

Beyond Aid for Development Effectiveness

By Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki

Over the last decade, aid policy debates have increasingly centered on how to make aid more effective. Global frameworks such as the Paris Declaration (PD) and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) captured the importance of partnerships in the management of aid.

The next global engagement towards making aid more effective and relevant to development is in Busan, South Korea. At the end of November, 3000 delegates – development partners, countries, civil society, academia and business groups – will meet for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness hosted by the OECD.

Busan is a milestone for Africa: for the first time, we will have a strong coordinated voice in the Aid reform process. Consolidated through a two-year comprehensive engagement with African stakeholders, we are taking this message to Busan: the agenda is bigger than aid. It is about *Development Effectiveness*. Aid is but one of the sources for financing Africa's development. More importantly, placed in the broader context of development, aid should support domestic resource mobilization in support of productive sector growth.

We are going to Busan with a common position, reflecting our own vision and priorities on effective development and what that means for aid reforms. The African voice will defend three principles: first, we take full responsibility for our Continent's development; second, partners cannot use Busan to renege on the long-standing commitments to deliver aid better; and thirdly, while attending to the unfinished aid agenda, development partners must align to Africa's vision and priorities. We are gearing up to guarantee that the outcome of Busan is in line with these principles and advances Africa's effective development.

The OECD's latest monitoring report shows that we have done well on our obligations to honor aid effectiveness commitments from Paris and Accra. We must keep up the momentum in the broader context of development, but we cannot go it alone. The same monitoring report shows how development partners have failed to keep their promises. In response, some are working to renegotiate those promises—essentially changing the rules of the game halfway through. We are asking development partners to meet outstanding promises: make aid flows predictable, untied from onerous conditions and requirements to purchase development partner goods and services, and delivered in a coordinated way, aligned with country systems and processes.

Africa has demonstrated high growth rates over the years, coupled with sound domestic resource mobilization despite prevailing challenges and constraints. To sustain these high growth rates, priority must be placed on capacity development and regional integration efforts, along with inclusive public policies that ensure that growth is both equitable and sustainable.

So we want aid directed at building capacity for development - Africa's exit from aid dependency hinges on this, because capable public and private sectors will drive the turn-around of Africa's economy. We want aid that supports a strong role for citizens, parliaments and entrepreneurs. And we want an inclusive, representative and accountable global system with strong African participation to monitor progress on what has already been agreed by Africa and its partners.

In the meantime, it is essential that we embrace our peers from the South in sharing knowledge and experiences to support African-owned and led development efforts. This is one of the most promising partnership approaches. Essentially, the African Union is strengthening Continental partnerships to make development more effective using South-South vehicles such as the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation, Africa-India Forum and the Africa-South America Summit. The G20, as the premier forum for international economic cooperation, offers new opportunities for Africa and African countries to leverage South-South exchange.

The negotiations in Busan provide African countries with an opportunity to reinforce control over their own destiny— we must remain resolute and draw on the current strong political commitment by African leadership and stand behind the Continent's development vision. The totally new world in which we are entering requires a new political energy. With Africa's leadership dedicated to this cause, we are bound to secure outcomes that can further our development and reflect our own priorities in the quest for a forward-looking, prosperous, dynamic and peaceful Africa.

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