

### **CPDE Response to the EC Communication:**

#### *A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015*

The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) acknowledges the important principles included in the European Commission's Communication 'A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015.' We agree that the promotion and protection of all human rights should be the fundamental basis for a sustainable post-2015 world and that solidarity and cooperation are important pillars on the road to ending poverty. We also welcome the resolve of the EC to put in place a Global Partnership that recognizes the important role of civil society as well as the EC's recommitment to inclusive development that ensures the widest participation of citizens and other stakeholders in decision-making processes.

However, in keeping its mandate to uphold the principles of development effectiveness in all areas of work, the CPDE raises caution on a number of issues that should be addressed in order to contribute in global efforts to end poverty after 2015.

We express concern on the increasing push for private sector engagement in development processes without proper discussion on regulatory and accountability frameworks ensuring that private sector involvement is predicated on social and environmental accountability and aligned with international standards on business and human rights, ILO and UN protocols. Despite endeavours to promote corporate social responsibility as a form of private sector accountability, the current voluntary systems have evidently limited scope while big businesses continue to externalise environmental and social costs.

We are alarmed by the unrestrained space provided to the private sector going as far as to reshape incentives, economic instruments and taxes in order to maximise economic activities while there is no mention of how to counteract the shrinking spaces for CSO action at all levels.

While we agree that it is important to generate adequate resources to fund development initiatives, this should not undermine the primacy of public sector financing over business interests. New sources of financing such as Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are at best complementary and should not be treated as a substitute for traditional means of implementation keeping the public sector at the center of sustainable development financing. In most cases of PPP infrastructure projects, the poor are often the last to benefit from increased access fees and end up marginalized from basic social services that now increasingly come with a price.

Moving forward, the Communication lacks mention on the root causes of poverty and inequality that continue to breed injustices between countries and between men and women. This is evident in the support provided to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other international trade agreements without recognition of its inherent flaws that critically erode developing country economies by allowing the dumping of heavily subsidized industrially produced food thereby undermining local production and increasing hunger.

On the other hand, Aid for Trade (Aft) is bolstered as an effective aid policy that brings greater national wealth where everyone, including the poor, will benefit. Unfortunately, there is hardly evidence to prove its effects on poverty eradication. While not all Afts are fundamentally problematic—building essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and ports to support the local economy—Afts are often used to attach politically motivated ties to aid that aim at forcing developing countries to open up their economies and comply with unjust WTO rules and regulations. What is needed is a reform of the current aid system including the elimination of tied aid and harmful conditionalities and a major overhaul of the international trade system to respect national sovereignty and democratic country ownership.

It is imperative to emphasize the importance of democratic country ownership by recognizing that inclusion is about more than just the nominal participation of the marginalized and excluded in governance but their active and meaningful engagement in decision-making processes. It is thus recommended to adopt a human rights-based approach that empowers the people by treating them not as passive recipients of development assistance but as active drivers that shape development outcomes on the ground.

While the recognition of migrants' rights and welfare is an important step forward, the document fails to recognize the context in which migration exists today. Beyond maximising remittance gains, it is important to view labour migration as symptomatic of conditions that force workers to seek greener pasture elsewhere. This form of economic displacement should be viewed as a problem of social justice rather than an economic opportunity to maximise.

Beyond finding means to implement the new set of sustainable development goals, it is more important to strengthen accountability to peoples by agreeing on major reforms in the international trade system, upholding respect for democratic country ownership, human rights standards and anchoring the Global Partnership on the principle of international solidarity that asserts the role of national governments as principal duty-bearers of human rights obligations. Ultimately, the success of the post-2015 development agenda will be judged by its ability to advance the principles of democratic country ownership, accountability, transparency, and the promotion of human rights and welfare across all dimensions. In the process of achieving these goals, civil society stands ready to assume its role in demanding accountability from all development actors of their commitment to inclusive development and in reminding them of what it means to build sustainable development; of what it takes to end poverty.

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