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CIVIL SOCIETY VOICES FOR POST-2015

INTRODUCTION

Since September 2012, Beyond 2015, the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) and the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP) have been convening national, regional, and community civil society deliberations in 30 countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. This report is the synthesis of the outcomes of these deliberations as well as others supported by Beyond 2015 and GCAP in Europe.

There is a collective understanding across national contexts that the world is in **crisis**. There is an urgent need expressed to collectively find new ways of organizing society, our relationship to the planet, and the logic of our economy. We have received contributions from people echoing the same demands. Across the world, civil society is concerned about rising inequality. People acknowledge that social protection is decreasing, and those who already live in poverty are being further marginalized. Even in places when economic growth is robust, many people are not benefitting.

There is a strong need for a new development framework to express **universal** values. All countries, rich and poor, in all regions of the world, are tied up in the same crisis. It has different expressions in different contexts, ranging from unemployment to environmental degradation, domestic violence

to hunger; but a fundamental, transformative shift will require all countries commit to upholding common values of equality, respect for human rights, peace, and environmental sustainability.

The eradication of poverty and hunger is essential to a new development agenda. Food insecurity and obesity are two sides of the same coin, and require a joint solution. This requires implementing universal social protection. It also requires extending specific support to farming communities and rural areas, which experience poverty differently. Just land distribution was identified as fundamental to eradicating hunger in many national contexts. Agricultural subsidies in rich countries are strong drivers of rural poverty, and their harmful affects need to be ended as a matter of urgency.

EQUALITY

Equality is essential to a new development agenda. This includes **gender equality**. Every single deliberation recognized that there can be no equality without gender justice. Violence against women is a major inhibitor to development, as well as a violation of human rights. While equality begins in the household, it must extend to the national level.

To ensure equality between nations, fair terms of trade and a just system of global governance is required.

CIVIL SOCIETY SPEAKS

ASIA

“Participants of the consultation meeting have raised strong voices that poverty continues to exist in our society because of unequal access to resources and services such as land, education, health and opportunities such as employment, and participation in decision-making.” ~ Nepal

AFRICA

“You cannot speak of human development without looking at the system of global governance, the place of multinational corporations, and an equal sharing of wealth between people.” ~ Morocco

LATIN AMERICA

“In order to attain significant and sustainable changes in the lives of people and communities, and not simply reduce gaps in statistics, it is essential to rethink the current paradigms of social and economic development from the human rights perspective.” ~ Mexico

EUROPE

“The post-2015 framework must prioritise the realisation of people’s rights and the key human rights based principles must underpin it - participation, non-discrimination equality, empowerment and accountability.” ~ European Taskforce

For a post 2015 framework to tackle equality meaningfully, it must promote the progressive redistribution of resources, corporate regulation, social protection, and structural transformation of systems of global governance, production and consumption.

There was a consensus in the deliberations: climate change poses an eminent threat to society. In every region, consultations noted that the affects are already being felt by people living in poverty. A post 2015 framework must take into account the interconnectedness between social and environmental consequences of our growth path. Particularly in rural areas, where many marginalised communities live, climate change is affecting everything from access to services to maternal health. It is a matter of justice, since countries least responsible for causing climate change are feeling its affects the most.

It emerged very strongly from the national consultations that human rights must underpin a new development framework. This means poverty must be eradicated, not reduced, and coverage must be universal for fundamental human rights. One strong criticism of the MDGs was that it set targets that left people behind (for example, halving the portion of people who are hungry). We must not make the same mistake again.

Finally, concern was raised in many national deliberations about the threat of poor accountability to achieving current and future goals. Therefore, accountability, universality, and good governance must underpin a new framework. Without clear delineations of re-

sponsibilities as well as rights, and without a mechanism for holding actors to account for their commitments, progress will not be made. A post 2015 framework should be underpinned by a comprehensive and inclusive accountability mechanism, that should empower existing human rights structures. It must also provide for financing in a way that is fair.

THE WAY FORWARD

A foundation for a just and accountable post 2015 framework has been put in place through the extensive consultations taking place with civil society. However, to ensure a meaningful result, civil and political rights must be firmly entrenched, including freedom of expression and assembly. Access to information is a priority for accountability and to fight corruption and tax evasion; the private sector must be included in this. Sustainable development will only be achieved through a genuine partnership of all sectors across national contexts. People must participate in building their future for the vision of a development framework to be realized.

Beyond2015

