Filling a data gap on sustainable development financing

In September 2015, the world’s leaders agreed on the most ambitious development agenda ever designed, the 2030 Agenda, comprised of 17 goals and 169 targets. Earlier that year, at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the international community committed to hold ‘open, inclusive and transparent discussions’ on a new measure of Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) to capture all types of official support targeting sustainable development. The concept of TOSSD emerged from the recognition of gaps in current international statistics on development finance, which do not take into account all actors (e.g. emerging providers), nor all flows and instruments available for sustainable development. Implementing the 2030 Agenda will require transparency on the full array of development finance to maximise the use of existing resources and to support greater mobilisation of private and public financing for sustainable development. As such, TOSSD has the potential to represent a major contribution to Goal 17 on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

The new statistical framework of TOSSD aims to measure resources in support of sustainable development provided by both bilateral and multilateral organisations. It is comprised of two pillars: Pillar I, which tracks all cross-border resource flows to developing countries, and Pillar II, which tracks resources in support of International Public Goods and development enablers, or to address global challenges. TOSSD will include all activities that support sustainable development. In practice, this means that only activities with a direct link to an SDG target and that have no substantial detrimental effect anticipated on one or more of the other targets will be included in the framework. TOSSD aims to include both concessional and non-concessional resources, from a wide range of providers, including through South-South and Triangular co-operation.

Developing TOSSD

In 2017, an International Task Force was set up to develop the TOSSD measure. The Task Force is comprised of about 25 experts from developing countries, provider countries (both from emerging and more advanced economies) and international organisations. It includes both statisticians and development policy officials. The Task Force also includes observers, such as representatives from Brazil (from ABC and IPEA) and from the People’s Republic of China (through its think tank CAITEC). The TOSSD Task Force completed the first TOSSD statistical methodology (called “Reporting Instructions”), for both Pillars I and II, on 5 June 2019. The work of the Task Force is also complemented by a number of consultations at the regional level or with specific groups (e.g. CSOs).

TOSSD country and thematic pilots

In order to establish TOSSD as a viable, relevant and robust international statistical standard, the support and engagement of emerging providers and developing countries are fundamental. Six country pilots in Senegal, the Philippines, Nigeria, Costa Rica, Burkina Faso and Indonesia have been carried out so far to test the potential of the TOSSD measure to inform country policy and planning.

2 See paragraph 55 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
3 ABC: Brazilian Cooperation Agency; IPEA: Institute for Applied Economic Research
4 CAITEC: Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation.
Objectives of the event

In February 2019, the International Task Force launched the first survey to collect TOSSD data. The overall objective of the event is to present the main findings of the Data Survey, including examples of data on financing for sustainable development collected:

- from Northern and Southern provider countries as well as from multilateral organisations
- on various types of flows and frameworks of collaboration much beyond ODA, including official concessional and non-concessional resources as well as private finance mobilised through official interventions
- on the contributions to International Public Goods, including by the UN system (e.g. the UN Secretariat, UN Funds and Programmes, Specialised Agencies and Regional Commissions).

In addition, the event will feature presentations of the pilot studies carried out in Nigeria and Costa Rica. It will also allow various stakeholder groups to raise questions and share feedback on TOSSD and the Data Survey itself.

Format of the event

- Introductory remarks by the co-hosts
- Presentation of the experiences of the TOSSD pilot studies in Nigeria and Costa Rica
- Presentation of the results of the TOSSD Data Survey
- Q&A / Discussion with the audience

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