WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases

Aligning international cooperation with national noncommunicable diseases plans:
information note on landmarks in development cooperation effectiveness

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This document will become an annex to a discussion paper prepared by the author.

Landmarks in development cooperation effectiveness
Since the 1990s, there has been global recognition that the landscape of development aid needs to be restructured. Relationships between “donors” and “recipients” have needed to be reformed, given the failures of “structural adjustment policies” and policy conditionality; pressures from developing countries for greater democracy and accountability; and questions about the effectiveness of aid.

New policy directions were reinforced by new ideas, including a broader notion of “human” development no longer confined to economic growth; recognition of the pivotal role of the State and of policy-making in development decisions; and the accountability of donors as well as the recipients of aid for development results. This reform was constructed through a series of initiatives that began in 1996 and included the strategy paper Shaping the 21st century, produced by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); and the World Bank’s Comprehensive Development Framework.

In 1996, in Shaping the 21st century, the OECD suggested a set of concrete development objectives that could be measured and monitored over time. The OECD also proposed a global development partnership effort to achieve ambitious yet realistic goals. In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration and hence the Millennium Development Goals, which encompassed in Goal 8 global partnership efforts in to help attain the Millennium Development Goals.

The first meeting on aid effectiveness took place in Rome in 2003. Two years later in 2005 the signing of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness defined principles and set targets and indicators for increasing aid effectiveness, to be achieved by 2010.

The Paris High-Level Forum and the Paris Declaration
In 2005, high-level officials came together in Paris to discuss aid effectiveness and to reform the ways to deliver and manage aid, especially in connection with the Millennium Development Goals. This High-Level Forum was the second in a series of three, and a follow-
up on the Declaration adopted at the High-Level Forum on Harmonization in Rome and the core principles put forward at the Marrakech Roundtable on Managing for Development. The goal was to increase the aid impact in reducing poverty and inequality, increasing growth, building capacity and accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The efforts made at the High-Level Forum resulted in five key principles and a set of 10 indicators, also known as the Paris Declaration.

More than a statement of general principles, the Paris Declaration intended to lay out a practical, action-orientated roadmap to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development. It established a series of specific measures for implementation and performance indicators to assess progress made. It also called for an international monitoring system to ensure that donors and recipients held each other accountable.

By implementing these principles, the countries and organizations that endorsed the Paris Declaration have tried to tackle issues that have hampered development for decades. As part of the Paris agenda for aid effectiveness, donors have been working to minimize proliferation, harmonize procedures and align aid by using developing country systems.

**Principles and indicators contained in the Paris Declaration**

- **Ownership.** Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improvement of institutions and tackling corruption.
  1. Countries put in place national development strategies with clear strategic priorities.

- **Alignment.** Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.
  2. Countries develop reliable national fiduciary systems or reform programmes to achieve them.
  3. Donors align their aid with national priorities and provide the information needed for it to be included in national budgets.
  4. Coordinated programmes aligned with national development strategies provide support for capacity development.
  5. a. As their first option, donors use fiduciary systems that already exist in recipient countries.
     b. As their first option, donors use procurement systems that already exist in recipient countries.
  6. Country structures are used to implement aid programmes rather than parallel structures created by donors.
  7. Aid is released according to agreed schedules.
  8. Bilateral aid is not tied to services supplied by the donor.

- **Harmonization.** Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.
9. Aid is provided through harmonized programmes coordinated among donors.

10. a. Donors conduct their field missions together with recipient countries.

b. Donors conduct their country analytical work together with recipient countries.

- **Managing for results.** Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.

11. Countries have transparent, measurable assessment frameworks to measure progress and assess results.

- **Mutual accountability.** Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

12. Regular reviews assess progress in implementing aid commitments.

Targets were set for the year 2010, designed to track and encourage progress at the global level among those countries that had agreed to the Declaration but for which compliance had fallen short. Multiple follow-ups of the Paris Declaration indicators at the national level, initiated by the OECD in 2006 and 2008, suggested that, at the pace of progress, the 2010 targets would not be met.

The 2011 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration showed disappointing results, as only one of the 13 targets established for 2010 had been met at the global level. Considerable progress, however, was made towards many of the remaining 12 targets. Furthermore, the survey results showed considerable variation in the direction and pace of progress across donors and partner countries since 2005. For the indicators where responsibility for change lies primarily with developing country governments, progress has been significant.

Aligning aid flows on national priorities has been a particularly important issue in health for a number of reasons:

- The diverse nature of the health sector often means that countries have a range of competing plans, for example separate plans on population, maternal and child health, communicable diseases, noncommunicable diseases and health systems, each supported by a different donor. Thus, there may not be a single plan or an agreed set of priorities for donors to align behind.

- The broad range of stakeholders involved in health, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other non-State actors, that seek to influence health sector spending in line with their particular priorities underscores the need to agree upon common health sector goals.

- The independent expenditures by donors may generate large distortions and misalignments, not only with respect to the burden of disease in the recipient country but also in expenditures across regions and targeted populations, and between health and other sectors that influence health outcomes. These distortions generate serious doubts as to the long-term sustainability of current expenditure efforts.
Some of the challenges on the implications and implementation of the Paris Declaration relate to the degree to which governments:

- have development strategies that are clear and well operationalized, so that development efforts are effective and can be aligned with country policies;
- take the lead in coordinating activities;
- use their national budget in a vigorous and consistent way to support agreed policy priorities.

Medium-term expenditure frameworks are widely seen as a useful means for steering annual budgets towards desired policy directions, and are very much donor driven. Donors are expected to self-assess their progress towards the Paris Declaration indicators, while the verification of such evidence is very challenging for recipient countries.

**Accra High-Level Forum**

In 2008, the third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness took place in Accra. The main output of the meeting was the Accra Agenda for Action, which took stock of progress and emphasized several of the Paris Declaration targets. However, following the endorsement of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, a number of changes occurred in the international socioeconomic climate, which shaped the agenda of subsequent meetings.

**Busan High-Level Forum**

The Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which took place in Busan, Republic of Korea, in November 2011, was the fourth meeting on aid effectiveness and the partnership framework. The purpose of the Busan forum was to take stock of achievements made since the signing of the Paris Declaration in 2005 and to identify how best to maintain and accelerate implementation of these commitments in a rapidly changing global context of “development” rather than “aid”.

With this in mind, the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation was drafted and endorsed, in 2011, by over 160 countries and around 50 other organizations. The Busan Global Partnership is a follow-up to the Paris Declaration and aims to provide solutions for the pitfalls experienced during the period 2005–2010.

Meanwhile, the development landscape is rapidly changing. Significant new sources of funding are emerging (such as the rapidly growing aid programmes of China and India) and new types of donors (such as private foundations and local authorities from industrialized countries) are becoming increasingly important. The lessons of the Paris Declaration and its principles can help encourage better ways of working together – to the benefit of all.

The Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action defined principles and established commitments that have contributed to improving the quality of aid. However, there still remains much to be done in order to fully put these principles into practice. The Busan Global Partnership Agreement goes further than reiterating commitment to the Paris
Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, and also states a series of concrete action points to accelerate the implementation of these commitments.

As the aid landscape changed rapidly, the third High-Level Forum in Busan attempted to accelerate the pace of the implementation of the Paris Declaration commitments.

The forum was also an opportunity to address concerns among developing countries that the Paris agenda had led to a greater focus on the mechanics of aid delivery rather than efforts to bring about effective development.

The financial crisis of 2008 led some major donor countries to implement severe austerity measures, and this, combined with the devaluing of the currency of commitments, slowed the growth of the official aid budget. At the same time, the number of partners continued to increase, contributing to high transaction costs. It is crucial that these factors do not hinder progress towards achieving the Paris Declaration targets and the Millennium Development Goals, and the newly formulated Sustainable Development Goals.

The Busan Partnership is a joint declaration of a political nature. It places an emphasis on country-level implementation and the monitoring of efforts in ways that meet the needs of developing countries and are appropriate to country contexts. Countries and organizations lending their support to the Busan Partnership have also agreed to “hold each other accountable for implementing their respective actions in developing countries and at the international level”.

All development stakeholders – including traditional donors and emerging providers – must respect and uphold these key principles by fulfilling the promises they made at Busan. For this to happen, the Global Partnership needs to rely on strong vision, high-level political engagement and a robust but flexible global accountability mechanism.

### Principles of the Busan Partnership

- **Ownership.** Partnerships for development can only succeed if they are led by developing countries, implementing approaches that are tailored to country-specific situations and needs.

- **Partnerships.** Openness, trust, and mutual respect and learning lie at the core of effective partnerships in support of development goals, recognizing the different and complementary roles of all actors.

- **Transparency.** Mutual accountability and accountability to the intended beneficiaries of cooperation, as well as to respective citizens, organizations, constituents and shareholders, is critical to delivering results. Transparent practices form the basis for enhanced accountability.

- **Focus on results.** Investments and efforts must have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, on sustainable development, and on enhancing developing countries’ capacities, aligned with the priorities and policies set out by developing countries themselves.
Both countries and international organizations have committed to the shared principles of the Busan Partnership, which guide action to:

- deepen, extend and operationalize the democratic ownership of development policies and processes;
- strengthen efforts to achieve concrete and sustainable results, through better managing for results, and monitoring, evaluating and communicating progress, as well as scaling up support, strengthening national capacities and leveraging diverse resources and initiatives in support of development results;
- broaden support for South–South and triangular cooperation, helping to tailor these horizontal partnerships to a greater diversity of country contexts and needs;
- support developing countries in their efforts to facilitate, leverage and strengthen the impact of diverse forms of development finance and activities, ensuring that these diverse forms of cooperation have a catalytic effect on development.

Country-specific efforts to monitor the Busan commitments are an important feature of the Busan Agreement, and have been developed by stakeholders at the country level to respond to their own needs and context.

The Busan Declaration focuses on “development cooperation” rather than on “aid effectiveness”. It recognizes the importance of “cooperation” among countries and the important contribution that South–South and triangular cooperation can make to sustainable development. New commitments have therefore been made to step up efforts towards gender equality, and to improve support for promoting sustainable development in fragile circumstances and strengthening resilience.

**Mexico High-Level Meeting**

The first High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), created in Busan, took place in Mexico City in April 2014. This event, which involved the full membership of the GPEDC at the level of ministers and heads of organizations, presented an important opportunity for multistakeholder discussions on progress and challenges in improving the effectiveness of development cooperation in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

The Mexico City High-Level Forum covered the following topics:

- progress since Busan and impact on inclusive development, taking stock of the implementation of commitments on effective development cooperation made at the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (2011), with discussion building on the evidence from the monitoring report;
- tax and domestic resource mobilization;
- development cooperation with middle-income countries;
- South–South cooperation, triangular cooperation, and knowledge sharing;
• the role of business in development cooperation.

The meeting contributed to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, and was an opportunity to advance a multistakeholder and inclusive approach to development cooperation. A communique approved in Mexico summarized the main political messages and outcomes from the meeting, covering the role of the GPEDC in the development cooperation architecture, and progress and challenges on implementing the Busan principles (country ownership, results focus, transparency and accountability, and inclusive partnerships), while drawing on the narrative emerging from the Global Partnership progress report.

WHO and the GPEDC

As a signatory to the Paris Declaration, WHO adopted a resolution to support implementation of its commitment to the Paris Declaration in 2005 (WHA58.25). Since then, the Organization has actively participated in each of the associated monitoring processes (the Paris Declaration monitoring surveys in 2008 and 2011). In 2013, WHO participated in the first monitoring survey of the GPEDC, which aimed to monitor the progress on Busan commitments. This survey reflects an agreement to establish a global monitoring framework with indicators and common goals that will enable cross-country comparison and foster international accountability.

The results of WHO’s participation in the first GPEDC monitoring exercise – an interim process during which the final set of indicators are decided – show that WHO has remained consistent in most of the indicators:

• WHO consistently aligns itself with national priorities by disbursing scheduled money to the government.
• On an annual basis, its funding is highly predictable.
• Its disbursement rate on an annual basis is very high compared to its funding commitment.

WHO has improved noticeably compared to previous years in its adherence to and performance against its commitment on its use of:

• public financial management systems
• national financial reporting procedures
• national auditing procedures
• national procurement procedures.

The United Nations Development Cooperation Forum

The high-level symposium “Development cooperation in a post-2015 era: sustainable development for all”, held in Montreux, Switzerland, in October 2014, discussed how development cooperation can help advance sustainable development for all in the post-
2015 era. It included deliberations on the implications of a post-2015 development agenda that is both unified and universal. One of the central issues in the debate was the role of official development aid (ODA). The representatives of the G77 countries underscored that it will continue to be central to future modalities of development cooperation, whereas OECD countries, especially the major donors, tended to minimize the role of ODA and to emphasize the increasing role of the private sector and domestic flows of resources in the future of development cooperation. The discussions revolved around the following issues:

- What are the implications that a post-2015 agenda could have for the allocation of different types of resources among and within countries and sectors?
- How can development cooperation be used to mobilize additional public and private sources to finance sustainable development?
- How can coherence be ensured in approaches to different types of financing, and how can accessibility of funding be improved?
- How would global monitoring of and accountability for development cooperation have to evolve in the post-2015 setting?

It was clearly recognized that the transition towards a development agenda that is unified (bringing together poverty eradication and sustainable development) and universal (applying to all countries) has to be achieved in a significantly changed international context. It was underscored that particular attention will be required to strike the right balance between social equity concerns and the financing of global public goods, and to enhance the mobilization of additional domestic and international public and private resources for the larger financing needs of a global development agenda. As the high-level symposium concluded: “The traditional North–South framework for pursuing global development cooperation is losing its hold. Sustainability has moved out of its environmental confines and is set to become a centrepiece of a post-2015 development agenda. A new narrative of international development cooperation is urgently needed that matches the changed development landscape.”

The Development Cooperation Forum organized by the Department for Economic and Social Affairs in Berlin in July 2014, entitled “Bringing the future of development cooperation to post-2015”, provided the opportunity to review the contextual elements of development cooperation associated with:

- trends and progress in international development cooperation;
- ways to advance a unified and universal development agenda;
- the critical role of ODA in development cooperation post-2015;
- extracting lessons from South–South cooperation and learning from them in looking to the future;
- how a renewed partnership for development could work in practice;
• how the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda will, among others, require greater focus on enhancing the effectiveness, quality and accountability of development cooperation to ensure the achievement of lasting development results;
• key steps towards a global post-2015 monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation;
• shaping a new narrative for development cooperation post-2015.

Development Cooperation Forum discussions were centred around the notion of a renewed global partnership for development that puts greater emphasis on strengthening accountability for commitments made.