

## Executive summary

In 2011, the international development community convened in Busan, Republic of Korea to take stock of advances in improving the delivery of aid. Participants generally agreed that the global economy and the development landscape had undergone fundamental changes since the Paris Declaration's aid effectiveness principles were defined in 2005 and reviewed in Accra in 2008. For development co-operation to increase its effectiveness as a catalyst for poverty reduction, a fundamental change of focus was required: from global structures to a country-led approach, recognising the range of actors in development partnerships and the important but different roles each plays. The Busan Partnership agreement embodies this shift with its four principles for achieving common development goals: ownership of development priorities by developing countries, a focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, and transparency and accountability.

### How is progress in implementing these commitments assessed?

This report represents the first effort to take stock of the implementation of the commitments agreed in Busan. Released at the midpoint between the Busan High-Level Forum and the 2015 target date for the Millennium Development Goals, it assesses progress and outlines concrete actions to accelerate implementation of commitments and deliver more effective development co-operation. The report draws on the Global Partnership monitoring framework and its ten indicators that were designed to uphold global accountability for selected Busan commitments.

Data for six of these indicators (use of country results frameworks, predictability, aid on budget, mutual accountability, gender equality and use of country systems) was provided by developing countries, drawing on their own information management systems as well as reporting from their development co-operation providers. The remaining indicators (enabling environment for civil society, private sector engagement, transparency and aid untying) draw on existing global processes and information sources. The data in this report captures 46% of total official development assistance that is programmed for developing countries annually.

The 46 developing countries that submitted data on a voluntary basis range from low- to middle-income status and represent all regions. The commitment of these countries to the monitoring process reflects the importance the development community places on accountability.

A diverse set of development co-operation providers also participated in data collection, including bilateral and multilateral development agencies, global funds and programmes, as well as members of the Arab co-ordination group and emerging economies. This engagement reflects the diversity of the Global Partnership and is recognised as an important expression of the spirit of inclusiveness forged at the Busan High-Level Forum.

## What is the state of play?

Globally, the results are mixed. Longstanding efforts to change the way development co-operation is delivered are paying off, but much more needs to be done to transform co-operation practices and ensure country ownership of all development efforts, as well as transparency and accountability among development partners.

The report reveals that despite global economic turbulence, changing political landscapes and domestic budgetary pressures, commitment to the Busan principles remains strong. Achievements made on important aid effectiveness commitments that date back to 2005 have been broadly sustained – confirming that political commitment can translate into better practices at the country level, given sufficient time and sustained commitment. More needs to be done, however, to meet the targets that the Global Partnership set for 2015.

**Country ownership continues to strengthen.** Achievements made in 2010 around strengthening and using country systems – although falling short of the Paris and Accra targets – have broadly been sustained despite unfavourable conditions for development co-operation in many provider countries. This shows that investments in strengthening country systems are paying off in the long term. It is too early to say whether strengthened commitment to ownership is translating into increased use of developing countries’ own results frameworks to guide development co-operation on the whole. Stronger dialogue is needed to promote greater alignment with the priorities and systems of the developing countries.

**Inclusiveness – the “core” of the Busan Partnership agreement – is translating into stronger recognition and engagement of non-state development actors** in national systems and accountability processes. Nonetheless, the development co-operation architecture is still skewed towards a government-centred, North-South perspective. Concerted efforts among all stakeholders are needed to ensure that civil society organisations can exercise their role as independent development actors. Further work is needed to assess public-private dialogue which matters for private sector development and the investment climate. Inclusiveness is also about ensuring that development leaves no one behind; evidence shows strong commitment by an increasing number of countries to track allocations for gender equality to ensure that public expenditure targets both women and men.

**The drive for transparency is starting to show results – but these need to be geared towards countries’ needs.** While increasingly transparent information is available, high-level political commitment in this area needs to work its way through co-operation providers’ systems and procedures to allow truly transparent and predictable co-operation, where information is geared towards supporting developing countries’ own planning needs and activities. Greater transparency is also needed in country-level review processes to fully reflect mutual accountability among all stakeholders for shared effectiveness principles.

Experience indicates that **the shift towards developing country-led monitoring is feasible.** Global Partnership stakeholders can advance this shift by supporting individual countries’ and regional structures’ efforts to strengthen country accountability frameworks, embed the data collection for global indicators within these frameworks, and exchange knowledge and good practice. Country leadership needs to be matched by stronger engagement of providers at the country level. This will ensure that reviews of

lessons and future refinements within the Global Partnership monitoring framework are guided by the experiences and needs of developing countries themselves.

In 2011, an unprecedentedly wide group of development stakeholders endorsed the Busan Partnership, committing to make development deliver better results for the world's poor. As the Global Partnership prepares to take stock of accomplishments and chart out areas where further efforts are needed – during its first High-Level Meeting – this report identifies remaining technical and institutional challenges and points to where political leadership can help to overcome them. Showing both successes and shortcomings, it provides an evidence base for reflection and motivation to intensify efforts and multiply the achievements that Global Partnership stakeholders will present in 2015 and beyond.



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