

STRENGTHENING AND RE-DESIGNING A PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACH IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015 launched in July 2015 was both personally inspirational as well as a stark reminder of the remaining development challenges that continues to hold back individuals, communities and nations from fully attaining their capacities and true potential. As we bring the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* to a close and move into the post 2015 development agenda, I am inspired by the fact that the report had concluded that the MDGs was largely successful across the globe.

Despite the challenges and complexities of implementing the world's largest coordinated development agenda to achieve the eight aspirational goals set out by global leaders in the Millennium Declaration in 2000, the MDGs has demonstrated that with targeted interventions, sound strategies, adequate resources and political will, progress was achievable globally in multiple development areas simultaneously. The importance of clear national targets, reliable and timely data, evidence based policy-making and continuous monitoring and evaluation of progress and results, were key building blocks to these national success.

The global, regional and national consultations for the post 2015 development agenda that took place over the last two years have also demonstrated that the development paradigm, as it has been traditionally defined, analyzed, debated, addressed, monitored, and reported have significantly shifted since the Millennium Summit. The new realities of the global development landscape is one whereby communities demand to be engaged with dignity and empowered politically and socially to participate effectively in the decision-making processes that impacts all aspects of their lives. The extensive consultation process of the post 2015 development agenda is a clear testament to this growing global demand to define and monitor future development pathways.

Thematically, there is a greater acknowledgement and appreciation by the development community on the development inter-linkages and the need to review and assess progress as well as address root causes and challenges through multi-dimensional perspectives. Implementation of development projects have also moved beyond traditional

singular ministry based approaches and mandates. Increasingly, cross-ministerial implementation and review committees as well as multi-stakeholder designed, developed, implemented and monitored development approaches are being undertaken and opening up a new chapter of opportunities as well as complexities and challenges. The increasing proliferation of technologies also now presents innovative and new platforms for greater engagement and consultations with citizens on development decisions affecting their lives and to contributing to measuring development progress, as experienced and perceived by citizens.

Supplementing its public-private partnership approaches, governments have also now begun embracing and engaging progressively with civil society organisations, as part of its '*alternative service delivery mechanisms*' and ensuring development results are achieved in lagging geographical regions and communities and thus further strengthening the reach of government services to be more effective and efficient. As these operational arrangements takes place, it has also fundamentally challenged the traditional means in which monitoring and evaluation of progress is undertaken and the approaches in which these activities are mandated, designed, funded, and implemented. These developments also transforms and impacts the traditional dynamics of governance structures as well as principles of transparency and accountability.

As the global community commits itself to the Sustainable Development Goals beginning from January 2016, I am hopeful that the infusion of new and innovative citizen centric engagement principles into the design, implementation and monitoring approaches will lead the global community over the next 15 years to chart a new development pathway towards ending global poverty, building a life of dignity for all and leaving no one behind.



* United Nations Development Programme (2013), *Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results*, Discussion Paper, United Nations Development Programme, available online at [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacity-development/English/Discussion%20Paper-%20Innovations%20in%20Monitoring%20&%20Evaluating%20Results%20%20\(5\).pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacity-development/English/Discussion%20Paper-%20Innovations%20in%20Monitoring%20&%20Evaluating%20Results%20%20(5).pdf)