



Post-2015 Monthly Monitor

January 2015

January Monitor: First set of intergovernmental negotiations kick off

Last week, the first set of intergovernmental negotiations, chaired by Ireland and Kenya, kicked off. Opening the session, **PGA** HE Sam Kutesa noted that we have a “truly historic opportunity on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the UN” to agree on an inspiring agenda that can energize the international community, governments everywhere, and citizens of the world. The **Secretary-General** highlighted the significance of the year 2015, noting that we’ll meet on three continents to ensure sustainable development: in Addis for the Financing for Development (FfD) conference, in New York for the Post-2015 Summit, and in Paris for the Climate COP. **ECOSOC President** HE Martin Sajdik highlighted the role of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and ECOSOC in monitoring implementation of the agenda, and challenged delegates to agree an agenda that can be communicated to the people they represent.

As the January session was meant to be a “**stocktaking**”, member states and civil society representatives took the opportunity to reflect on all four elements of the post-2015 agenda: 1) the Declaration, 2) Goals & Targets, 3) Means of Implementation (MOI) & Global Partnership, and 4) Monitoring and Review. A brief analysis of the status of each of these elements is below.

On the Declaration:

Member states viewed the declaration as an **opportunity to clearly communicate what the post-2015 agenda seeks to achieve in a way that is concise, compelling and understandable** to the global public. Some referred here to the six elements of the [SG’s synthesis report](#) (*dignity, people, prosperity, planet, justice and partnership*) as a useful framing guide, though others cautioned against losing the integrated and balanced nature of the OWG’s outcome. There was consensus that the declaration should be visionary and inspiring, focusing on people and planet with extreme poverty at the core. However, there was **divergence on the principle of CBDR**: some thought it should be emphasized in the context of MOI, while others stressed a focus on shared responsibility and universality. The co-facilitators will provide a draft elements paper on the Declaration for member states to consider ahead of the February session.

On Goals, Targets and Indicators:

There was broad support for maintaining the Open Working Group’s ambitious and delicately balanced outcome on SDGs and targets. Many recognized that the OWG outcome was the result of an unprecedented and inclusive process that enjoys broad political support, and thus did not wish to reopen negotiations. Several governments did voice support for **a technical assessment of the targets** – not to

remove targets or change their substance – but to ensure that targets are actionable, measureable and no less ambitious than existing international agreements. The co-chairs proposed that the UN Statistical Commission, with input from the UN task team and other stakeholders, review the targets with this lens ahead of the March session, qualifying that member states would have the opportunity to consider this input and decide how they wish to move forward. All agreed that any review should meet certain conditions, **such as not backtracking on ambition levels or reopening negotiations on the OWG’s carefully balanced outcome.**

The **indicator-setting process** is expected to be an iterative process that not only draws on the UN Statistical Commission’s work but also on UN agencies and experts outside of the UN system, including academia, civil society, think tanks and the business sector. Based on input from an interagency expert group, the UN Statistical Commission will provide member states a roadmap of **indicative global indicators** by March 2015. A full set of indicators is not expected to be finalized before the September summit and therefore will not be part of the official intergovernmental negotiations. However, member states will have an opportunity to provide initial feedback to the roadmap in March. In addition to global indicators that are comparable across countries, many governments emphasized the need for **nationally developed indicators** that are tailored to national contexts and priorities.

On Means of Implementation and Global Partnership:

Many member states agreed that the means of implementation must match the ambitions of the SDGs and targets if we are serious about translating them into meaningful action. Much discussion was dedicated to the **role that the Financing for Development (FfD) conference should play in terms of MOI**, particularly when considering the overlap between SDG 17 and the Monterrey Consensus. Some believed that all MOI aspects should be negotiated within the FfD context and subsequently plugged into post-2015 outcome, noting that this would both minimize duplication and provide added impetus for concrete FfD outcomes in Addis. Others emphasized the need to keep MOI central to the post-2015 discussions, particularly around key non-financial MOI, for example, on technology facilitation. The FfD co-chairs were present for much of the January negotiations, and both co-chairs have asserted their intentions to ensure coherence between processes. They circulated an [elements paper](#) as “food for thought” at the end of the week just before the first drafting session on FfD January 28-30.

On Follow up and Review:

While integral to implementation of the SDGs, it was clear that the follow-up and review mechanism was thus far the least fleshed out element of the agenda. Some governments called for a **strong mechanism to review implementation and commitments, while others stressed the voluntary nature of the process**, and see it more as of a forum for peer review and sharing lessons learned. Most agreed that the review mechanism should be multi-layered – ranging from the local to national to the regional and global levels. Several governments emphasized the **primary role of national governments** in monitoring and review, pointing out that national governments are first and foremost accountable to their citizens rather than to

other governments or multilateral bodies. For this reason, many governments preferred to call the follow-up “monitoring and review” rather than “accountability”.

Co-facilitators Ambassador Donoghue of Ireland and Ambassador Kamau of Kenya wrapped up the session by identifying a few key points for member states to keep in mind or **to resolve in the months ahead**:

- The need to **maximize coherence between the FfD, post-2015, and climate change** processes
- **The strong willingness to have civil society, business and other actors** actively engaged, as all play a key role, especially in raising awareness outside of the UN context
- Ahead of September Summit, the need to do better on **communicating the SDGs** – to get out the message of why they are important and transformative, and what they promise
- The need to decide on **themes for the six thematic roundtable** of the Summit.

January Must Reads:

- Released by the co-chairs of the FfD preparatory process, Norway and Guyana, the “food for thought” [elements paper](#) summarizes the key components of a financing and means of implementation deal for the post-2015 agenda and discusses the building blocks needed for successful delivery of the SDGs.
- Bill and Melinda Gates issued their [annual letter “Our Big Bet for the Future,”](#) in which they bet that the lives of people in poor countries will improve faster in the next 15 years than at any other time in history, with breakthroughs in health, child survival, education and technological innovation.
- At the launch of action/2015, some of the world’s most influential and concerned citizens issued [an open letter](#) calling on world leaders to make the right decisions at the two summits in 2015, a year they call a turning point in history. They ask leaders, “Which side of history will you be on?”
- Claire Melamed of ODI and Grant Cameron of the World Bank highlight four key funding priorities for the data revolution: official statistics, innovation, data literacy and use, and partnership and leadership in **“Funding The Data Revolution.”**
- The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has completed a draft report, [“Indicators and a Monitoring Framework for the SDGs”](#) which presents an indicator framework for the OWG

goals and outlines major indicator gaps that must be filled over the next twelve months. Their report is currently open for public consultation.

Look Ahead:

- **January 28 – 30:** Financing for Development (FfD) First Drafting Session, UNHQ.
- **January 31:** Deadline for input on Sustainable Development Solutions Network's global consultation on Indicators and a Monitoring Framework for the SDGs.
- **February 9 – 10:** PGA's High-level Thematic Debate on [Means of Implementation for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda](#), UNHQ.
- **February 17 – 20:** [Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Agenda](#), UNHQ.
- **March 6:** PGA's High-Level Thematic Debate on [Advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#)