

Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation Inputs to the 2019 High-Level Political Forum

“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”

1. The Global Partnership: embodying the spirit of SDG17

Recognising the need for all countries and all stakeholders to work in collaborative partnership to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (the ‘Global Partnership’) convenes – on equal footing – governments, civil society, the private sector, trade unions and other actors, to work together for more effective partnerships for development. Grounded in country-level evidence and data, the Global Partnership is the multi-stakeholder platform to track progress, share lessons and hold partners to account for internationally-agreed effectiveness principles; that is, country ownership of development activities, a focus on results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency and mutual accountability. These principles are instrumental in harnessing the contributions of all development partners and maximising the potential of each dollar spent to implement the 2030 Agenda. With contributions of data to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17, as well as SDG5, the Global Partnership embodies the essence of inclusive, multi-stakeholder partnerships as set out in Goal 17, which is a catalyst for achieving all other SDGs due to their interlinked nature. As a result, together with the need to mobilise increased resources for development, effective development co-operation is fundamental to achieving the SDGs and ensuring that no one is left behind.

2. 2019 Global Partnership data shows significant progress toward country ownership and results orientation toward the SDGs despite slow progress on inclusive partnerships, accountability and transparency

In 2018-2019, 87 partner countries led the third Global Partnership monitoring round in their countries; engaging hundreds of development partners, civil society organisations, representatives from the private sector, trade unions and other actors. This multi-stakeholder process tracks progress in implementing internationally agreed effectiveness principles and facilitates the collection of data for three SDG targets:

- > SDG target 17.16 on enhancing the global partnership for sustainable development, which tracks overall progress on effective multi-stakeholder partnerships captured by the Global Partnership monitoring framework through all indicators;

> SDG target 17.15 on respect for national policy space and leadership, which reports on the status of development partner alignment to country results frameworks; and

> SDG target 5.c. on adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality, which reports on the status of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality.

Partner countries have embedded the 2030 Agenda into national development planning and evaluation. 2019 data shows that in national development strategies, as well as country-led results frameworks approved after 2015, many countries are referencing SDGs at the goal, target and indicator-level. This suggests that results orientation towards the SDG framework is taking place in a relatively short timeframe. Development partners are also increasing alignment with and referencing the SDGs in country strategies. Consistent with 2016 data, development partners continue in 2019 to be strongly aligned to national development priorities at strategic level. Alignment is much lower when it comes to reliance on local monitoring systems to track project implementation. Global Partnership 2019 data covers approximately USD 64 billion in grants and loans dispersed at country-level in the fiscal year of reference. Of the more than 3,400 development interventions assessed, less than half have results indicators use data from national statistics and monitoring systems. This has regressed since the last round of Global Partnership monitoring in 2016. As a result, country results indicators, national statistics and monitoring systems should be used more widely – and thereby strengthened - when implementing development interventions.

There is a ways to go in shifting from a ‘whole-of-government’ to a ‘whole-of-society’ approach to development. Consistent with the notion of shrinking civil society space, Civil Society Organisations report in Global Partnership 2019 data that there is not adequate opportunity for civil society to engage in meaningful dialogue on national development policies. Furthermore, improvement is needed in engagement between civil society and development partners. However, Civil Society Organisations also note that there is room for improvement in terms of upholding development effectiveness principles within their own organisations.

Mutual accountability and transparency are improving, but more work is needed. Almost all partner countries have a mutual accountability framework in place; however, less than half track the implementation of these frameworks through regular, inclusive and transparent mutual assessments. Timely, relevant and accurate data on development co-operation is critical to country ownership, ensuring alignment with national priorities and reducing fragmentation. At country level, majority of partner countries have some form of financial/aid management system in place to track development co-operation, yet more than a third of development partners do not report to these systems. At global level, more detailed and transparent information is being published about development and humanitarian flows through increased/ improved reporting to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System. However, there is lack of improvement in the quality of reporting for forecasting purposes through the OECD-DAC Forward Spending Survey.

3. Applying effectiveness principles in response to new and evolving challenges: SDG17, SDG16 and delivering on the commitment to leave no one behind

The Global Partnership is responding to the need for effective engagement of the private sector in development co-operation to create sustainable solutions and leave no one behind. Engaging the private sector offers new opportunities to complement official development assistance and enable a shift from billions to trillions. Yet ensuring that private sector engagement for development co-operation is effective, as with other partners, is critical to achieving long-lasting development results. In response, the Global Partnership developed a set of principles to ensure the effectiveness of private sector engagement. These principles were informed by evidence from pilot countries and inclusive dialogue at national and global levels. In support of this work, in 2018, the Global Partnership undertook a systematic review across four countries (Bangladesh, Egypt, El Salvador, Uganda) of over 900 development co-operation projects that include the private sector - from multinationals, to large domestic firms, micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises. Analysis of the projects concludes that the development co-operation community can do more to improve the implementation of private sector partnerships on the ground, including with a greater focus on sustainable results, impact and accountability. For example, the review revealed that only 13 per cent of the projects listed national governments as partners, only four per cent explicitly focused on the poor, and only 16 per cent reviewed results, with many private partners in the projects criticizing complex donor procedures. The principles for effective private sector engagement will be launched at the Global Partnership's Senior-Level Meeting in July 2019, with the aim to then apply the principles at country level with businesses, governments, partner countries and civil society working together.

The Global Partnership is adapting to new and emerging challenges by developing context-specific monitoring of development effectiveness that is tailored to fragile and conflict affected situations. Recognising the need to reach those at risk of being left behind, development actors have scaled efforts in fragile and conflict affected situations. In response, the Global Partnership is adapting how it monitors effective development co-operation in fragile and conflict affected situations. The aim is to spur dialogue and action on bottlenecks to delivering effectively in fragile contexts through more relevant and useful data, and a timely feedback loop. This tailored monitoring approach focuses in on a narrow set of six priority action areas, which can be broadly summarised as: mutual accountability; political dialogue; alignment with national priorities; strengthening national capacity; use of country systems; and, humanitarian-development-peace coherence. These action areas, around which indicators are being developed, have been shaped by partner countries, development partners and civil society, including close engagement with the three constituencies of the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding: g7+, the International Network on Conflict and Fragility and the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. This tailored approach will be rolled out in the next Global Partnership monitoring round, which is planned to take place in the coming two years.

4. Ensuring inclusiveness

Inclusive partnership is one of four effectiveness principles that the Global Partnership monitors and champions. Providing adequate space for all actors to contribute to development efforts is critical to embedding ownership, which is in turn imperative for sustainable development results. Participation of civil society organisations, the private sector and other local development partners in all phases of development policy-making, planning and implementation helps ensure that resources are maximised and used effectively. Inclusive partnerships capitalise on the comparative advantage of every stakeholder group and enables resources, technology and knowledge to be shared and leveraged.

In March 2019, acting on the shift from a ‘whole of government’ to a ‘whole of society’ approach, the Global Partnership decided to further embed inclusion and equality within its governing structure by establishing a fourth non-executive Co-Chair. This is in addition to the Global Partnership’s three governmental Co-Chairs, which hail from a partner country, a development partner and country that both provides and receives development co-operation. The Global Partnership is unique in its level of diversity and inclusion, where representatives from foundations, sub-national governments, parliamentarians and other development actors sit shoulder-to-shoulder with national governments on its Steering Committee. The fourth non-executive Co-Chair speaks for the six non-executive constituencies on the Steering Committee at the highest level of the Global Partnership.

5. Sharing lessons learned on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality through effective development co-operation

In the margins of the 2019 HLPF, the Global Partnership will convene a Senior-Level Meeting on 13-14 July in New York to spur momentum for all actors to boost efforts for more effective development co-operation. The Meeting will draw on fresh country evidence, discuss concrete examples, and share practical lessons on the contribution of effectiveness in achieving the 2030 Agenda. Paired with inputs to relevant reports, it will make a tangible contribution to the 2019 HLPF by showcasing how greater effectiveness can accelerate progress on the SDGs under review in practice. It will call for urgent action for more effective development co-operation as a cornerstone of sustainable development.