officials from the following SAARC member states: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka; civil society and private sector organizations from all eight SAARC member states; and United Nations organisations, funds, programmes, and specialized agencies.

The objectives of the multi-stakeholder South Asia consultation workshop were to: (a) Articulate South Asian priorities for the post-2015 Development Agenda and the role of SAARC; (b) share the findings and recommendations of the UNESCAP/ADB/UNDP Asia-Pacific MDG Report: *'Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspective for a Post-2015 Development Agenda'* and the Outcome Document of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals, to contribute to South Asia perspectives; (c) Draw suggestions on global partnership for development and on the means of implementation, focusing on finance, technology plus data and monitoring frameworks.

### II. Guiding Principles for the Future Goals

Eight guiding principles are proposed to underpin the future goals

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Universal coverage founded on a rights based approach</li><li>• Embedded in equity (within countries, across countries and across generations)</li><li>• Follow common but differentiated responsibilities</li><li>• Underpinned by sustainable production and consumption (transformed economic and ecological systems)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customized to national circumstances (respond to diversity)</li><li>• Backed by identified and innovative finance</li><li>• Monitored by robust data (accountability)</li><li>• Based on well-defined and reinvigorated global partnership including the private sector along with civil society</li></ul> |
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### III. Key Messages and Recommendations on South Asia's development priorities

- a) Despite some remarkable achievements, the MDGs in South Asia remain an unfinished agenda and the momentum to accelerate MDG progress should be maintained in the remaining nearly 500 days. The persisting challenges confronting South Asia include, but are not limited to: gender inequality; gender based violence; and addressing the right of all people to an adequate standard of living, such as access to decent employment, quality education, health services – including reproductive health - water and sanitation, food and nutrition security and access to energy.
- b) South Asia is a dynamically changing region; the new development challenges to be addressed include: deteriorating quality of growth, unplanned urbanization, challenges related to harnessing the demographic dividend and addressing the issues of aging population, inadequate connectivity, non-communicable diseases, the need to invest in renewable energy sources, heightened vulnerability from increased natural disasters and other crises, and climate change.
- c) There is the recognition that the present socio-economic development model needs to be revisited and more emphasis be put on more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, within planetary boundaries and adhering to the principles of social justice, equity and equality, and social inclusion, fully in line with paragraph 7 of the Outcome Document of the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>1</sup>
- d) The new goals should focus on people's quality of life – the ends – and kept distinct from processes and means.
- e) Means of implementation should be identified and be measurable, along with roles and responsibilities at national, regional and global level.
- f) Accountability should be strengthened and backed by better data. New accountability mechanisms for the post-2015 development agenda should comprise access to information, people-led accountability mechanisms, community participation in monitoring initiatives – e.g. to monitor budgets, and independent oversight institutions. There is need for disaggregated data to identify marginalized population.
- g) SAARC may build on its work on the SAARC Development Goals (SDGs) and work on new post-2015 goals, customised for South Asian countries; to support implementation at regional level it may use and better align its existing mechanisms with the post-2015 development goals.

#### **IV. Financing for a post-2015 Development Agenda to support sustainable development**

##### Key messages and recommendations

- a) Strengthen the macroeconomic framework and the financial structure to better align with development goals.
- b) Mobilize domestic resources through public finance reforms: taxation regimes (e.g. increase tax/GDP, more progressive taxation), better financial management, regulation and procurement systems resulting in more effective use of fiscal resources, subsidies and innovative taxation.
- c) Scale up and customize good models of public private partnerships (PPP), financial inclusion, financial literacy and retail financing instruments for rural and urban penetration with appropriate

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<sup>1</sup> Para 7 of the OWG Outcome Document - Rio+20 outcome reaffirmed the need to be guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, with full respect for international law and its principles. It reaffirmed the importance of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the right to development and the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and water, the rule of law, good governance, gender equality, women's empowerment and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development. It also reaffirmed the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international instruments relating to human rights and international law.

regulatory oversight. PPPs currently tend to focus on physical infrastructure and could also include services.

- d) Introduce global innovative financing instruments, such as international financial transaction tax (FTT), to support financing of the new development agenda.
- e) Create an enabling environment for private sector investment, including FDI, and financing of SMEs aligned to sustainable development, including regulation of private financial capital.
- f) Increase transparency of cross-border financial flows and curb illicit financial flows.
- g) Increase global sources of finance, including climate finance.
- h) Increase transparency and accountability related to the securing and deployment of revenues from extractive industries, and ensure allocations to support sustainable development.
- i) Developed countries should strive to achieve the long agreed ODA target of 0.7% of GNI, with particular consideration to countries in special need, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.
- j) Encourage new sources of regional and global finance at concessional terms, aid for trade and access to markets.
- k) Strengthen existing trade, funding and financing mechanisms under SAARC.
- l) Establish a SAARC Development Bank, mobilizing resources from member countries and multi-lateral agencies.

## **V. Technology Access**

Key messages and recommendations

- a) Regional cooperation to play a bigger role in facilitating access to technology for countries in South Asia, in terms of investment in applied R&D and human resource capacity development. R&D to include endogenous technology and its improvements.
- b) Mainstream access to technology throughout the SDGs. Targets on access to technology should be measurable and clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- c) The CBDR principle should be applicable to the issue of technology transfer.
- d) Promote the use of technology for the provision of public services for effective governance and to protect peoples' rights.
- e) Prevent the abuse technology to protect the rights of citizens (especially women and children) through appropriate regulation.
- f) Promote technology access for health sector, energy access, money transfer, food technology – post harvest and preservation - and technology related to sustainable urbanisation, as well as to environmental sustainability beyond climate change adaptation and mitigation (e.g. solid waste management, water purification etc).
- g) Reassess Intellectual Property Right regimes and trade issues, especially in the context of bilateral and multilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and their impact on the use of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) flexibilities by developing countries, especially LDCs. TRIPs flexibilities should be available to developing countries to access appropriate technologies, going beyond public health, for facilitating access to environmentally sound technologies, disaster prevention and management.
- h) Support countries to reach the technological frontier, by promoting entrepreneurship and venture capital. Technology adoption is, by and large, led by entrepreneurs; buying off-the shelf

technology and developing the capacity to use it in a way that's adequate to local processes and scale.

- i) Assess countries' need for technology to achieve sustainable development and map out technologies that are locally and regionally available for further collaboration and partnership.
- j) Reinvigorate efforts to establish and maintain a regional technology bank.
- k) Incentivise R&D investments in the public space, including investments in capacity for endogenous technology development; increase international cooperation (South-South and North-South) for scientific research and technology development and innovation.

## **VI. Data, Monitoring and Accountability**

Key messages and recommendations.

- a) Ensure data availability to support the implementation of the SDGs; regular strategic dialogues between data users and producers must be held so that the statistics produced and disseminated meet the needs of key stakeholders.
- b) Avoid duplication and ensure that common definitions and methodologies are applied to facilitate the sharing of statistics; an effective coordination among producers of statistics at National level must be maintained, underpinned by appropriate legislative frameworks.
- c) Conduct periodic and regular sample surveys, and support the production of reliable and high quality administrative disaggregated data and of robust civil registration systems – by ensuring the allocation of adequate human and financial resources - to monitor progress towards the new sustainable development goals.
- d) Strengthen the capacity of National Statistical Organizations (NSOs) to produce reliable, timely and trustworthy statistics, using new technology, and providing training on methodologies (including qualitative), collection, disaggregation, dissemination, analysis and use of data.
- e) Foster and support the strengthening of civil society organisations, so that they can empower people and hold governments to account, while recognizing that transparency and citizen's right to information is at the heart of ensuring accountability.
- f) Coordinate between government and non-government data producers to increase access to affordable, usable, reliable and disaggregated data.
- g) SAARC may strengthen its existing mechanism to ensure effective coordination for the generation and sharing of data for better monitoring the post-2015 development agenda at the regional level.
- h) The UN system to support capacity development, including focus on access to and use of data;
- i) Establish national coordination mechanisms to ensure data produced by various government and non-government agencies for monitoring SDGs are harmonized
- j) Establish regional data producers' networks on SDGs
- k) SAARC portal to include an icon on SDGs