

# **Global Dialogue on Implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Participatory Monitoring for Accountability**

## **Summary of Key Messages for Recommended Actions**

### **I. Background**

Encouraging an inclusive dialogue on the Post-2015 Agenda is a mandate given to the UN by Member States. The *Outcome Document of the UN General Assembly Special Event on the MDGs and Post-2015 Development Agenda* emphasized the need for an inclusive and people-centered Post-2015 Development Agenda and has led to a series of consultations with different stakeholders. One such consultation has been on *Participatory Monitoring for Accountability (PMA)*, co-sponsored by the governments of Peru, Canada and Republic of Korea.

The global event that took place in Lima, Peru from 12-13 March 2015 was the culmination of the yearlong consultative process. It aimed to showcase examples of good practice in PMA, particularly at the country level, and to facilitate dialogue among participating States on the topic. Results of the national consultation processes and experiences<sup>1</sup> were shared publicly along with the evidence gathered through regional and global initiatives. The event has served to validate the findings and to formulate recommendations for a way forward in PMA within the Post-2015 Development Agenda (especially in relation to SDG 17). The meeting brought together representatives from governments, civil society and the media as well as from the UN and other international organizations.

There is growing demand from Member States for pragmatic proposals on how to make the Post-2015 Development Agenda work. Means of Implementation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are becoming increasingly central to the debate. A follow-up and review mechanism under the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) for Sustainable Development is envisioned as one of the indispensable accountability components for this agenda.

### **II. Introduction**

A major issue on PMA to be addressed is how the Post-2015 Development Agenda can best be adapted to serve people in terms of the complex and diverse realities they confront in their daily lives. A PMA approach that is rooted in human rights principles, in line with national and international commitments, should be considered as a key supportive element for effective implementation and the follow-up and review framework for the new Agenda.

PMA empowers people in the development process to articulate their priorities and have greater engagement in decisions that affect their lives. It also provides people with tools to hold duty bearers to account for delivery and performance in both the public and private sectors. Of particular interest to the implementation of the SDGs, PMA can also provide concrete information for evidence-based decision-making processes from the local and national to the global level.

PMA encourages responsible collaboration between people and their government, and can

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Bangladesh, Guatemala, Kosovo, Montenegro, Peru, Thailand, Vietnam, and Zambia carried out national consultations on PMA, while relevant experiences of other countries were shared.

promote social inclusion and equality especially for those whose voices are not heard and excluded groups. Such efforts will have greater impact if governments encourage and promote the participation of their citizens and particularly the poorest and excluded.

Openness and transparency in policy-making, setting of budgets and use of public funds are key elements for building greater trust and increasing valuable and informed public input into these processes. Participation and transparency contributes to more effective spending, leading to improved outcomes, but transparency alone is insufficient without accountability. PMA must be an explicit element of the Means of Implementation and Follow-up and Review mechanisms of the SDGs.

### **III. Key messages for recommended actions resulting from the consultation process**

People must be placed at the center of sustainable development. Participation and people-centered development processes should therefore be at the heart of implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda. PMA must be inclusive of all people as right holders and it is particularly critical to strengthen the voice and influence of women, as well as those who are often excluded from these processes including girls and boys, youth, minorities, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty and other excluded groups. When people are included, outcomes are better and accountability leads to better allocation of resources and sustainable development results.

- PMA practices directly contribute to strengthening human rights. Participatory monitoring supports development processes, and through its practice, results are owned by the rights-holders, with all involved parties working together to reach goals and targets. It is also important for more informed development decision-making resulting in programs and initiatives that are more effective, efficient and have better results.
- PMA should be grounded in an enabling environment that is conducive to and includes: open government; strong institutional oversight and transparency; robust national approaches supporting participatory practices and mechanisms that embrace cultural diversity; and policies that promote a culture of participation among all social groups.
- Involving civil society in policymaking and budget decisions is relevant for national planning and implementation of the SDGs. It promotes good management, consensus building and trust between authorities and society, and it makes possible the coordination of their monitoring and accountability efforts.
- Monitoring government budget allocations and spending on the SDGs is an effective Means of Implementation. Likewise, budget monitoring, transparency, reporting and audit are crucial to ensure that the Post-2015 Development Agenda is adequately funded and achieves its goals.
- Implementation of the SDGs will require mobilizing additional resources to address financing needs in underfunded priority areas with the greatest impacts for the poor. Therefore, Financing for Development (FfD) is crucial to implement the SDGs and operationalize PMA approaches. There is a need for transparent and inclusive accountability and budgetary systems that ensure full participation of citizens.

- Local development solutions and good participatory practices should be scaled-up where appropriate and featured more prominently in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The national PMA consultations also illustrated that successful local practices need to be adapted before scaling-up to the national level, and national experiences may require flexibility and to be adapted for local context.
- More space should be created for civil society organizations (CSOs), grassroots and local organizations to participate meaningfully in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This should include women's and children's organizations as well as individuals of all ages. It is particularly critical to strengthen women's and children's voices and influence in monitoring and accountability mechanisms, as well as other groups who are often excluded from these processes.
- People-led monitoring can change the dynamics and direction of accountability and bring in new voices and ideas about what is working, where and why. And -- if things are not working -- what is needed to change course. The use of information and communications technology should be promoted in participatory mechanisms, in particular to engage the most marginalized groups in monitoring and accountability.
- The Post-2015 Development Agenda requires that citizens have access to relevant information in language and formats that they can understand and use. Therefore, PMA requires transparent, timely and relevant data, including budget information that should be disaggregated by sex, age, income, geographic location and other dimensions of inequality as required for monitoring progress beyond national averages. This requires strengthening investments in national statistical capacity. Administrative data such as civil registration and vital statistics are a critical part of strengthening country-level monitoring and accountability, as they support demographic / population analysis and contribute to results tracking and reporting across a number of sectors.
- The media and other communications channels can be valuable partners to government and civil society actors in order to encourage participation, transparency and accountability in development, as they are well placed to inform and raise awareness regarding PMA initiatives among the public.