

EC Consultation: “Towards a Post-2015 Development Framework”

Submission by the European Population Alliance

A: The MDGs: benefits and limitations

1. To what extent has the MDG framework influenced policies in the country/ies or sectors you work in/with? **Substantially.**
2. To what extent has the MDG framework been beneficial for the poor in the country/ies or sectors in/with which you work? **Substantially.**
3. What features and elements of the MDG framework have been particularly valuable in the fight against poverty? **Gender equality/women’s empowerment (Goal 3); Maternal health (Goal 5); Universal access to family planning (Goal 5b).**
4. What features and elements of the MDG framework have been problematic, in your view? **Attempts to eradicate poverty/hunger (Goal 1) and ensure environmental sustainability (Goal 7), without integrating population stabilization and gender equality programmes into them, thus increasing long-term failure rates as population growth overwhelms development benefits. As Kofi Anan has said, “Population stabilization should become a priority for sustainable development”.**
5. In your view, what are the main gaps, if any, in the MDG framework? **The low priority accorded MDG 5b, and the failure to integrate it and MDG 3 into all other programmes, as a necessary condition of success. Failure to monitor corruption has also not helped.**

B. Feasibility of a future framework

6. In your view, in what way, if at all, could a future framework have an impact at global level in terms of global governance, consensus building, cooperation, etc.? **By building in a requirement to monitor and report progress on the new SDGs; and as a permanent reminder of the importance of population stabilization as a necessary condition of ecological sustainability, with women’s empowerment and family planning as cross-cutting themes affecting all other programmes. Recognition of ‘reproductive rights’ as basic human rights would also help.**
7. To what extent is a global development framework approach necessary or useful to improve accountability with regard to poverty reduction policies in developing countries? **The most important advantage would be a new requirement on all countries, developing and developed, to monitor, evaluate and report resource-sufficiency (sufficiency, not efficiency) in relation to population size and growth. Failure to do this hitherto has made the conduct of the world economy analogous to flying an airliner without a fuel gauge; and has led to a**

‘race for what’s left’ of global resources such as fossil fuels, minerals, soil and water, with accompanying ecological degradation, biodiversity loss and violent conflict. On the other hand, cumulative data on resource-sufficiency would enable ever clearer identification of movement towards or beyond planetary boundaries; leading to agreement on pre-set limits.

8. What could be the advantages and disadvantages of a global development framework for your organisation/sector, including how you work effectively with your partners? **It would enable critical path analysis to concentrate resources on the most threatening areas of failure, and to relate these to each other (eg relate increasing food production to declining soil quantity and quality, ground-water and biodiversity).**

C. The potential scope of a future agenda

9. In your view, what should be the primary purpose of a future framework? **To set broad priorities for development resources providing basic needs, identify and cost perverse policies and practices such as fossil fuel subsidy or diverting food production into animal- and vehicle-fuel, and relate these closely to the over-riding need for long-term ecological sustainability.**
10. In your view, should its scope be global, relevant for all countries? **Yes, especially in moving the economies of middle-income and developed countries towards sustainable steady-state or degrowth, with increasing emphasis on quality of life rather than GDP growth; while providing for the basic needs of the poorest countries through economic growth. All countries should be encouraged to move their economies towards ‘full-cost pricing’, ie the internalization of all external costs in prices; and to account for their consumption in relation to planetary boundaries.**
11. To what extent should a future framework focus on the poorest and most fragile countries, or also address development objectives relevant in other countries? **Both (see 10 above). The emphasis should move on a spectrum from priority for ‘development’ (economic growth without environmental degradation) in the least developed countries to priority for ‘sustainability’ in the most developed.**
12. How could a new development agenda involve new actors, including the private sector and emerging donors? **Emerging donors could be asked simply to bear the SDGs in mind when offering grants or investment capital (preferably not loans) for new enterprises, services or training programmes. Private sector investment is to be encouraged, though the UN could offer advice and expertise to host countries in negotiation of the terms, to facilitate ‘best practice’ in retained profit, training for succession, time limits etc. The mining industry poses the additional problem of depleting a finite natural resource towards zero, while respecting the principle of national sovereignty over such resources. The UN should encourage the translation of natural capital into enduring economic or social capital, rather than recurrent consumption.**
13. How could a future framework support improved policy coherence for

development (PCD), at global, EU and country levels? **Through annual reporting of donor activity, related to the SDGs.**

14. How could a new framework improve development financing? **By promoting more complete valuation of, and greater respect for, the natural resources of poor countries; by transferring resources from perverse subsidies to sustainable development; and by promoting a 'Tobin tax' on international financial transactions.**

D. The potential shape of a future agenda

15. What do you consider to be the "top 3" most important features or elements which should be *included* in or ensured by any future development agenda? **1 Population stabilization; 2 Family planning and women's empowerment; 3 Resource-sufficiency monitoring, evaluation and reporting. UNFPA have shown that \$1 invested in family planning saves many times that in health, education, water etc, and thus contributes to many other SDGs.**
16. What do you consider to be the "top 3" features or elements which must be *avoided* in any future development agenda? **Standard development programmes which ignore the three elements in para 15 above; and thus aim purely to increase the supply of goods and services indefinitely (which is impossible), without at the same time endeavouring to reduce future demand through population stabilisation.**
17. Should it be based on goals, targets and indicators? If any, should goals have an outcome or sector focus? Please give reasons for your answer. **It should contain goals, targets and a few indicators, plus a limited number of cross-cutting themes, including those in para 15 above. Quantified sectoral targets can be helpful such as: 'x% of depleting aquifers stable or replenishing'; 'universal primary education' (ie repeat MDG 2); 'y% increase in %age of girls in secondary education; 'z% increase in modern contraceptive uptake'; 'q% of arable area with improving carbon content and soil structure'; etc. In addition all countries should conduct periodic "Sustainability Audits" to a common standard, such as Global Footprinting measurement of natural carrying capacity in relation to population and consumption per head. Cumulative data would indicate the speed at which countries are moving into or away from overshoot (cf Overshoot Index attached).**
18. How should implementation of the new framework be resourced? **Sources should include: a tax on international financial transactions; and funds released by the ending of perverse subsidies, notably on fossil fuels, fisheries, and other depleting natural resources.**

The European Population Alliance comprises: One Baby (Belgium); Demographie Responsable (France); Herbert Gruhl Society (Germany); BOCS Foundation (Hungary); Assisi Nature Council (Italy); Associazione Radicale Rientrodolce (Italy); Ten Million Club (Netherlands); ECOPOP (Switzerland); Population Matters – Sweden; Chartered Institute Environmental Management (UK); Population Matters (UK).

30 August 2012

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