"An African driven Post-2015 Development Agenda – opportunities for peace and human security"

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What is an African driven post 2015?

The idea of an African driven post 2015 has not been fully unpacked and one has to proceed under the convenient yet untested assumption that this actually means something that we all understand.

Beyond this, there are fundamental questions about ideological underpinnings of notions of universality, common goals and responsibility. "Socioeconomic development is never a merely pragmatic enterprise: the way … socio-economic issues are addressed is never ideologically neutral"[1]. Yet ideologies at the heart of international development discourse, peace and security architecture are seldom questioned.

The ideological underpinnings of Post2015 can be found in the political origins of MDGs as "…motivated by the need to reverse the declining support for development aid and forge a united community to defend international development" after the dismal SAPs in the 1980s and 1990s. Some have thus argued that the "MDGs were primarily a product of the rich world…"[2] meant to ensure "support for a specific development strategy, agenda or argument…"[3] The idea of an "African driven" post-2015 can be viewed as one of the many responses to this problematic.

Questions of power relations and a global system of production that has perpetuates inequality, poverty and uneven development the need to address "asymmetric rules of global trade, international investment and finance, the reduced policy space and quality of aid"[4] are all issues that post-2015 has to grapple with.

Economic arguments over macroeconomic policy choices between the North and IFIs on one hand and the global south, CSOs and academics on the other hand led to the adoption of the "narrative of poverty as the 'overarching' purpose of international development' and "a way out for all sides". "Consensus could be reached on the ends without resolving differences over the means"[5].

It is therefore not surprising that the MDGs and without doubt, the post-2015 framework and process expends heavily in defining the ends, but not the means.

But as one of my favourite authors argues, so will I, that "Society needs visionaries of means, not dreamers of ends. Once we have the means, the ends will reveal

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[1] Marguerite A. Peeters, *The Post-2015 UN Development Agenda (III) – The Global Ethic of The New Development Agenda : Ideological And Anthropological Challenges*, Interactive Information Services (IIS) Report 297 – July 8, 2013 © 2013

[2] The MDG Conundrum: Meeting the Targets Without Missing the Point,

[3] David Hulme & James Scott, 2010, "The Political Economy of the MDGs: Retrospect and Prospect for the World's Biggest Promise, Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper Series 11010, BWPI, The University of Manchester.

[4] DESA Working Paper No. 117 pg

[5] DESA Working Paper No. 117 pg,

themselves"[6]. Not surprisingly, within the post-2015 framework discussion, the question of implementation mechanisms has been one of the hotly contested.

Additionally, as Elaine Unterhalter and Andrew Dorward argue, "…a major concern in developing a set of post-2015 goals is the need to address the disarticulation between 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches in international development"[7]. For example, while many surveys in the build up to post-2015 have found that peace, security and safety top the list of priorities of the general populace, women and children, the inclusion of a goal on peace and security in the OWG draft has had to be fought for. Its retention in the final post-2015 framework remains one of the most precarious.

This notwithstanding, the "power of global goals and the value of comprehensive development goals in raising awareness, maintaining political support for development, and in coordinating policy debates" has been evident. The relevance and importance of a global development framework cannot be overemphasized.

Thus far I have raised what I think are fundamental questions, but now I must go back to the discussion for today.

What is the status of peace and human security discussion in the current post 2015 process?

Inclusion as goal 16 has been most welcomed by CSOs and the targets generally capture submissions made by participating CSOs to the OWG. Though there is a sense that "language could have been strong e.g. specify elimination of illicit financial flows, 'transfer pricing and tax havens' and 'introduce a global corporate tax floor'.

It is generally accepted that while the "OWG Open Working Group report is a major step, more intense negotiations and potential political obstacles lie ahead on the road to a UN Summit in September 2015"

Those who have been involved in the negotiation process through the OWG agree that Goal 16 was one of the most controversial – rather controverted (together rule of law, climate change and sexual and reproductive health). "This Goal was promoted strongly by the Europeans and other developed countries, with support of **some** African countries (especially Liberia) and other developing countries (such as Timor Leste)"[8].

But the link between development and peace and (human) security should be quite obvious.

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[6] David R. Hawkins, *Power vs. Force (Revised Edition): The Hidden Determinants of Human Behavior*, Hay House, New York, 2012, pg. 520

[7] Elaine Unterhalter & Andrew Dorward, 2013, "New MDGs, Development Concepts, Principles and Challenges in a Post-2015 World," Social Indicators Research, Springer, vol. 113(2), pages 609-625, September.

[8] Notes from the OWG 13 Feedback Webinar, July 29, 2014, by Thomas Wheeler, Saferword.

1. First, the evidence shows that violence and insecurity have undermined development and attainment of the MDGs: all the seven countries which are unlikely to meet a single MDG by 2015 are countries that have been affected by high levels of violence. Indeed, improvements in security go hand in hand with development everywhere, not only in countries affected by conflict.
2. Second, there is expert consensus and popular support that peace and security should be included;

The UN High Level Panel of Eminent Persons identified building peace and effective, open and accountable institutions as one of five transformative shifts needed in post 2015, CAP identifies Peace and Security as pillar number five, consultative process and several survey have identified peace and security as a popular priority.

Yet in spite of this, goal 16 remains one of the most vulnerable. One would think that the massive investment in consultations should make the process simple, but it is sophisticated and **the inclusion of peace and security in the OWG report is less a reflection of the goal's popularity, rather the relentless advocacy and lobbying by CSOs and other interested parties.**

So what are the opportunities and constrains going forward?

The process is now entering a very difficult and key phase for CSOs. CSOs influence is not going to be as much as in the OWG process. The daunting question is, when more countries have their say... will this goal be strengthened, weakened or dropped altogether?

1. **Building consensus among African Members states on this goal would be key[9].** According to Saferworld, a global CSO campaigning for the inclusion of a peace and security goal and targets in the post-2015 agenda, "Africa's position will define the framework. Given their number, Africa's 54 member states have the potential to play a decisive role in shaping both the wider debate and the position of the G77 grouping of developing countries. Other influential Southern states are committed to taking the position of African countries very seriously: China, Brazil and India could all seek to align themselves with Africa (and in the case of China have committed themselves to doing so)".
2. Addressing the critical questions raised on language and framing.
3. Implications of goal 16 for development financing (that financing for goal 16 may compete with other priorities), needs to be clarified.
4. There is need to clearly define security – from securitization of development to humanization of development, from state centered security to human security. Citing the CAP may be useful here; "…tackle economic and social inequalities and exclusion; strengthen good and inclusive governance; fight against all forms of discrimination; and forge unity in diversity through

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[9] African rising has been attending by rising inequality – thus while the notion of a rising Africa excites some optimism it presents specific threat of instability that come with certain segments of the population feeling of exclusion.

democratic practices and mechanisms at the local, national and continental levels".

5. Address concerns about measurability of peace and security – It is encouraging that work being done with AU and UNDP with strong support from Stats SA shows that "…measurement of progress in these areas is not only feasible and practical, but also in high demand by the political leadership in African member states. As many as 20 national statistical offices have officially confirmed to the AU their interest in applying the SHaSA instruments to produce harmonized statistics on governance, peace and security, and data collection work is well underway in 8 of those".

Conclusion

I will end with a quote from the Association for Women's Rights in Development, "A new development framework must draw from lessons learned from the MDGs: critically question the long-standing assumptions driving dominant development models and be based on different macroeconomic policies and ways of understanding development beyond economic growth"[10].

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[10] AWID, *The UN Post-2015 Development Agenda – A Critical Analysis*, accessed at http://www.awid.org/News-Analysis/Special-Focus-Post-2015-Development-Agenda/AWID-Analysis-and-Publications/AWID-Analysis-and-Publications/The-UN-Post-2015-Development-Agenda-A-Critical-Analysis on 19 August 2015