



Post-2015 Monthly Monitor

December 19, 2014

The month of December has seen several important milestones in the post-2015 process. On December 4, the Secretary-General released an advanced version of his much anticipated synthesis report, *The Road to Dignity by 2030*. Member states have just agreed on how the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations will work next year and substantive discussions on Financing for Development (FfD) are underway. The President of the General Assembly will also convene a set of thematic sessions in the first half of 2015 to complement the negotiations. With many of the key pieces now in place, questions remain as to how all of these pieces will converge into a coherent whole by September 2015.

Secretary-General's Synthesis Report

The [synthesis report](#) begins with **a strong case for the success of the MDGs**. It lays out a clear narrative of how the MDGs have gotten us on a more successful trajectory, yet recognizes the challenges ahead, underlining the importance of finishing the job and getting the successor agenda right.

The synthesis report outlined six “essential elements” to help **frame and reinforce the existing OWG goals and targets (and not supplant them)**:

1. **Dignity**: to end poverty and fight inequalities
2. **People**: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge, and the inclusion of women and children
3. **Prosperity**: to grow a strong, inclusive and transformative economy
4. **Planet**: to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children
5. **Justice**: to promote safe and peaceful societies, and strong institutions
6. **Partnership**: to catalyze global solidarity for sustainable development.

It is too early to tell how these elements might be treated in the intergovernmental negotiations, as many are still digesting the report and others are awaiting the translated versions (due at the end of the year). However, many observers have said that the **six elements could be useful for communicating such a complex agenda to the outside world** – including helping to focus the political attention of world leaders, ministers, and those who will be charged with implementing the new agenda.

Given the **competing views** from member states about how to treat the number of goals, the Secretary-General had a very difficult task, but he has navigated the political terrain well and provided constructive ideas on the way forward. Questions remain on the other less defined aspects of the agenda, particularly around monitoring and review, and financing and means of implementation will continue to play out over the next year. While some stakeholders have said they liked the focus on inequality, others thought that could have been stronger. Most observers have applauded the inclusion of the principle to **leave no one behind**, such that “*no target should be considered met unless met for all social and economic groups*” – an idea that gets to the core of inequality.

Overall, the report does a good job of **shifting the focus away from the contentious debate on the number of goals and towards a more useful reminder that whatever is agreed in 2015, it must have a real impact on people's lives**.

2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations Take Shape

On December 17, member states agreed on modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations, or how the negotiations will work leading up to the September 2015 summit. Here is what's been decided:

The intergovernmental negotiations are set to begin in January 2015. The theme of the September 2015 summit will be *Transforming the world: Realizing the post-2015 development agenda*. Member states have voiced that they want maximum flexibility, therefore the summit's six thematic dialogues will not be outlined in advance. Civil society will be able to engage in the process as well.

Below is an indicative roadmap for the year ahead:

- 19-21 January: Stocktaking
- 17-20 February: Declaration
- 23-27 March: Sustainable Development Goals and targets
- 20-24 April: Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
- 18-22 May: Follow up and review
- 22-25 June:– Intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome document
- 20-24 July and 27-31 July: Intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome document.

To get a post-2015 agenda that is as transformative as possible, the co-facilitators have raised the possibility of a **technical proofing of targets**, particularly potential improvements in cases where language can be made more actionable or where ambitions can be brought in line with existing international agreements and evidence. Member states would need to agree to any technical improvements, but there seems to be some appetite for the idea, as long as changes are technical and maintain the careful political balance. We expect this to be further discussed during the intergovernmental negotiations.

Indicators: The **UN Statistical Commission**, a member state body made up of representatives from government statistical bureaus, is expected to work on global indicators, though many have also called for the **indicator-setting process to tap into the deep expertise of the academic, think tank and civil society communities**. It is likely that member states will approve indicators rather than negotiate them, given the technical nature of the exercise. Governments have also voiced a desire to tailor some indicators to their national contexts.

President of the General Assembly Outlines Thematic Debates

The PGA has [announced](#) dates and themes for five high-level sessions in the first half of 2015 to complement the debate. The outcome for each of the debates will be a President's summary, and member states, observers, UN Agencies, and other stakeholders will be invited to participate.

- 9-10 February: **Means of Implementation** for a Transformative Post-2015 development agenda
- 6 March: **Advancing Gender equality** and empowerment of Women in the Post-2015 agenda
- 6 or 10 April (TBC): **Promoting Tolerance** and Reconciliation
- 15 May: **Strengthening Cooperation** between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations
- 29 June: **High-Level Event on Climate Change**.

Financing for Development and Convergence of Tracks in 2015

December's substantive FfD sessions (December 9-12) took up issues around the enabling and conducive policy environment; trade, investment, and technology; governance; learning from partnerships; and the follow up process. The enabling environment session included discussions on the international monetary and financial system, international tax cooperation (an issue which seems to have increasing political momentum among member states), and debt crisis prevention.

The governance session discussed the importance of **closing data gaps** and strengthening statistical capabilities as well as the need for strong and transparent domestic and global economic governance. There has been increased traction around the potential of domestic resource mobilization, investments in infrastructure, and the power of data. Briefing notes and panelists for each session can be found [here](#).

Member states have called for the FfD and post-2015 tracks to be mutually reinforcing yet not duplicative. Ideally, this means outcomes from the FfD conference in July 2015 would be fed back into the post-2015 process, providing greater momentum for the September 2015 summit. The co-facilitators of the post-2015 and FfD processes have agreed to host joint meetings to ensure coherence.

Finally, the recent [climate change conference](#) in Lima, Peru was yet another reminder that 2015 will be a pivotal year for climate change—making 2015 *the* critical moment for global sustainable development.

December Must-Reads

- [2014 African Transformation Report: Growth with Depth](#). The latest report from the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) emphasizes that sustainable development cannot be achieved through economic growth alone, but rather through economic transformation and growth with “DEPTH” (“Diversification, more Export competitiveness, more Productivity increases, more Technological upgrading, and more improvements in Human well-being”).
- [Financing the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals: a rough roadmap](#). Andrew Rogerson, Annalisa Prizzon and Homi Kharas contributed to this ODI paper, which investigates the importance of lending to developing countries as they grow, even when they reach middle-income status – the so-called “missing middle dilemma”.
- [Sustainable Development Goals: eight ways to make reality match ambition](#). Alex Evans of the Center on International Cooperation at NYU proposes eight ideas for what a deal might look like if the world is serious about a major transformation of the global economy by 2030.
- [Toward a common agenda: zero poverty, zero emissions, within a generation](#). This blog by Susan Nicolai of ODI and Katy Harris of Development Progress highlights the need to think about **poverty eradication and climate in conjunction** with one another, analyzing the relationship between the two through concepts like energy access and inequality.
- [Three Breakthrough Agreements Will Underpin the Post-2015 Global Agenda](#). Homi Kharas and John McArthur of The Brookings Institution discuss the need for three concrete deliverables that can make or break the post-2015 agenda: **basic services, infrastructure and accountability**.
- [Who might change the rules of global development?](#) Oxfam's Paul O'Brien blogs about the potential for “**vanguard**” countries to lead a **transformative post-2015 process**, creating a race-to-the-top ideology as an incentive for countries to strive toward bold achievements.

Look Ahead:

- **January 15:** Action/2015 worldwide launch. Follow #action2015 on Twitter.
- **January 16:** Post-2015 Stakeholder Prep Forum, UNHQ, New York
- **January 19 – 21:** Intergovernmental negotiations begin (Stocktaking), UNHQ, New York
- **January 21 – 25:** World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, Davos, Switzerland
- **January 28 – 31:** Financing for Development (FfD) first drafting session, UNHQ, New York

