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LOCALIZATION OF POST 2015 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Abstract

A major outcome of Rio Summit in 2012 was the agreement by member states to launch a process to develop a sustainable development framework to replace Millennium Development Goals. While the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) have been instrumental in addressing global challenges and led and the poor lifted out of poverty, a series of initiatives have commenced at the global, regional and national levels to define the post 2015 development agenda.

Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) in collaboration with United Nations in Uganda and National Planning Authority organized the

52nd State of Nation Platform titled “Localization of Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.” With the development of National Development Plan (NDP II) the dialogue presented an extraordinary opportunity for Uganda to show leadership in the implementation of a post-2015 agenda.

A. Introduction

The Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment in partnership with United Nations in Uganda organized a high level policy dialogue focusing on Localization of post 2015 development goals. The dialogue took place on 4th July 2014 at Protea Hotel in Kampala. The topics discussed by the different speakers largely focused on localizing the post-2015 agenda within the National Development Plan (NDPII) framework. The main objective of the policy dialogue



L-R: Hon. Henry Banyenzaki, Minister, Hon. Norbert Mao, Osten Chullu, UNDP Regional Policy Advisor and Dr. Ahunna Eziakonwa UN Resident Coordinator at the 52nd Session of the State of the Nation Platform at Protea Hotel in Kampala

was to engage stakeholders (Government, United Nations and NGOs) to discuss how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) can be implemented in Uganda and how SDGs could be reflected in NDP II. The key presenters were Dr. Ahunna Eziakonwa Ononchie, UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda; Hon. Henry Banyenzaki, Minister of State for Economic Monitoring; Osten Chullu, UNDP Regional Policy Advisor on MDGs in Eastern and Southern Africa; and Dr. Patrick Birungi, Director Planning and Development at the National Planning Authority.

B. Brief Background On Post 2015 Development Agenda

At the Rio Summit in 2012, member states of the UN committed to building a new sustainable development framework to replace the Millennium Development Goals. The General Assembly agreed to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process open to all stakeholders with a view toward developing global sustainable development goals. An open working group on sustainable development goals is building consensus on a common set of goals around 16 focus areas that are likely to form the basis of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals will inform the new global development agenda after the MDGs come to an end in 2015. To capture what people all over the world want for their future, the United Nations has been organizing and undertaking extensive consultations at the global, regional and national levels that have enabled it capture the voice of nearly two million people. Through these consultations, governments, parliaments, and civil society have been engaged in discussing the post-2015 agenda since 2012. In Uganda, these consultations have involved multi-stakeholder engagements across the country.



With the developments on National Development

Plan II, the 52nd State of Nation Platform intended to deliberate how the sustainable development goals can be implemented in Uganda and how this can be reflected in the National Development Plan II.

C. Presentations

a) Welcome Remarks: Dr Ahunna Eziakonwa, UN Resident Coordinator

Highlighting the election of Uganda's Sam Kutesa as President of the 69th session of the UN General Assembly, Dr Eziakonwa recognised Ugandan achievements and key position in overseeing upcoming global development conversations. Dr Eziakonwa suggested that Uganda could be first country to align its National Development Plan to the global development plan and that the UN was ready to support Uganda in achieving this.

Original criticisms of the MDGs include a lack of bottom-up representation during their adoption. Despite this, Uganda was one of 88 countries to hold national discussions to stimulate participation among Ugandans with SMS initiatives being used to collect the opinions of over ten thousand Ugandans in anticipation of the original MDGs. Key priorities highlighted were an increase in the quality of services, a reduction of corruption in the management of public goods, a reduction of youth unemployment and the promotion environmental sustainability. There was a particular call on governments to work with and listen to the people, to be responsive to national needs and reduce corruption in government.

As a champion of implementation, Uganda has a lot to contribute to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development agenda. Successfully contributing to this agenda, however, will require work at the local level in Uganda and with the UNDP; particularly in strategic planning, resource distribution and the monitoring and evaluation of implemented MDGs. Successful local implementation of the Post-2015 SDGs requires ownership of the agenda by local communities with the support of government and private sector engagement with the inclusion of gender, human rights and social inclusion perspectives as well as the equitable distribution of aid.

b) Key Note Address: Hon. Henry Banyezaki, Minister of State for Economic Monitoring

Pleased that MDG discussions were taking place in Uganda, Hon. Henry Banyezaki noted that national platforms were not utilised originally in the formation of MDGs. Introduction of MDGs to Uganda was thus problematic as parliamentarians and executive committees, charged with executing the MDGs, were ill informed with poor implementation.

Information sharing on past MDGs and future SDGs is vital for MDG goal ownership by local people, parliament and the executive committee. Goal ownership of the SDGs will, in turn, increase opportunities for and

likelihood of implementation. Localising SDGs based on the experiences of MDGs remains challenging despite recent successes including economic growth. Economic growth has reduced poverty levels (as indicated by a reduction of people living on less than \$1 a day), despite the global economic recession which resulted in conflict on the African continent.

As Uganda leads the 69th UN General Assembly with the appointment of Hon. Sam Kutesa, it is vital that Uganda owns the SDG process and is well versed on the



efforts to pursue them. This requires additional effort to encourage particularly key stakeholders, including cabinet (as an implementing body), parliament (as representatives of people and leaders in planning process) and local governments, to engage local participants in discussions of SDGs to ensure that the process is not top-down and promote the consultative process as people-oriented.

Expected challenges include the completion of Uganda's National Development Plan a year prior to the release of SDGs. In order for the SDGs to be priorities of the country, the budget and plan must reflect them. Implementation challenges will include prioritization, as there will certainly be insufficient national resources for the implementation of all 16 goals. Mechanisms for reporting, implementing, monitoring and evaluation, and review are vital for tracking SDGs, so specific targets with indicators focussed on measurable outcomes need to be agreed upon nationally by stakeholders.

Achieving the Post-2015 SDG goals requires ownership of agenda to achieve prosperity, the development of infrastructure and human development and it is also important to account for the achievement of previous MDGs. Moreover, the proposed alignment of the national plan with the SDGs will require the NPA (National Planning Authority) to remain flexible and open to constructively adopting the proposals made

by stakeholders.

As a nation, Uganda must support Hon. Sam Kutesa to involve themselves with UN protocol, particularly interest groups including religious groups, youth groups, children and people with disabilities. Working together on a realistic global plan demands that attention must be paid to climate change whilst delivering on promises made.

c) "Africa's Position in Post-2015 Process"



Osten Chulu, UNDP Regional Policy Advisor on MDGs for Eastern and Southern Africa.

Osten Chulu outlined in his presentation that his task was to clarify the work, background and rationale of the MDGs and SDGs which originated in 1942 as a response to repairing post world war destruction in the form of the Atlantic Charter, a forerunner of the UN. 1945 saw the emergence of the UN whilst the 1950's brought recognition of the need to share resources in the context of the rise of the Cold War. Beyond the remit for reconstruction, issues of human protection and global peace became inculcated in the UN mandate.

The 1960's welcomed the first UN Development Decade. Comprised of a collection of international agreements preceding 2000, the focus was on structural development. The selection of goals was an international, collaborative effort, although the prioritisation was top-down. In 2005, the core global poverty indicator to reduce by half the number of people living on \$1/ day was met, although this was largely a result of the steps made by India and China. African poverty, however, increased during this period suggesting that progress is not being reached and is lost in averages of achievement.

2010 saw global leaders meet to analyse report results from countries regarding MDGs, seeing that the remaining business of MDGs produced two mandates:

1) to look beyond 2015 topost-2015 goals, and 2) to accelerate progress for those countries lagging behind. The Rio +20 Summit, held in 2012, posed additional questions regarding sustainability and the state of the earth for the next generations, which moved beyond the sole focus of development and growth characteristic of previous development initiatives.

With a focus on sustainability, it was noted that the process of deciding MDG goals was not consultative or opened to debate. For example, the energy sector had been left out of the conversation and governance issues such as corruption were not on the table. These topics were discussed outside the MDG platform but not included. Following 2010 UN summit and Rio, looking at developing the post-2015 goals, two tracts of work emerged: global consensus and consultation.

Themed and interest group consultations were conducted to contribute to developing post-2015 goals. Goals and needs expressed by individuals remain largely unchanged as priorities remain on food, water, shelter, good health and education. Nonetheless, the reports from these consultations will be assimilated by the UN task force to produce one report for the post-2015 process and clarify the priorities of the people. Based on the realisation that implementation cannot occur with grassroots action, localising the whole agenda by involving the people whose lives the SDGs are intending to change is vital. Communal and national ownership requires a comprehensive and definitive understanding of the SDGs to enable political will and commitment necessary to ensure money translates into service delivery.



Since 2012, a common African position has been developed to present to the global community on the post2015 sustainable development agenda. It includes indicators to monitor and evaluate the implementation of activities and is premised on six pillars:

- 1) Structural economic transformation and inclusive growth

- 2) Science, technology and innovation
- 3) People centred development [largely MDGs]
- 4) Environmental sustainability, natural resources management and disaster risk management
- 5) Peace and security [reduction in affinity to conflict and maintaining peace]
- 6) Finance and partnerships [how do we make savings from current resources and domestically resource financing instead of looking externally?]

To guarantee ownership of the post-2015SDG process citizens must want the process to succeed in order for them to be motivated to instigate community engagement. This requires the explanation of goals, processes and indicators for translation into action and the sourcing of adequate resources and human capacity. Data will play a key role in establishing the baseline, mapping, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms necessary to direct SGDs. Financing and partnerships will also be critical in stablishing innovative ways of mobilising resources to facilitate the SDGs.

d) Progress and Role of NDP II to Economic Transformation of Uganda

Dr Patrick Birungi, Director, Planning and Development, National Planning and Development Authority (NPA)



Dr. Birungi addressed requests from speakers that the NPA remain open, flexible and adaptable to proposals, noting that this will be the case and that the national plan, he anticipates, will include the SDGs. The NPA has a strategic direction to engage stakeholders, local government in particular, according to the NPA theme: “strengthening Uganda’s competitiveness for sustainable wealth creation, employment and inclusive growth”. The thematic development priorities on which NPA is being established include three major opportunities found in agriculture, tourism and minerals, all of which depend upon the fundamentals of strengthening infrastructure and human capital. Stakeholder integration on the NDP from the beginning of the budget formation process is also important is to

influence the budget towards supporting activities that will support the completion of the SDGs.

The NPA has also conducted preliminary macro analysis on strategies such as expanding fiscal space to accommodate development expenditure to encourage the economy to grow at 8% over the next 5 years whilst preparing for fiscal deficit to be at 9% of GDP, peaking by 2017/2018. Inflation is expected to stay at between 5-10% to maintain macroeconomic stability. Oil revenues also require effective management; minimal activity is expected in this sector in the next five years whilst further ahead, effective action and management will be critical.

Challenges to incorporating SGD goals into the National Development Plan include issues with reporting and accounting because the government system and UN systems for are so different. When the SDGs are included in the plans, Dr Birungi noted that it would make sense to merge the two systems.

E) Emerging Issues

Following the panellists' presentations, a discussion among attendees raised the following issues:

- The STON meeting was recognised for positive work in bringing peace and security issues to the forefront of NPA, particularly considering issues of terrorism.
- Credit was given to the NPA for their planning efforts with a suggestion to prioritise more effectively to guarantee results. It was also suggested that the NPA place an emphasis on human development, using it as a driver to instigate national development. In particular, youth unemployment was highlighted as a high priority.
- Additionally, the inclusion of governance was highlighted as a necessity in the NPA based on a need to mobilise higher levels of government accountability, particularly given that Uganda has ample resources and 'riches' which remain untapped due to corruption. A discussion of national SDG issues raised the need to focus on the quality as well as the quantity of education, given bloated attendance and comparably little learning.
- Dependency syndrome exists as an issue in the HIV/AIDS sector with the majority of HIV/Aids treatment being funded externally despite 1.6 million Ugandans being affected by the disease. Uganda must contribute to the health of its own citizens and reduce reliance on external partners.
- The need for gender analysis in planning and budgeting processes for transformation was noted as key, particularly in the NPA process.
- The need to increase Africa's capacity for technological innovation was also noted.

- Global MDG issues highlighted the importance of separating aggregated and household figures. Uganda as a nation posts growth at 6%, the 4th or 5th highest in terms of development yet posts a dropout rate at primary school of nearly 50% at entry point. Despite the recruitment of about a million primary school pupils at exit level, not even 500,000 sit the exit exam; this is a cause for concern and calls for scrutiny.
- Developed countries currently refuse to diminish unfair trade subsidies, despite being committed to the MDGs. How is Uganda intending to pursue the new SDGs with only partial support from developed nations, given the intertwining nature of trade with the ability to successfully pursue and implement the SDGs? On a similar note, an issue exists with aligning free market thinking and institutions with pursuing the SDGs given the clash between profit making institutions and the altruistic goals of the SDGs.
- Development goals require engagement from the current generation to meet their needs without compromising the needs of future generations, which Africa has done well by pursuing a common African agenda. Areas for improvement include the need to develop south-south cooperation for learning and innovation. As the SDGs lack financing, Africa as an emerging economy must implement a tangible plan to mobilise domestic resources to pursue SDGs and advance sustainability. This is particularly pertinent as Africa was 'left behind' in the pursuit of previous MDGs.

Hon. Henry Banyezaki closed by remarking that until governments are mobilising resources with accountability, achievements will not be met because the issue of governance transparency is very important in reaching goals. There is a need to begin SDG advocacy to include LC1 and LCO governments as stakeholders, partnership and collaboration is vital - leaving everything to parliament will not work. He made a suggestion to include SDGs into curricula, called on development partners to support collaboration, and called on citizens to support the government to translate world vision into reality.

Osten Chulu closed by highlighting two issues; 1) how we look at development: the focus must be on changing people's lives and the quality of health, education, longevity and wellbeing. 2) How we educate children must be aligned with national needs, which will require consideration for teaching for innovation rather than just job creation. This requires looking at what development means to the individual.

Dr Ahunna Eziakonwa noted that the issue of youth unemployment is not going to be solved by a youth fund from government, and that this approach created distortion of what the answer is for ending youth unemployment. Unemployed youth must address

their mind-set that help is required before youths can innovate. Uganda's economy needs to expand to account for youth engagement and marketable skills including manufacturing and industrialisation. In the next 15 years, Dr Eziakonwa said, a culture must be facilitated which refuses to believe that external players are responsible for transforming the continent; others people's resources are not required to do what is needed to change the continent. A key issue is thus governance; it must start to hold people responsible for their actions in the distribution of wealth. In terms of Africa, stimulation is required for nationals to recognise the richness of the continent and ensure resources are used to benefit the people.

D. Policy Recommendations

- 1. National Planning Authority needs to be open and flexible to suggestions from stakeholders:** National Planning Authority pledged to remain open and flexible to suggestions from stakeholders and align national development plan to global development plan.
- 2. National Planning Authority needs to include governance challenges:** National Planning Authority to include governance as a key issue alongside infrastructure and human capital development, particularly with regards to government accountability and addressing youth unemployment and issues of peace and security.
- 3. Develop South-South Cooperation to boost post-2015 SDG African agenda:** SDG African agenda needs to develop south-south cooperation for learning and innovation and a tangible plan to mobilise domestic resources to pursue SDGs and advance sustainability.
- 4. Advocacy should include local government levels:** Begin SDG advocacy to include LC1, government and university students as stakeholder partnership and collaboration is vital to instigate community engagement which requires the explanation of goals, processes and indicators for translation into action.
- 5. Need for more data to establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms:** Data plays key role; need to establish baseline, mapping, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to direct SDGs. Financing and partnerships are also crucial; establish innovative ways of mobilising resources to facilitate the SDGs.
- 6. Promote culture that Africans are responsible for transformation of their economies:** Need to facilitate a culture which refuses to believe that external players are responsible for transforming the continent; government must account for their actions taken to distribute wealth to recognise the richness of the continent and ensure resources are used to benefit the people.