

Chapter 1

Towards more effective development co-operation: Overview of monitoring findings

Two years after the endorsement of the Busan Partnership agreement for Effective Development Co-operation, are we on track to deliver on agreed commitments? What is the state of implementation of the Busan principles? How is progress assessed, and what are the limitations to the approach used? This chapter responds to these questions, drawing on evidence generated through the Global Partnership monitoring framework and its ten indicators, offering a concise overview of the findings that are explained in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Busan: A turning point for development co-operation

In 2011 when the global development community convened in Busan, Republic of Korea, for the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4), the international community was standing at a critical juncture in international development co-operation. The world had changed profoundly since development co-operation began over half a century earlier. In this changing landscape, development co-operation had undergone notable reform to improve its quality, and positive results had been achieved. Nevertheless, progress had been uneven and neither fast nor far-reaching enough to generate sustainable results for all citizens. With the 2015 target date for the Millennium Development Goals fast approaching, there had never been greater urgency to achieve strong, shared and sustainable growth. Success would depend on the results and impact of joint efforts.

Two key factors served to create a paradigm shift in the nature of development co-operation – the realisation that aid alone is not enough to achieve our shared development goals, and the recognition of an evolving and increasingly complex development “architecture” characterised by a greater variety of actors, country contexts and new forms of partnership.

The Busan Partnership agreement for Effective Development Co-operation (BPo) embodies this paradigm shift. The result of an inclusive process of consultation and negotiation, it reinforces the core principles of the Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) for effective aid, while also embracing diversity and recognising the distinct roles that all co-operation stakeholders can play to support development. In recognising that different stakeholders may approach a common agenda for development in different ways, building on voluntary engagement, it identifies four common principles which form the foundation for effective development co-operation (Box 1.1).

Box 1.1. Shared principles to achieve common goals

Ownership of development priorities by developing countries. Partnerships for development can only succeed if they are led by developing countries, implementing approaches that are tailored to country-specific situations and needs.

Focus on results. Our investments and efforts must have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, on sustainable development, and on enhancing developing countries’ capacities, aligned with the priorities and policies set out by developing countries themselves.

Inclusive development partnerships. Openness, trust, and mutual respect and learning lie at the core of effective partnerships in support of development goals, recognising the different and complementary roles of all actors.

Transparency and accountability to each other. Mutual accountability and accountability to the intended beneficiaries of our co-operation, as well as to our respective citizens, organisations, constituents and shareholders, is critical to delivering results. Transparent practices form the basis for enhanced accountability.

Source: Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011), endorsed at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, Republic of Korea, 29 November-1 December 2011, <http://effectivecooperation.org>.

The Busan Partnership agreement formed a new, inclusive Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (Box 1.2) to support implementation of commitments at the political level and to act as a forum for the exchange of knowledge and the regular review of progress. It also called for agreement on a “selective and relevant set of indicators and targets through which we will monitor progress” (BPa, 2011: para 35).

Monitoring is key to uphold accountability and support implementation efforts in individual countries.

Box 1.2. What is the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation?

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation was established at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2011 to sustain political dialogue on issues relating to the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation. It brings together a wide variety of development actors to improve the way development co-operation is delivered at the country level to ensure that it contributes to poverty eradication and shared prosperity.

The Busan Partnership agreement has so far been endorsed by 161 nations and territories and 54 international organisations, representing a wide range of stakeholders: governments from both provider and recipient countries; countries involved in South-South co-operation; multilateral organisations; civil society; and representatives of parliamentarians and the private sector. The Global Partnership provides these development players with an open forum for sharing experiences and ensuring that funding, knowledge and policy produce maximum impact for development. It also supports regular monitoring of progress in the implementation of the commitments agreed in Busan. While still in its early stage, the Global Partnership has the potential to play an important role in the global development co-operation architecture and contribute to implementing the post-2015 development agenda.

The Busan Partnership agreement invited the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to work together to provide support for the effective functioning of the Global Partnership. The UNDP-OECD joint support team includes dedicated staff across the two organisations who provide day-to-day support to the Global Partnership. More information is available at: <http://effectivecooperation.org>.

There is a strong demand from developing countries for a global monitoring framework to support their own implementation efforts and accountability.

An evidence-based approach, geared towards learning and sharing of lessons, has been the key characteristic of international effectiveness efforts since 2005. In Busan, developing countries called for the continuation of a global monitoring framework to uphold accountability and support implementation efforts in individual countries. A rationale for continued monitoring efforts at the global level had emerged already in the preparations for the Busan High-Level Forum. The final Evaluation of the Paris Declaration recommended that the international development community build on the important international advances made through purpose-built joint partnership mechanisms to pursue further development co-operation reform (Wood et al., 2011). The

evaluation confirmed the Paris Declaration principles' relevance for all forms of development co-operation focused on ownership, alignment and harmonisation, results and accountability. It also pointed out that the implementation of these principles had helped to strengthen standards of partnerships, and legitimised demand from developing countries that good practice be observed. Likewise, the Co-Chairs of the former Working Party on Aid Effectiveness stated that inclusive global accountability mechanisms are needed to support strong, country-led partnerships (Abdel-Malek and Koenders, 2011). Drawing on experience to date, they highlighted the role of monitoring and evaluation of international commitments in creating and sustaining incentives for implementation and reform by refocusing global processes on essential learning and accountability functions.

Monitoring the Busan commitments globally and locally

The Global Partnership monitoring framework, developed by the multi-stakeholder Post-Busan Interim Group, was endorsed in June 2012 in the final meeting of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness.¹ The framework consists of ten indicators which provide the basis for this report. Since the Busan Partnership agreement reaffirms the commitments of those countries and organisations signing up to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), the Global Partnership monitoring framework retains those indicators from the Paris Declaration monitoring framework that developing countries identified as particularly important, while supplementing these with additional indicators that capture some of the broader dimensions of the Busan Partnership agreement. Each indicator includes a target for 2015, providing a foundation to measure progress in making co-operation practices more effective.

The Busan Partnership agreement strengthens the emphasis on country-level implementation of commitments, and the Global Partnership monitoring framework was designed to reflect this spirit of a country-led approach; developing countries choose when and how they engage in global monitoring efforts, based on their own data, planning cycles and country priorities. This approach draws on and helps to strengthen countries' own accountability processes. It places particular emphasis on behaviour change in development co-operation efforts in order to help achieve the results defined in developing countries' own development strategies. Its aim is not to monitor development outcomes themselves; this is the role of other international frameworks (e.g. the Millennium Development Goals).

The Global Partnership monitoring framework increasingly grounds data collection in existing national monitoring processes.

In this spirit of a “global light, country-focused” approach, the Global Partnership monitoring framework increasingly grounds data collection in existing national monitoring processes. Where relevant, developing countries are encouraged to use their own monitoring mechanisms and tools – where they exist – to report data to the global process. The aim of this monitoring approach is to ensure a degree of aggregation and comparability in the evidence generated through national frameworks, while moving away from parallel monitoring mechanisms and cycles that primarily serve international reporting needs.

This report provides a first global snapshot of the state of play in implementing selected Busan commitments. In the midpoint between the Busan High-Level Forum in 2011 and the 2015 goalpost that the international community has set for the Millennium Development Goals, this interim stocktake draws attention to areas where advances have already been made, where progress remains within reasonable reach, and other areas that warrant considerable attention if the international community aspires to demonstrate concrete progress on more effective development co-operation by 2015 and beyond.

This first chapter presents an overview of findings and future considerations, while Chapters 2 to 4 review findings from the ten indicators. Chapter 5 gathers observations and examples on country efforts to implement the Busan principles and to set up national accountability frameworks to monitor progress.

Are we on track to meet the Busan targets by 2015?

Despite slow progress, efforts initiated in 2005 have been broadly sustained and indicate a profound transformation in the way development co-operation is managed and delivered.

Overall, the glass is half full. Efforts to implement the monitored commitments are underway. At the same time, much more is needed to implement commitments by 2015. Findings confirm that reform takes time – but it works. Despite slow progress, previous achievements towards the “aid effectiveness” commitments have been broadly sustained; efforts initiated in 2005 shape how development co-operation is carried out today. In view of the political challenges that development co-operation faces today, this outcome should not be taken as a given. Since the global economic crisis, many providers of development co-operation have faced pressures on their budgets and increased domestic scrutiny over the way they spend funding and what such funding can achieve. This has not been without implications for choices regarding resource allocations, modalities for delivery and risk management. The fact that previous investments in more effective practices have resisted a less favourable environment indicates a profound transformation in the way development co-operation is managed and delivered today – and confirms that reform yields lasting results.

This knowledge should give Global Partnership stakeholders the impetus for the concerted and targeted action needed to build on successes and address bottlenecks. In doing so, the 2015 targets for effective development co-operation will be within reach. Particular effort will be needed to bring about the action and behaviour change required for the newer Busan commitments related to inclusive partnerships. In due course, these efforts will too begin to translate into reform and, eventually, more effective co-operation and more sustainable results.

Ownership and results of development co-operation (Chapter 2)

The Busan Partnership agreement sees developing countries’ ownership of development priorities as the first of four fundamental principles for effective development. This principle is closely associated with the focus on results, the second principle. Countries and organisations agreed at Busan to do more to align their work with the priorities and policies set out by developing countries, ensuring that investments

and efforts have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, on sustainable development, and on enhancing developing countries' capacities.

Country ownership continues to strengthen. Achievements made in 2010 around strengthening and using country systems – although falling short of desired Paris and Accra targets – have broadly been sustained despite somewhat 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 countries' own results frameworks to guide development co-operation on the whole.

Table 1.1. **Ownership and results of development co-operation**

Indicators	2015 targets	State of implementation
Indicator 1. Development co-operation is focused on results that meet developing countries' priorities	All providers of development co-operation use country results frameworks	Too early to assess progress – indicator piloted in eight countries. Preliminary feedback suggests great variation in use between providers but consistent provider behaviour across countries.
Indicator 6. Aid is on budgets which are subject to parliamentary scrutiny	Halve the gap – halve the proportion of development co-operation flows to the government sector not reported on government's budget(s). By 2015: 85% reported on budget.	Some progress – 64% of scheduled funding is reported on government's budgets. Only seven countries have reached or are close to reaching the 85% target.
Indicator 9. Developing countries' systems are strengthened and used	Half of developing countries move up at least one measure (i.e. 0.5 points) on the PFM/CPIA scale of performance. Reduce the gap in the use of PFM and procurement systems (by two-thirds where CPIA score ≥ 5 ; or by one third where between 3.5 and 4.5). By 2015: 57% of funding uses country systems.	Previous achievements sustained but more progress is needed. No overall change in the quality of countries' public financial management systems. No change in use of country systems: Development co-operation funding using PFM and procurement systems remained at its level of 2010 (around 49%).
Indicator 10. Aid is untied	Continued progress over time	Some progress – 79% of bilateral ODA is untied (in comparison with 77% in 2010).

Indicator 1: Increased use of countries' own indicators, statistics, and monitoring and evaluation systems strengthens country results frameworks and solidifies ownership and accountability

- Preliminary results indicate great variation in the use of country results frameworks, with providers showing high, moderate and low levels of use. This said, the tendency of individual providers to use country results frameworks across different countries seems to be consistent. These findings draw on piloting the indicator in eight countries and cannot be generalised at this stage.
- Further efforts among Global Partnership stakeholders are needed for a better understanding of what drives progress in this area. It would be particularly important to identify operational policies and instruments of individual providers that are more likely to increase their ability to use country results frameworks of developing countries to assess progress achieved through development co-operation.

Indicator 6: Including development co-operation funding in budgets enables alignment with national priorities, more accurate and comprehensive budgeting

and greater transparency and accountability in implementing development co-operation as part of national development efforts

- There has been some progress since 2010. In total, 64% of development co-operation funding scheduled for the government sector was reflected in national budgets of developing countries.
- Seven countries have reached the agreed minimum target of capturing at least 85% of scheduled co-operation funding in their national budgets.
- Caution is needed when looking at these results, given the discrepancy between what governments record in their budget and information from providers on their disbursement schedules. This calls for greater transparency and regular exchange of information at country level.

Indicator 9: Using developing countries' own institutions and systems will strengthen these institutions and systems themselves, reduce transaction costs and enable greater country-level accountability towards citizens and parliament

- The quality of public financial management (PFM) systems shows little change in most countries: three countries demonstrate increased quality of country systems, while quality has declined in three other countries.
- Half of development co-operation funding is channelled through PFM and procurement systems. There has been no change in the use of country systems since 2010.
- There are encouraging signs that the international community could reach the target set for 2015. This will require developing countries to continue the reforms to strengthen their systems while providers' efforts to update their policy guidance on use of country systems provide a good basis for further progress. This can be achieved through stronger dialogue at country level.

Indicator 10: Development co-operation which is not tied to specific geographic sources for the procurement of goods and services enables greater alignment to country priorities and systems and ensures better value for money

- Providers are delivering on their commitments to untie more official development assistance (ODA). The share of untied ODA was 79% in 2012, the highest level recorded, despite pressures on ODA budgets more generally.
- Reporting by providers on tied aid has also improved. Only 3.5% of ODA in 2012 did not have its tying status reported.
- Remaining inconsistencies in how and what providers report as tied aid need to be resolved.

Inclusive development partnerships (Chapter 3)

Inclusiveness – the “core” of the Busan Partnership agreement – is translating into stronger recognition and engagement of non-state development actors, including the private sector and civil society. Full engagement of these actors in national systems and accountability processes and recognition of their contributions to development will, however, require more time and effort in a development co-operation architecture which is still skewed towards a government-centred, North-South setting.

Inclusiveness goes beyond how different actors engage in development. Inclusiveness is also about development benefiting all, and men and women equally. There are encouraging signs that political commitment translates into greater accountability to track progress in this area. Evidence shows strong commitment by an increasing number of countries to ensure that public expenditure is targeting both women and men. This requires institutions, systems and data.

Table 1.2. **Inclusive development partnerships**

Indicators	2015 targets	State of implementation
Indicator 2. Civil society operates within an environment that maximises its engagement in and contribution to development	Continued progress over time	Too early to assess progress – further thinking needed on measurement due to data limitation. Mixed picture with evidence of positive examples of government efforts to facilitate the work of civil society organisations however, notable challenges prevail in many countries.
Indicator 3. Engagement and contribution of the private sector to development	Continued progress over time	Too early to assess progress – indicator pilot ongoing. Other sources of evidence suggest that the quality of private-public dialogue matters.
Indicator 8. Gender equality and women's empowerment	All developing countries have systems that track and make public resource allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	A good start – one third of the countries have systems in place with indications of others committed to track gender allocations more systematically.

Indicator 2: Enabling civil society organisations to exercise their role as independent development actors will help to maximise their contribution to development

- Due to the limited data available, it has not been possible to develop a quantitative measure of the legal and regulatory framework for civil society organisations (CSOs). Examples of efforts by governments to facilitate the work of CSOs have been reported in the form of improved legislation or institutionalised CSO engagement in national policy dialogue. Evidence from different sources suggests that CSOs continue to face notable challenges in many countries: the creation of mandatory and/or complex registration process for CSOs, which can result in limiting the activities of organisations rather than providing a regulatory framework, and control and restrictions in relation to funding they receive.
- More concerted efforts among all actors are needed to ensure that CSOs can exercise their role as independent development actors. This includes: developing a common understanding on what has to be done to promote an enabling environment for civil society, and investing resources to generate primary data on CSO environment to show accurate and comparable information across countries and promote meaningful dialogue on the CSO enabling environment within the Global Partnership.

Indicator 3: Promoting better participation of the private sector in the design and implementation of development policies and in dialogue on reforms impacting their enabling environment will maximise the contribution of the private sector to development

- The indicator on private sector engagement is being piloted at the time of writing this report. The development of this indicator has been challenging, given the difficulty in both identifying an appropriate proxy for assessing private sector engagement and in drawing on existing methodology in such a complex area.
- Existing evidence suggests that initiatives to promote public-private dialogue have attached greater attention to the organisational effectiveness and outcome focus of formalised structures put in place. Such dialogue can be associated with a wide range of reforms within the financial and private sector development space/business-enabling environment. The dialogue process in itself has been a positive outcome for government reforms, in terms of communication, co-ordination and accountability.
- Public-private dialogue constitutes an entry point through which to implement broader and more ambitious development co-operation programmes focused on improving the investment climate and associated reforms.

Indicator 8: Tracking and making public budget allocations disaggregated by sex enable fuller use of this data to inform policy decisions and guide investments and allocate resources in a way that maximally benefits both women and men

- Countries are making serious efforts to put in place systems to track budget allocations on gender equality and women's empowerment. Out of 35 countries, 12 have systems in place to track and make public allocations on gender equality. Five additional countries have a tracking system, but allocations are not made public.
- There is scope for further progress: many of the countries without a system in place reported ongoing efforts to promote gender responsive budgeting and to develop mechanisms for tracking gender allocations in a more systematic manner. The fact that many of these countries voluntarily reported on this indicator despite not having systems in place is a sign of their commitment to making progress in this area.

Transparency and accountability for development results (Chapter 4)

The transparency drive is starting to show results – but these need to be geared towards countries' needs. Increased availability of information is not yet translating systematically into greater support to countries' strategic planning. Continued effort is needed for the high-level political commitment in this area 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.

Mutual accountability for implementing agreed commitments is growing stronger – which is underscored by the observations around the monitoring process itself. Greater transparency and inclusiveness is still needed to fully reflect mutual accountability among all relevant stakeholders for shared effectiveness principles.

Table 1.3. **Transparency and accountability for development results**

Indicators	2015 targets	State of implementation
Indicator 4. Information on development co-operation is publicly available	Implement the common open standard for electronic publication of information on resources provided through development co-operation	A good start but more progress needed. The average provider publishes data once-a-year that is six to nine months old and provides information for 50% of common standard data fields. Transparency of forward information is a challenge: 25% of providers do not publish any forward-looking information through the systems of the common standard.
Indicator 5(a). Annual predictability: proportion of development co-operation funding disbursed within the fiscal year in which it was scheduled by co-operation providers	Halve the gap – halve the proportion of development co-operation funding not disbursed within the fiscal year for which it was scheduled. By 2015: 90% of funding is disbursed as scheduled	Some progress – 84% of scheduled disbursements were disbursed as planned (in comparison to 79% in 2010).
Indicator 5(b). Medium-term predictability: proportion of development co-operation funding covered by indicative forward spending plans provided at country level	Halve the gap – halve the proportion of development co-operation funding not covered by indicative forward spending plans. By 2015: plans cover 92% of estimated funding for 2016, 85% for 2017 and 79% for 2018.	A good start but more progress needed. Forward spending plans cover: 83% of estimated total funding for 2014, 70% for 2015 and 57% for 2016.
Indicator 7. Mutual accountability among co-operation actors is strengthened through inclusive reviews	All developing countries have inclusive mutual assessment reviews in place	Some progress - 59% of countries have mutual assessment reviews in place. Encouraging efforts are underway to mutually track progress, but more is needed to make reviews inclusive and transparent.

Indicator 4: Implementation of the common, open standard on transparency will improve the availability and public accessibility of information on development co-operation and provide a stronger basis for enhanced accountability

- The provider community needs to raise its collective level of ambition and redouble efforts if it is to publish by 2015 timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on development co-operation resources. To enhance the publication of information, urgent action is needed to report more frequently, using data that is less than six months old, and to overcome systemic/procedural hurdles to providing information on all agreed common standard data fields. To be more transparent about future plans, providers that do not yet publish any information should urgently start to publish at least aggregate country envelopes for future years, and aim to gradually move towards more detailed activity-level reporting.
- Further work is needed to assess the quality and usefulness of information. Insofar as the Global Partnership transparency indicator measures the implementation of the common standard, any evolution of the indicator will ultimately be guided by the evolution of the standard itself. In line with the Busan Partnership agreement, it is recommended that further work around the common standard focuses on improving the understanding of what timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information means in practice for developing countries and non-state stakeholders so that all transparency efforts respond effectively to local needs and country contexts.

Indicator 5: Accurate information on future development co-operation funding enables better planning and allocation of resources within and across sectors

and sound implementation of national development strategies over the medium term

- There has been some progress on annual predictability, with 84% of funds disbursed according to plan. However, developing country governments are faced with continued unpredictability and are managing increasingly complex resource equations where providers' disbursements both fall short of – and exceed – initial plans.
- Making development co-operation more predictable in the short term will essentially require providers to: (1) eliminate the remaining shortfalls in disbursements as compared to original schedules; (2) make disbursement schedules more accurate, realistically estimating the pace of programme implementation and revising plans upwards where necessary so that they provide reliable estimates for future funding; and (3) provide government with disbursement plans in the first place.
- Medium-term predictability remains a real challenge. The commitment for providers to share, by 2013, rolling three- to five-year forward expenditure plans has not been implemented. Forward expenditure plans for the third year ahead now cover just over half of estimated expenditure.
- Urgent action is needed from providers to adjust policies and procedures so that medium-term co-operation plans can be regularly updated and communicated to developing countries and broader stakeholders. Where changes in legislation, policies or procedures are required, revitalised political leadership is urgently needed to implement commitments and make medium-term predictability a reality.

Indicator 7: Comprehensive and inclusive reviews of progress provide the basis for mutual accountability for progress among all stakeholders at the country level

- More than half the countries have in place mutual review processes. An additional 11 countries now have processes in place in comparison with 2010, despite stricter criteria used for defining mutual review processes.
- Targeted efforts are needed to make mutual review processes more transparent and inclusive, extending participation to emerging providers, CSOs and the private sector. While some countries have taken positive action to strengthen inclusiveness of partnerships, mutual accountability frameworks and joint assessment reviews continue to be undertaken mostly between the government and traditional providers of development co-operation.

The monitoring process shows encouraging signs of commitment and involvement

The voluntary nature of the Busan Partnership agreement provides the basis for Global Partnership monitoring efforts. The set of countries and organisations covered by the global monitoring framework is thus determined through self-selection, and participation by different stakeholders may grow over time. The data featured in this report covers 46 developing countries that voluntarily collected and provided data for the country-level indicators. This group includes countries of low- and middle-income status and from all regions. Additionally, several other countries expressed their interest in drawing on the Global Partnership monitoring indicators to enhance their national accountability frameworks and, subsequently, to participate in future global monitoring rounds.

Between them, the countries participating in the monitoring exercise offer a reasonable sample of development co-operation today: this report captures roughly USD 41 billion, or around 46% of the ODA that is programmed for developing countries annually.² Data used for this report includes 77 providers of development co-operation – bilateral and multilateral providers as well as global funds and programmes³ – drawn from self-reporting to government at the country level and/or their participation in other global processes that generate data for the monitoring framework.⁴

Strong country leadership over data collection signals that the focus on country implementation is the right way to go.

Collaboration with developing countries during this monitoring effort suggests increasingly strong country leadership over the data collection process, signalling continued commitment to participate in and contribute towards global monitoring efforts. This leadership has in several countries been intertwined with increased use of existing frameworks and tools to extract necessary data, such as aid information management systems and databases. These accountability frameworks build on country priorities and may encompass a much wider set of issues and commitments beyond the Global Partnership indicators, but also provide information necessary for global monitoring efforts. At the same time, *ad hoc* approaches to monitoring remain necessary in some countries that do not yet have processes or tools for periodic collection of the country-level data required for global indicators. With time it is hoped that there will be a decrease in the number of such countries.

The diversity of participants reflects the spirit of inclusiveness forged at the Busan High-Level Forum.

This monitoring exercise also saw an increasingly diverse set of co-operation providers such as members of the Arab Co-ordination Group and emerging economies participating in accountability processes at the country level. 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.

Limitations to assessing progress

Comparison is limited given that country contexts differ and mandates and areas of intervention vary across providers.

The Global Partnership monitoring framework is primarily a mechanism to support global- and country-level accountability and learning to make development co-operation more effective. The process does not aim, as such, to offer a complete picture of progress and challenges. Due to the light global approach envisaged for the Global Partnership, the framework of indicators, and consequently of this report, is limited in scope:

- This report examines progress towards the specific commitments related to the ten agreed indicators of the Global Partnership monitoring framework. It does not monitor the many other commitments stemming from the Busan Partnership agreement. Findings and recommendations on the ten indicators are one input for broader political

dialogue on accountability and progress; they are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of all principles and commitments on development co-operation.

- The ten indicators offer a degree of insight into the implementation efforts of stakeholders, and are intended to act as an entry point for political dialogue around monitored commitments. They are not intended as a score card for ranking countries or organisations; such direct performance rankings or comparisons over time or across countries and organisations are not feasible due to changes in the sample of participating countries and organisations, modifications to the indicator methodologies, and variation in country contexts and the mandates of co-operation providers.

Each of the Global Partnership monitoring indicators is accompanied by a target for 2015, and the data provides a sense of where we are on the road towards this milestone. At the same time, there are some limitations in the extent to which it is possible to assess the distance travelled. For some of the indicators measured previously under the Paris Declaration monitoring framework, there is scope for assessing progress within the subset of the 38 countries that participated in both 2013 and previous Paris Declaration monitoring efforts. However, even comparisons within this subgroup should be treated with caution, as country contexts and the composition of co-operation providers in-country may have evolved between 2010 and 2013.

For the new indicators piloted for the first time, the report offers a preliminary narrative on the status of implementation, but cannot yet offer a comprehensive assessment of progress. It should also be noted that developing new indicators, particularly those related to inclusive development partnerships (Chapter 3), has been challenging. While the introduction of these indicators was essential to construct a monitoring framework consistent with the vision set out in Busan, follow-up action is needed to translate this vision into specific and concrete actions to attain these goals. Substantial efforts have been invested to formulate conceptual frameworks and methodologies for assessing an enabling environment for civil society and private sector engagement. However, a robust measurement approach will mean further articulating the expected behaviour change required of relevant stakeholders.

Some of the challenges encountered in consolidating and validating data at the country level indicate that further efforts are needed to enhance transparency and accountability.

An inclusive approach has been encouraged throughout the process of data collection and validation. The aim is to encourage multi-stakeholder dialogue on progress in each country. Joint reviews of data by government and co-operation providers have been important, particularly to identify possible discrepancies between data extracted from government databases and matching data as understood by providers' country offices and headquarters. In some instances co-operation providers' understanding of accurate data has differed rather substantially from that extracted from government databases for the purposes of Global Partnership monitoring. The concerns expressed by these providers are duly noted. However, in helping to reveal such misunderstandings, miscommunication or inaccuracies, the Global Partnership monitoring framework is already fulfilling one of its important objectives: to bring together government and providers to identify these gaps in accountability structures and to find ways to improve them. Some of these challenges encountered in consolidating and validating data at the

country level indicate that further efforts among development stakeholders are needed to enhance transparency and accountability.

The gains of increased country leadership and more embedded monitoring efforts do not come without some data implications: collecting existing data and following national fiscal cycles means less consistency and comparability across countries and over time. Relying on countries' existing data collection mechanisms can mean a less comprehensive data set. Nevertheless, this transformation in the monitoring process is gradually strengthening country-driven accountability frameworks that primarily serve countries' needs for progress and accountability for results, while at the same time enabling light, periodic global reviews of progress.

Ways forward for strengthening global accountability

Refine indicators to strengthen the monitoring framework

The Global Partnership monitoring framework adopted in 2012 foresaw a light periodic review of global indicators and the methodology underpinning them to coincide with periodic reports on progress. A review could be envisaged to coincide with the second High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership to take stock of monitoring efforts and contribute to continued global learning to inform future monitoring and accountability efforts. To further refine the monitoring framework in the meantime, stakeholders are invited to lend their support in the following way:

- Monitoring efforts in 2013 have highlighted that some of the indicators piloted in 2013 need further strengthening and sharpening. This is particularly the case where further political discussions are necessary to pin down concrete actions required to deliver on commitments (e.g. CSOs, private sector), and where strong political leadership is needed to guide further improvement in the measurement approach. In some cases, this is compounded by data gaps or methodological constraints (e.g. indicator 2 on CSO enabling environment, indicator 3 on private sector engagement and indicator 1 on use of country results frameworks). The relevant chapters of this report make suggestions to guide these refinements.

Support countries to strengthen national accountability frameworks and enable more comprehensive future global monitoring

The transformation towards monitoring led by countries themselves is both desirable and feasible. Lessons from monitoring efforts indicate that there is strong demand for country-owned monitoring, with several additional countries developing their own mechanisms to review progress on the Busan commitments. The following could be considered:

- Global Partnership stakeholders are invited to consider adequate support for individual countries and regional structures to strengthen country accountability frameworks, embed the collection of data for global indicators within these frameworks, and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and good practice. This will ensure that any review of lessons and future refinements within the Global Partnership monitoring framework are guided by the experiences and needs of developing countries themselves.
- Country leadership needs to be matched by stronger engagement by providers at the country level. To ensure legitimacy of global monitoring efforts which will increasingly

be embedded in national monitoring processes, more is needed from co-operation providers to re-align their systems and procedures to those of developing countries. This calls for better internal communication and co-ordination within provider organisations to address apparent disconnects between headquarters and country office operations. This will be key to accurately monitor progress and reinforce mutual accountability both at the country and global levels.

Notes

1. The Working Party on Aid Effectiveness – a multi-stakeholder group that had been working since 2008 to improve the effectiveness of development efforts – was tasked by the Busan Partnership agreement to convene representatives of countries and stakeholders to agree by June 2012 on the working arrangements and monitoring framework of the Global Partnership. After its final meeting, the WP-EFF gave way to the new Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.
2. Known as country programmable aid (CPA), this is the portion of ODA that provides programme for individual countries. CPA seeks to capture the portion of flows that go directly to developing countries from the overall ODA envelope. For more information, see www.oecd.org/development/aid-architecture/cpa.htm.
3. Partners engaged in South-South co-operation were not expected to participate in the monitoring framework, but were invited to share their experience and achievements in implementing agreed principles of effective development co-operation on a voluntary basis. Nevertheless, contributions were received from a number of South-South partners, and this report benefits from their reporting at the country level.
4. Such as the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting Systems, OECD Forward Spending Surveys or the International Aid Transparency Initiative, which source the data for indicators on transparency and untying (see Chapters 2 and 4).

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