

Rethinking development cooperation for the SDGs: country-level perspectives and lessons

*DCF Belgium High-level Symposium
Brussels, 6-8 April 2016*

Objective

A key question following the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development is how development cooperation actors will gear their operations towards the Sustainable Development Goals and realize the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development. The range of actors is diverse, including governments from the South and North as well as non-state actors. Their efforts will also be strongly context-specific.

Yet, common challenges will arise for all in realising the 2030 Agenda. Development cooperation will also remain vital in helping to address the particular challenges faced by the Least Developed and most vulnerable countries in the demanding task of building capacity for implementing integrated and coherent policies for sustainable development.

Making development cooperation a better fit for implementing the 2030 Agenda in LDC's and vulnerable contexts.

LDCs and other countries exposed to vulnerabilities (economic, social, environmental, institutional) that hinder their development in particular lack capacities for implementing the 2030 Agenda, which demands policy integration across the dimensions of sustainable development and beyond. Whole-of-government approaches, joint programming, nexus policy making, and sustainable development commissions can be relevant strategies in this regard. How can ODA and other types of innovative and traditional financial development cooperation support these countries in their SDG implementation efforts? What type of assistance is needed to scale up solutions in different country contexts, including for domestic resource mobilisation? The Symposium will also look at how such vulnerabilities often have effects beyond national borders or are of global nature, requiring collective action.

Development cooperation institutions for implementing the 2030 Agenda.

The operational business models of development cooperation institutions and agencies as well as non-governmental organizations are challenged by the 2030 Agenda. A variety of institutional models for development cooperation exists across governments, ranging from stand-alone ministries to integrated approaches, where development cooperation is part of foreign affairs, economic affairs, finance, economic planning or trade. The private sector, foundations and civil society organizations often focus on narrow aspects of development cooperation, where they add specific expertise. How will the SDGs and AAAAA inspire change in the ways these institutions and organizations engage with others for achieving sustainable results through development cooperation? How can cross-cutting issues be mainstreamed into the work of different organizations in an effective way? How to promote and sustain knowledge sharing and mutual learning?

Expected outcome

The DCF Belgium High-level Symposium will provide an open and interactive, multi-stakeholder format for sharing experiences among high calibre policy makers and practitioners on opportunities and challenges in development cooperation for the 2030 Agenda.

The discussions in the Symposium will produce concrete policy guidance on development cooperation institutions and development cooperation in the poorest and most vulnerable countries.

Background

The United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) has a clear, broad mandate to review trends and progress and encourage discussion around the future of international development cooperation, while promoting greater coherence in development policy and among partners.

The work of the DCF informs the Financing for Development follow-up process and implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. In monitoring and reviewing progress towards the SDGs, the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development takes the work of the DCF into account.

Analytical work and multi-stakeholder dialogue in support of the 2016 DCF are focused on: strengthening the narrative of development cooperation for the 2030 Agenda; further analysis on South-South cooperation; and monitoring, review and accountability of development cooperation, for mutual learning and better development results.

The preparatory Symposiums for the 2016 DCF are held in the Republic of Korea (April 2015), Uganda (November 2015) and Belgium (April 2016). The Republic of Korea Symposium explored the changing narrative of development cooperation, while the Uganda Symposium analysed the monitoring, review and SDG implementation challenges posed by the new global agenda for sustainable development.

Participation and programme

The DCF Belgium Symposium will engage up to 120 high-level experts from all stakeholder groups: donor and programme countries, Southern partners, civil society, private sector, philanthropic organizations, international organizations, parliamentarians and local governments from all regions of the world.

Deliberations will proceed through informal and highly interactive panel discussions, luncheons and coffee sessions, plus opening and closing sessions.

The first day will include a meeting of the DCF Advisory Group and two workshops, open to all participants, on digital for LDCs in the 2030 Agenda and capacity building experiences in LDCs.

Participants will also receive a special briefing on the ECOSOC Dialogue on making the United Nations system fit for purpose to support countries and other stakeholders in implementing the SDGs.

Do you want to learn more?

Please contact us:

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