

# Delivering on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in Africa

## Introduction

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) is based on principles and differential commitments to achieve the goals of ownership; focus on results; inclusive development partnership; and transparency and accountability. GPEDC aims to ensure the implementation of commitments at political level and offer a platform that embraces diversity, providing exchange of knowledge and the regular review of progress. GPEDC transfigures the aid effectiveness agenda towards a development effectiveness agenda that is more inclusive with emphasis on strong partnerships informed by presence of “new actors” in development cooperation<sup>1</sup>. It places renewed support to national policies and working through national systems and institutions since implementation will be done at country level.

The purpose of the global monitoring framework is to support international accountability for “making progress in the implementation of commitments and actions agreed in Busan”<sup>2</sup>. African countries are at different levels in implementing the GPEDC and evidence of progress and stagnation is clear. However fears exist that after signing the agreement; all the signatories went back to their own default of “Business as usual”. There is need to take stock on how countries have implemented the agreement. This policy brief will elaborate on the minimum standards identified through the AFRODAD research work for successful implementation of the GPEDC and identifies the challenges faced in pursuit of implementing<sup>3</sup>.

## Minimum standards for successful implementation of the GPEDC

It is imperative that countries have minimum standards to successfully implement the

GPEDC. For effective implementation, there is emerging consensus that aid effectiveness is dependant, to an overbearing degree, on both the donors and recipient country's institutions and policies. Donors ought to cherish country-led processes and sustain capacity development. At country level they have to be a strategic vision and mission document formulated through wide consultations and shared with donors. Some countries develop country strategies and vision with a longitudinal life span of over 20years. It is within this framework that Donors will feed in to achieve its objectives.

The legal framework is critical for boosting development partner confidence and to encourage donors to use country systems. Critical financial legislation and other legal instruments namely, the Financial Administration, Audit and the Public Procurement legislations should be in place. With such legislations in place, the development partners need to show more confidence in the reformed systems and if further change is required, donors need collaborate with government to achieve mutual acceptable systems. Also in conformity to the GPEDC, the legal framework should also give these development actors (Parliaments, Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)) the legal mandate to perform a watchdog

role. For example in some countries the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is mandated by law to assess misappropriations and corruption issues raised.

Aid management policy development<sup>4</sup> is critical policy documents to implement the GPEDC. Similarly, the relationship between aid's positive effects and good domestic policies always holds. The Aid policies will determine the manner in which the aid will be disbursed and also ensure that the aid will be in line with the national development plans of the recipient country. Most development frameworks reviewed fully committed to fight poverty and has articulated plans for poverty and growth. The aid policy will set up the government's preferences in terms of types of aid it wishes to receive and processes to be followed when managing foreign aid. However for aid the aid policy to be more effective it should be an outcome of extensive consultations.

Development partners need to allow the countries to lead the process as they lend support. Whereas they could remain true to their own development cooperation policies and strategies, they nevertheless need to remain flexible towards the priorities of the partner country and structure their support accordingly. They

ought to use country systems as the default approach for development co-operation in support of activities managed by the public sector. These country systems include among others Public Financial Management systems and Procurement systems. Therefore donors should reinforce use of country systems by strengthening governments' capacities and promote transfer of skills.

Governments and Donors must come up with a platform where donors and CSOs meet and discuss specific topics every month aimed at information and best practice sharing. In countries which Direct Budget support is the desired form of disbursement, Policy dialogues<sup>5</sup> have proved of paramount importance as they support the inclusive nature of the GPEDC. The Policy Dialogue is an appreciated instrument of donors and recipient governments because it provides the possibility to have an open and frank dialogue which is partnership-based and in most cases done through contract between donors and a recipient government which normally regulates responsibilities agreed between the partners.

Policy dialogues and observatories<sup>6</sup> are fundamental to reflect the inclusive nature of the aid architecture as articulated in the

GPEDC. Observatories will include non state actors in the monitoring and evaluation of government programmes. These non state actors will carry out their own independent monitoring and evaluation whose findings could be discussed with government through advisory institutions. This is critical as evidence show that they have been slow progress in including non executive stakeholders in national level processes. Government together with its partners should establish transparent dynamic and informal dialogue mechanism among all actors.

Recipient governments should institutionalise and strengthen aid and development policy dialogue between Governments, donors, civil society, Parliaments, private sector and emerging lenders to make it more participatory. Parliaments should ensure effective and tangible implementation of the GPEDC to raise the political pressure to deliver on the agreement. Citizen participation in all levels of decision-making must be highlighted. Governments should provide an enabling environment for CSO to measure progress progressively.

African countries ought to put key policies and efforts in place for managing development cooperation and also work towards identifying mechanisms through

which other stakeholders can play a larger role in managing development agenda. In the Policy dialogue all stakeholders can contribute on priority areas and the need of the moment hence resulting in the effectiveness of aid. However CSOs need to promote and abide by the Istanbul Principles and the International framework for CSO development effectiveness. However, policy dialogue content and organisation are highly dependent on the country case.

A code of conduct for all Partners to ensure more inclusive aid architecture is desirable for development effectiveness. Memorandum of understandings (MOU) is a tool of setting out a shared agenda that defines the performances and reporting commitments of both the governments and the donors in implementing of the aid. The MOU are in most cases based on the commitments from the Paris declaration and the GPEDC. MOU's usually contain commitments to sound macroeconomic policies, peace, credible and democratic processes, and commitments to reduce poverty. Other instruments liked to the MOU will be programme aid partners performance assessment frameworks.

Donors Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) forms a part of a mutual review process designed to strengthen

mutual accountability at the country level, drawn from international and national agreements on the quality of development assistance. Recipient countries and donors need to commit to be mutually accountable to each other as they implement the GPEDC. Donors are encouraged to show strong commitment towards meeting the targets and Government should be able to hold donors accountable. Under this platform recipient countries can assess issues to do with predictability of aid flows and donor conditionalities hence review on the impact of the aid they receive.

Joint Assistance Strategies (JAS) needs to be revised and implemented in an effort to improve donor coordination, harmonisation and alignment with government priorities.<sup>7</sup> JAS is expected to guide aid modalities and delivery of development assistance in the context of increased harmonisation between the donors. It should be geared towards strengthening national ownership of development programmes through aligning donor support to national priorities and Government policy frameworks; reduction of transaction costs for the Government, as well as for the donor community by doing away with multiple strategies, processes, and reporting formats and duplicate/overlaps in donor supported

activities. It also focuses at achieving more efficient and effective use of donor resources through division of labour. The process of formulating the JAS should be led by the Government and involve extensive and broad-based consultations with Development Partners and non-state actors.

Creating an enabling environment to implement the BPEDC is a long term project that requires sustained political support. In implementing the BPEDC recipient governments should institutionalise and strengthen aid and development policy dialogue between Governments, donors, civil society, Parliaments, private sector and emerging lenders to make the development process more participatory. Government needs to create an institutionalized platform backed by law that will promote exchange of information. To enable transparency, publishing user-friendly aid information on a timely basis under the International Aid Transparency Initiative standard will allow citizens to track what aid is being used for and especially to monitor what it is achieving. This will also help the government manage aid more effectively, so that every dollar destined towards fighting poverty does so. For countries with strong donor dependence timely transparent information on aid flows is crucial. The information should be available

through a database which will be important for monitoring and improving capturing of various sectoral/ministerial activities/budgets. Countries have already started to review existing frameworks to bring them in line within Busan commitments.<sup>8</sup>

Statistics provide the evidence needed to improve decision making, document results, and heighten public accountability. **Fully integrated statistics assist in decision making hence the need to promote open access to statistics.** Improving transparency around the budgeting process and development processes is critical to ensure that all actors are fully involved in a meaningful manner. Donors should also channel as much foreign aid as possible through national budget and procurement systems in order to increase value for money and strengthen government ownership. They should utilize existing platforms, supporting national efforts including capacity building towards inclusive national development.

Generic steps in moving the BPEDC commitment forward at country level have been identified. An inclusive task force to oversee the process and the task force should have clear terms of reference.<sup>9</sup> The next stage will be convening Preliminary stakeholder consultations so that all the

stakeholder members understand the BPEDC commitments, analyze the gaps in the current frameworks and make proposals. Development of Post BPEDC milestone objectives and outputs will then follow after the stakeholder consultations with rules of engagement, key actions, time frame and budget. The process depends on how each country has evolved- no blue print. Consultation, reviews-stakeholders in a country should agree depending on recaps whether it was necessary to review the Aid Policy or the Joint Assistance Strategy or strengthen what is already there. Implementation of actions then became the output of this process.

## Challenges

Creating an enabling environment for CSOs, local authorities and parliaments has proved elusive for most countries in Africa as they lack the political will to do so. Supporting CSO's as independent development actors in their own right, and commitment to an enabling environment for their work in all countries has been problematic. On another level Private sector, CSO's and local authorities have not taken advantage of the space to engage with government necessitated through GPEDC.

Success in the implementation of the GPEDC has not been realised due to the

systematic capacity weakness at national level. Africa recognises the centrality of capacity development in building its potential. The strengthening of the ministry of Finance and other line ministries working on aid effectiveness is paramount. The ministry of Finance and other line ministries need human capital and capacity development to enable it co-ordinate the implementation of GPEDC both within itself and with other stakeholders. Parliaments, local authorities, CSO's and private sector also lack the requisite skills to effectively engage hence the need for capacity development. However donors have not aided resources towards capacity development.

Emerging lenders like China do not divulge the information about the aid they allocate hence presenting a planning problem to strengthen inclusive partnerships and transparent mutual accountability mechanisms at the country level. The main challenge identified in making further progress at national is lack of political commitment by these donors

Inefficient parliament oversight role have forces donors to continue using parallel systems. This has resulted in donors using parallel structures. Most development partners are unyielding to using country systems even though they admit significant

improvement have been made particularly the Public Financial Management System. Many developing countries are still learning how to lead mutual accountability processes with local ownership, and many are still exploring the best way to hold donors accountable on the basis of results.

### Conclusion

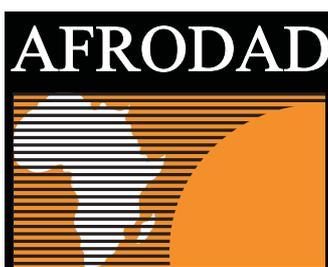
The real work of implementing the GPEDC is only starting to take shape and the post Busan governance and monitoring landscape has just been concluded. Some countries are on track in the implementation of the GPEDC while others are still lagging behind to put all mechanisms in place. Most countries are still in the process to domesticate the global indicators so that the success and failure can be measured. There should be continued implementation of on-going processes and reforms to strengthen the implementation of the GPEDC. The given standards come in handy for the successful implantation of the GPEDC. The demand for change to do business differently in order to address poverty and coordinate donor activities in the countries is paramount for implementation of the GPEDC.

### REFERENCES

1. *Such as civil society, local authorities, private sector and non-DAC donors, private donors and global funds*
2. *Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, paragraph 35*
3. *This policy Brief is based on the research done by AFRODAD for Ghana, Mozambique and Zambia in 2012*
4. *Most African countries have developed their aid policies like Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana, Uganda, Namibia only to mention a few.*
5. *Policy Dialogue are implemented in Zambia which through its Aid policy opted for Direct Budget support as its desired aid modality. Mozambique has developed its observatories to monitor implementation of the GPEDC This is for the three countries Ghana,*
6. *Mozambique and Zambia Results and Accountability Building Block , Regional Workshop, 11-13 September, 2012, Zambia*
7. *Results and Accountability Building Block , Regional Workshop, 11-13 September, 2012, Zambia*
8. *Acknowledgements: Eleanor Maeresera and Taurai Chiraerae (Development Aid Portfolio)*



## Contact Us



### **AFRICAN FORUM AND NETWORK ON DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT**

31 Atkinson Drive, Hillside P O Box CY 1517,  
Causeway, Harare, Zimbabwe

**Tel:** +263 4 778 531/6

**Fax:** +263 4 747878

**E-mail:** [info@afrodad.co.zw](mailto:info@afrodad.co.zw)

**[www.afrodad.org](http://www.afrodad.org)**

