

March Monitor: FfD Zero Draft, March Negotiations, FfD/Post-2015 Relationship

Financing for Development (FfD): Zero Draft

On March 16, the FfD Co-facilitators released the [zero draft of the Addis Ababa Accord](#), a major step in the process to craft an outcome document for the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Conference in July. The zero draft will be debated during the **second FfD Drafting session, the week of April 13.**

The draft includes an Accord that lays out areas of synergy where investment is needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals so that "the implementation of one will contribute to the progress of others." These included a commitment to a social compact that provides minimum levels of social protection and essential public services; investments in sustainable infrastructure, sustainable energy and sustainable agriculture; creating a stable and enabling environment for business, particularly SMEs; and being mindful of impact on the planet through environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting frameworks for the private sector.

The draft then provides an "Action Agenda" with specific proposals under each of the following categories: domestic public finance; private finance; international public finance; trade; debt; systemic issues; technology, innovation and capacity building; and data, monitoring and follow up.

While it is still early, thus far, reception of the zero draft has been relatively positive, with observers noting its **ambition, specificity, and overlap with SDG 17 of the post-2015 agenda.** The draft is particularly strong on tax cooperation, innovation and technology, financial inclusion and women's empowerment. Others have pointed out areas where language could be more ambitious or concrete.

March Intergovernmental Negotiations

The March 23-27 intergovernmental negotiations on post-2015 included: a [briefing on indicators](#) from the head of the UN Statistical Commission, a proposal for a technical tweaking of 19 targets, and a proposed way forward for a joint FfD-Post-2015 April negotiating session, in order to bring those two tracks closer together.

Indicators

There was general agreement that the UN Statistical Commission needed sufficient time to complete its work on global indicators, and that the proposed **March 2016 roadmap** was acceptable. While work on global indicators will continue beyond the September Summit, some questioned whether the outcome should include a set of principles or criteria for indicators so that leaders would have a complete package to adopt in September. Member states said they would like to remain abreast of the indicator-setting process, yet most agreed it was a technical task for experts. The Statistical Commission will brief member states on progress again in May.

There was also a clear understanding that national and regional indicators would comprise an important part of the overall **"data ecosystem" of indicators** for the post-2015 agenda, and that these should be created by national and regional bodies, respecting the diversity of national and regional contexts. The Irish and Kenyan co-facilitators proposed that future **oversight of the indicator-setting process could shift to ECOSOC and the HLPF**, though member states will likely take up this question at the May session.

Targets

The co-facilitators proposed [a technical tweaking](#) of 19 targets, to ensure that targets were action-oriented and in line with existing international agreements. While some countries generally supported the idea, several developing countries were concerned about the risk of disturbing the delicate balance of the OWG outcome. **The co-facilitators requested another attempt at tweaking the same 19 targets – this time focusing on replacing x’s in the targets with numerical values – and they said they would provide more detailed rationales for the proposed changes to address member state concerns.** There seems to be more support for the idea of filling in x’s, as many agree the document should be as complete as possible for leaders to sign off on in September. **Others would like the technical tweaking to go further than this, and this debate seems likely to continue.** Because the April session will focus on the means of implementation, the co-chairs’ next proposal will likely be discussed at the May session.

September 2015 Summit themes

The co-facilitators proposed themes for the six interactive dialogues for the September Summit, though **co-facilitators will present a revised set in May**, based on member state input. Some pointed out that critical issues like gender empowerment, for example, were missing.

The following cross-cutting themes were proposed:

1. Eradicating poverty in all its dimensions and addressing inequality
2. Tackling climate change and achieving more sustainable lifestyles
3. Building strong, inclusive and resilient economies
4. Promoting peaceful societies and strong institutions
5. A renewed global partnership and adequate means of implementation
6. Reviewing progress on SDG commitments; universality and differentiations

FfD and Post-2015 Relationship

A major topic of debate during the March negotiating session was the need for coherence between FfD and post-2015 tracks, and precisely **how these two processes should ideally converge**. While the [April program of work](#) is still being finalized, there will be a joint session between FfD and post-2015 delegates to discuss the way forward in greater detail.

Many have observed that it will be **important to integrate the Addis outcome in a way that maintains the integrity of FfD as a distinct process, and in a way that complements the post-2015 process, rather than supersedes it**. During the March session, some noted a possible precedent for convergence along these lines; a “Monterrey-lite” outcome (from the 2002 Monterrey Consensus) was included in the [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation](#) later that year. Member states also highlighted the need for the April session to put more emphasis on important **systemic issues** and on the development of a **technology facilitation mechanism**.

Aside from content of the Addis agreement, another outstanding question is whether Addis will have its own **follow-up process**, or whether there will be a joint review process for both Addis and the Post-2015 agenda. Many observers contend that it will be necessary to link FfD follow-up to the post-2015 review process in order to maintain coherence and the highest possible level of ambition.

Must Reads

This week **The Economist** critiqued the SDGs as “[The 169 Commandments](#)” which it calls overly sprawling, misconceived, and unfeasibly expensive, and argues that a more focused set of priorities would be more powerful. It also published pieces on the possibly “[too big” global agenda for 2015](#) and on [assessing the MDGs](#) – which worked and which SDGs might work.

Researchers from **Southern Voice on Post-MDGs** outline policy options for curbing [illicit financial flow \(IFF\) in financing post-2015](#) and argue that it is important not only to have dedicated targets and indicators on IFF but also to understand the influencing factors behind it.

Charles Kenny of the **Center for Global Development** analyzes the draft of the Addis Ababa outcome document in [First Look at Addis Development Finance Accord: What’s in It and What Should Be](#). Kenny compliments the draft’s ambition and offers suggestions for improvement on: aid quality, Total Official Support for Sustainable Development, transparency, infrastructure investments and public finance.

Separately, the Center for Global Development is launching a [series on tweaking the SDGs targets](#) to make them stronger.

The **German Development Institute (DIE)** offers recommendations for improvement in [The Sustainable Development Goals of the Post-2015 Agenda: Comments on the OWG and SDSN Proposals](#).

The **Overseas Development Institute’s** Claire Melamed discusses concrete policy options for operationalizing [Leaving no one behind: how the SDGs can bring about real change](#).

Look Ahead

- **April 7:** PGA’s [High-Level Thematic Debate on Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation](#) (UNHQ)
- **April 8 – 9:** FfD [Informal Interactive Hearings with Civil Society and the Business Sector](#) (UNHQ)
- **April 8 – 10:** Development Cooperation Forum’s [High-Level Symposium](#) (Incheon, Korea)
- **April 13 – 17:** FfD [Second Drafting Session](#) (UNHQ)
- **April 20-21:** High-level meeting of [ECOSOC with World Bank, IMF, WTO and UNCTAD](#) (UNHQ)
- **April 20 – 22:** Cartagena [Data Festival](#) (Cartagena, Colombia)
- **April 21 – 24:** Intergovernmental negotiations on [Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development](#) – (UNHQ)