

CAIRO CONSENSUS ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT: CALL TO ACTION

Building on Bonn, Accra and meetings that followed, including the Cairo Workshop, we acknowledge the progress made and take note of a number of practical results since then, yet we remain aware that more needs to be done. Progress includes recognition, based on strong evidence, that *institutional and human resource capacity development* (CD) is essential to achieve sustainable development results.

We, the Cairo Workshop participants, commit to a series of priority actions for implementation prior to and beyond the High Level Forum in Busan. This consensus statement marks a *shift to an approach which is demand-driven and results focused, owned by the country, and which builds on existing capacity.*

- *Capacity development is not an afterthought.* We will make sure that CD is at the heart of all significant development efforts. We will involve state and non-state actors (parliaments, media, civil society), and facilitate coalitions of local agents to drive change.
- *Capacity development is strategic for the achievement of development results and accountable institutions.* It must deliver short, intermediate and long term results, recognizing tangible and less tangible (soft) dimensions. Short term results could include a strengthened coalition among actors to implement new policy initiatives or develop new skills to generate quick impact. Intermediate results could include improved institutions, better policy environments, and higher competences of stakeholders involved in development. Longer term results such as improved performance of a water utility or better quality of learning outcomes are examples of practical results that are indispensable to wider, sustainable, development impact.
- *Domestic leadership of capacity development is essential.* We will align CD efforts behind a country's vision for development and key deliverables within a national strategy. Without effective control of the process, a country will be unable to align resources for CD to its key priorities, and sustainable improvements in capacity will be almost impossible to achieve.
- *Existing capacities should be the backbone of any capacity development initiative and must not be undermined.* We will act to minimize distortion of incentives and labour markets, particularly in fragile and conflict affected states, and will strengthen country systems while gradually phasing out, and using very selectively, parallel units.
- *Systematic learning on what works and what doesn't is key to improved capacity.* We will invest more in learning and knowledge networks, focusing on mutual learning through partnerships with middle-income countries, learning from evaluation, and South-South.
- *Supply-driven technical co-operation rarely builds sustainable capacity.* We will support demand-led, transparent technical co-operation tailored to country context, with a focus on peer-based, flexible and long-term partnerships, designed to achieve results.
- *Capacity development is a top priority for all partner countries and especially countries affected by fragility.* We will work with the g7+ and the International Dialogue Group to develop a protocol for adoption in Busan. This will guide effective use of limited development resources and assist in delivering critical results in the short and longer term. We commend the g7+ for showing leadership in defining CD as a priority.

Cairo, 29th March 2011