

Beyond2015

Campaigning for a global development framework
after the Millennium Development Goals

BEYOND 2015 BRIEFING FOLLOWING THE UN SPECIAL EVENT ON THE POST-2015 AGENDA 25 SEPTEMBER 2013

Intro

Ten intense days on side events, high level meetings, civil society planning sessions, bilateral meetings, stocktaking meetings, not to mention the UN Special Event on the post-2015 agenda itself, allow us to present a brief overview of where we stand, following the title of Sergio Leone's classic film 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly'

The good

The clear decision for a single framework and set of goals enables us all to work constructively towards transformation in the lives of the people who need it most – those experiencing the greatest poverty and vulnerability. The commitment to a coherent approach, which integrates poverty eradication, human rights, economic transformation, social justice and environmental stewardship, indicates the potential for transformational change in 2015. Central to this is the recognition of common but differentiated responsibilities in a universal agenda.

The inclusion of peace and security, democratic governance, the rule of law, gender equality, and human rights for all is critical. Evidence and experience since 2000 illustrates that neither eradication of poverty nor achievement of sustainable development is possible without these essential elements. The event bringing together regional voices on post-2015 was well received by civil society, and there was a general recognition that Member States and UN officials were well engaged in a variety of side events with civil society.

The bad

Despite these positive signs, the tone of the debate in New York from most Member States lacked the ambition needed to make that change. For more than two years, civil society has been insisting that a post-2015 agenda must address the structural causes of poverty and injustice by tackling inequality, gender injustice, social exclusion and skewed financial systems. This has to be based on human rights for all people.

A post-2015 framework approach that fails to tackle the root causes of deprivation through quick-fix solutions will be neither effective, nor sustainable or legitimate. Governments need to start listening to the people and to raise the level of ambition in order to ensure that no-one is left behind, that a new development agenda meaningfully addresses the structural causes of poverty and injustice, that it redefines the way in which we understand the economy, so that it exists to serve people and planet, rather than the other way round.

The ugly

Many of us were somewhat disheartened to hear the incoming President of the General Assembly inviting civil society to participate in the discussions, suggesting that we have a 'blank canvas'. While the invitation to participate is welcomed, the suggestion that we have not been engaging in a meaningful way for the last two and a half years is somewhat insulting. Thankfully, this sentiment was raised with representatives of his office at a later date, who recognized that 'CSOs have been more engaged in shaping the post-2015 agenda than there were for the MDGs'

Another 'ugly' moment during the week was when CSOs were speaking during the roundtables – as CSOs were left until the end, many of the senior level government officials had left, leaving only their junior colleagues behind. As such, there is a big question as to the influence we can have on the proceedings by brining people to speak at these roundtables – which are, in fact, anything but roundtables. Many of us expected small tables of up to 40 people speaking, interacting, with others observing around the sidelines. However, the roundtables take place in huge rooms with almost 1000 people in them, and consist of government representatives reading their statements. There is literally no interaction, no discussion during these roundtables.

So, the process moving forward...

Beyond 2015 and others spent a lot of time persuading governments that one of the main outcomes of the 2013 Special Event needed to be a clear roadmap on the process moving forward. This time, governments listened, and the Outcome Document contains a clear roadmap. So, for those of you who have not had time to study the document carefully, a quick overview...

- The **Open Working Group** will continue its work, gathering input until February 2014 and writing its report from February until August.
- At the same time, the **Inter-governmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing** will be discussing how governments and others will fund the post-2015 agenda – another important arena in which to engage. Both of these processes should complete their work by September 2014, to feed into the intergovernmental negotiations.
- Preparations for the intergovernmental negotiations will also benefit from a series of **thematic events** convened by the President of the General Assembly, under the theme 'The Post-2015 Development Agenda – Setting the Stage'. Dates and ways to engage TBC. These themes are:
 1. **What role should women the young and civil society play in the new development agenda? (Feb 2014)**
 2. **How can we incorporate human rights and the rule of law?**
 3. **How to maximize South-South cooperation and ICT for development?**
 4. **New and existing partnerships for development outcomes**
 5. **Promoting peaceful and stable societies**
 6. **How do we address to challenges of water, sanitation and sustainable energy**
- Full **intergovernmental negotiations** on the post-2015 agenda will start at the beginning of the 69th session on the UN General Assembly (i.e September 2014). These negotiations will take as inputs all the recent reports: from the High Level Panel, Sustainable Development Solutions

Network, the Global Compact, and the national and regional consultations organised by the UN Development Group, and the future reports of the Rio+20 processes (Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, Sustainable Development Finance Committee.

- The **Secretary General** will present a synthesis report to governments of all inputs available (see above) by the end of 2014 as an input into their negotiations.
- A **high level Summit** will take place in September 2015 to adopt the post-2015 agenda. This Summit will be the culmination of the intergovernmental negotiations.

This roadmap is very important information for Beyond 2015, as it provides clarity on the way that negotiations will proceed and decisions will be taken. This should allow Beyond 2015, and all its participating organisations, to organise advocacy activities around these key milestones.

While we don't know EXACTLY what the intergovernmental negotiations will look like between September 2014 and September 2015, a likely scenario seems to be something similar to the negotiations held in advance of the Rio+20 process. Beyond 2015 will provide further details of what the negotiations may look like, and how civil society can effectively engage, in due course.

One crucial point to highlight here – while these global processes take place in New York, governments are influenced by what happens at home. We heard time and time again that to effectively influence this agenda, we have to engage in an ongoing manner at the national level. Beyond 2015 will be doing precisely this, and we encourage all participating organisations to do the same.

So, what are the governments saying in all of this?

Certain statements from governments are available here:

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/specialevent-programme.shtml>

Beyond 2015 hopes that, in the interest of transparency and accountability, the UN will publish all statements online without delay. Participating organisations of Beyond 2015 were present during each of the round tables, and we have compiled informal notes of each session. These notes are attached for your use (English only)

(A selection of) The Good

Fiji, on behalf of the G77: This is an opportunity for real transformative change, and it is time to tell our citizens we mean business. Let us commit ourselves to build a better future we want.

Guyana, on behalf of the Small Islands and Developing States (SIDS): Post 2015 needs more focus on and understanding of the inequalities of the trade system. They focused on economic and trade inequality, as well as the need for true and genuine partnership with whole international community excluding none.

South Africa: The post-2015 agenda must be guided by spirit of equality, mutual trust, inclusiveness and universality. The focus must be on the eradication of poverty and hunger as well as combating inequality. It must be cognizant of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

Ecuador: The MDGs addressed symptoms not causes – and the post-2015 framework must address the political factors preventing development –including finance and trade. The aim should be the eradication of poverty in all its forms, while respecting nature.

India: Post-2015 should be based on outcome of Rio – CBDR emphasized. Universal agenda demands meaningful action from developed countries. Greater focus on sustainable production & consumption, food waste, reform of global economic governance to give voice to developing countries. Need to integrate three dimensions of sustainable development in balanced manner at all levels.

Colombia and Sweden: Both countries reiterated their commitment to ensuring strong citizen (especially those living in poverty and affected by climate change) participation in the creation, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 agenda. These countries both issued a strong call for other governments throughout the world to ensure meaningful space for citizens and their organizations to engage with their governments at the national level.

Ireland: The principles of equality, inclusion and fundamental human rights must be at core of the post-2015 agenda.

(A Selection of) The Bad

China: Amongst other things, China said that trend of economic globalization must be embraced, and that the post-2015 is an extension of MDGs and must serve as a continuation. See <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1078984.shtml> for a full explanation of China's position on the post-2015 agenda.

India: The post-2015 framework should promote rapid & sustained economic growth in developing countries.

Shining a spotlight on gender equality

We were asked many times about gender equality in the post-2015 framework in New York. For colleagues who are focusing specifically on gender equality in the context of the post-2015 agenda, it may be useful to know a selection (not exhaustive) of those countries which made specific reference to gender equality in their statements to the General Assembly (for advocacy planning purposes): **Japan, Norway, Australia, Austria, Nicaragua, Finland, Trinidad and Tobago, Italy, The Netherlands, Romania, Iceland, Portugal.**

Where we now stand on our key issues, messages, and values

Beyond 2015 key issues / message	Origin of Beyond 2015 message and further details	How it was dealt with during the UN Special Event
Environmental sustainability	VPVC, national deliberations	Outcome Document agrees on working to a 'single framework and set of Goals'. It makes the link between poverty eradication and sustainable development. There was no mention of planetary boundaries, and there was resistance from some in the UNF CCC process to the idea of having a goal on climate change in the post-2015 framework.
Human rights	VPVC, national deliberations	Outcome Document states that the framework should promote 'human rights for all'. What this means remains unclear, and CSOs should make practical recommendations as to how this would apply to goals, targets and indicators.
Poverty eradication and hunger	VPVC, national deliberations	Nobody seems to disagree with this, and the Outcome Document is clear: 'We underscore the central imperative of freeing poverty eradication and are committed to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency'
Well being	VPVC	This is a value that is not well reflected in global discussions, nor is it reflected in the Outcome Document. If we are collectively serious about looking beyond income to measure progress, we still have a long way to go, and many governments to convince.
Peace and security	VPVC	The Outcome Document suggests that the framework should promote 'peace and security' and a number of governments focus on this as well (Japan is a good example)
Equity and equality (including gender equality)	VPVC, national deliberations	While various reports have focused on tackling inequality and leaving no-one behind, there is no mention of it in the Outcome Document. Equity and equality may well be a key part of the negotiations, and we should continue to push the 'Leave no-one behind' message, as well as attempting to persuade government to tackle the growing economic inequalities. Gender equality has the support of a number of governments (see list above) but civil society will have to remain vigilant to ensure it remains on the agenda. Vulnerable groups, often highlighted in side events, were rarely mentioned in the High Level Event on the 25 th – which disappointed many colleagues. The key here will be in the disaggregated data used to monitor the post-2015 framework.
Global	VPVC	After lengthy negotiations around the Outcome Document,

responsibility		member states agreed that the framework should be 'universal in nature and applicable to all countries, while taking into account national circumstances and respecting national policies and priorities' It also reaffirmed the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, a key ask of Beyond 2015.
Evidence	VPVC	While Helen Clark, head of UNDP, highlighted to the need for an evidence-based framework, learning from the experiences of those most affected by poverty and injustice, this was lacking in most discussions and indeed the Outcome Document.
Effectiveness	VPVC	While most Member States agree that the framework must be easy to communicate, fewer focus on the need for it to effectively tackle the structural causes of poverty and injustice, or for it to ensure that no other policies undermine development.
Good governance, Participation and accountability	VPVC, national deliberations	Many countries have championed participation, good governance and accountability. However, the High Level Political Forum, which replaces the Commission on Sustainable Development and will likely be where the post-2015 framework will 'set' as well as the mechanism which states will use to review progress, has only had one meeting, which was only open to a small number of representatives from Major Groups. Civil society will need to work hard to ensure that true participation of people in the design, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 framework actually happens.

Moving Forward

As the Hungarian Ambassador had challenged us to share thinking on the 'strategic vision about how the work should look like' in preparation for future meetings of the Open Working Group, we will certainly share existing thinking with the OWG and encourage them to consider not just the vision, but also the purpose of a post-2015 framework. If we are not all talking about the same thing, the same type of framework, it will be very difficult for us to agree on exactly what should be in that framework.

As you can see above, there are a number of different global 'tracks' to follow. The Open Working Group. The Expert Committee on Financing. The High Level Political Forum. The President of the General Assembly. It will be important for Beyond 2015 to ensure that participating organizations, especially those from the Global South, are able to feed into these processes. However, with a limited Secretariat, we may move to create Beyond 2015 Task Forces for each of these processes. We would welcome your

thoughts on this – is it a good idea? Would you like to be part of one of these Task Forces? Would you be able to lead one? Let the Secretariat know on lwillims@beyond2015.org

Top quotation from the week

“We do not want an agenda that will keep us all busy for the next two decades, but that replicates the economic and political power imbalances that perpetuate poverty, inequality and unsustainable development. We want to ensure a transformation that puts people and planet first.” Cliona Sharkey, Trócaire, Beyond 2015 European Task Force.