

Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning

**'Lessons Learnt from the MDGs and Perspectives for the Post-2015
Development Agenda'**

Trade Union Meeting of Experts on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

22 May 2013, 14:30
ILO, Geneva

Participants include 40 trade unionists from across all regions who will adopt a trade union platform and an action plan for engaging with the Post-2015 development agenda.

Introduction

- Express gratitude to the ILO Bureau for Workers Activities' for the very timely and valuable opportunity to participate in this trade union meeting and to brief them on the ongoing post-2015 development process.
- The post-2015 agenda is important and complex. However, I take comfort from the fact that the process established to address it is progressing steadily.
- In fulfillment of the mandate received at the MDG Summit in 2010, the Secretary-General has established a multi-layered process aimed at including all stakeholders in this most important agenda

Lessons learned from the MDGs

- Recall that implementation of MDGs are still fundamental, which has been stressed by the voices from the ground.
- The MDGs have proven to be a powerful tool in embodying a shared global vision and development framework to address poverty and hunger and advance human development. Highlight that significant progress has been made in a number of areas and some targets have been achieved ahead of schedule.
- Acknowledge that the format of the MDG framework brought an inspirational vision together with a set of concrete and time-bound goals and targets that could be monitored by statistically robust indicators.
- Repeated agreement that the current MDG goals focusing on people (1-6) should not be thrown out. Health, education and other public services should continue to be the focus of the new framework.
- Recognize that progress has been uneven across goals and within and across countries and regions. Gains will need to be consolidated and gaps in implementation will need to be addressed.
- Through implementation efforts over the past years it has become clear that some targets were not adequately formulated. For example, some targets undervalued demographic change and consequently also the magnitude of certain social problems, such as the size of urban slum populations.

- The MDGs emphasis on **global targets** limited consideration for national circumstances and differences in initial conditions. Especially in the case of African countries, this has led to perceptions of failure even as substantial progress had been made, but without meeting the globally set targets.
- The MDGs did not adequately address issues of productive employment, violence against women, social protection, inequalities, social exclusion, biodiversity, persistent malnutrition and increase in non-communicable diseases, reproductive health and complexities related to demographic dynamics, peace and security, governance, the rule of law and human rights.
- Neither did the MDG framework account for vulnerability to natural hazards and other external shocks, which have caused setbacks in MDG achievement. These should all be considered in the development of a new post-2015 framework.
- Stress the importance of addressing cross-cutting issues, drawing on the UNDG consultations where we, the UN System, heard an emerging convergence that countries cannot meet MDG priorities as singular, disparate attempts.
- Reiterate the fact that economic growth without quality job creation is not sustainable

**Consultations on Growth, Structural Change and Employment – Thematic:
Tokyo 15-16 May 2012 (UNDG Thematic Consultations by Japan, UNDP and
ILO)**

- Major efforts have been made to ensure the genuine participation of people – civil society, social movements, trade unions, workers and private sector – throughout every step of the consultation process. The inputs have exceeded expectations and will be very valuable in the formulation of a post-2015 framework.
- A life cycle approach to employment should be a focus – childhood is the foundation of the future and therefore ensuring decent jobs and incomes for parents, carrers and public service providers, while eradicating child labor can make a difference.
- The new framework should recognize that different models will work for different countries and models that worked in the past may no longer be sustainable.
- Highlight that across the world people with limited employability are being squeezed into vulnerable, insecure, low paying jobs, mostly in the informal sector or substance agriculture.
- Acknowledge that the situation is even worse among women, youth as well as other groups that have one or more characteristics that become the ground for discrimination.

- Recognize that education is fundamental to employment. Many countries experience a disconnect between education and skills imparted in schools and higher education and the knowledge and skills needed by enterprises with the potential to expand employment.
- Mention that apart from improving the quality of education, a significant expansion of technical and vocational training is needed to repair this disconnect between employment and education.
- With respect to growth, the new framework should focus not only on growth alone, but it should recognize the importance of growth for employment creation and improved well-being.
- Growth must be inclusive and a broader notion of wellbeing should be included in the framework.

Next steps in the post-2015 agenda

- Mention that the report of High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post 2015 process will be submitted to the Secretary- General at the end of May.
- Note that emerging consensus from the High Level Panel and the National, Thematic and Regional consultations highlight the need to promote a universal, single and coherent post-2015 global development agenda that integrates economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

- Also mention that the intergovernmental process mandated by the Rio+20 Conference is beginning to pick up momentum. The Open Working Group successfully held its 2nd session and will continue its stock taking work until early 2014 prior to more concrete deliberations on crafting the sustainable development goals. The OWG is planned to discuss the issues of “Employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth, education and culture” in its meeting in June.
- The Experts Committee on Sustainable Financing will be established very soon to commence its work. Meanwhile, Member States have been discussing the organizational modalities for the High Level Political Forum. It is expected to complete negotiations on a draft resolution by the end of May.
- In September this year, there will be the Special Event on MDGs during which Member States will also take stock of the MDGs’ status as well as the initiatives to accelerate on the MDGs in the final days to the 2015 countdown. The Special Event will also consider the next steps of the post 2015 development planning process.
- Recognize the importance of allowing the post 2015 and Rio processes to progress, mature and bear fruits on their own separate tracks. Note that there is broad support for one cohesive and coherent post 2015 development agenda with one set of development goals encompassing the three dimensions of sustainable development.

- Express the renewed support from the UN systems in entering this new phase and **5 major UN reports** are in the finalizing stage, namely (i) the High-level Panel's report, (ii) "The Global Conversation Begins" a report from the consultations, (iii) a report the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), (iv) a report from the Global Compact and (v) a report from the regional commissions.

Conclusion

- Welcome today's meeting and call for all of its participants to engage with this process and for trade unions to make their voices heard.
- I wish you every success in your deliberations.