Background Note

Roundtable on

Optimising Philanthropy’s Potential to Fast-Track the SDGs

Friday, 25 September 2015 | 9 am-12:00 pm

Hosted by the Ford Foundation, 320 E. 43rd Street, New York

Background

As the global community gathers in New York to endorse the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the need to identify concrete entry points at the global and field level and optimise the contribution of foundations and the impact of their efforts - a key but often overlooked actor of the post-215 development agenda - is pressing.

The Financing for Development Conference, held in Addis Ababa has already marked a significant evolution in focus from the Millennium Development Goals / Monterrey era, as its final outcome document recognises philanthropy beyond its funding capacity, as source of expertise and knowledge.

This progressive recognition of the role of philanthropy at the global level alone is not enough. As the SDGs get adopted, a paradigm shift should be gradually supported in the way governments and foundations work together on the ground. Indeed, multi-stakeholder partnerships premised on achieving impact will be essential to achieve the SDGs and will be needed at a scale and quality that goes way beyond current levels of collaboration.

Rationale for the event

A number of catalytic foundations – including some members of the OECD Global Network of Foundations Working for Development (netFWD) – recognise the power of such partnerships. They have been developing a pioneering framework to scale up and accelerate impact through deliberate collective action around clearly identified focus areas in specific countries. netFWD is supportive of this work and is taking its brokering and dialogue role one step further to help unleash this potential through the new Accelerating Impact 2030 initiative. The Accelerating Impact 2030 initiative (see the graph below), which is still in its early stage, aims to bring together philanthropic foundations, governments and other committed partners to pool their collective expertise and resources to accelerate achieving the SDGs.
Objectives

The by invitation-only Roundtable will bring together representatives of governments and foundations, as well as other like-minded actors (e.g. impact investors, business) who share an interest in discussing how philanthropy and other development actors can accelerate impact towards specific SDGs at the field level, on the basis of the preliminary framework (Accelerating Impact Initiative 2030) and efforts led by netFWD and some of its members.

The event will specifically seek to:

- Provide an opportunity to discuss the field-level challenges and opportunities (i) for philanthropy to accelerate progress and impact towards the post-2015 agenda through enhanced collective action, (ii) for governments to support the enabling environments required for high-potential development solutions to scale.
- Unveil the scope and ambition of the Accelerating Impact 2030 initiative and discuss its potential.
- Offer participants an opportunity to suggest new areas of multi-stakeholder engagement at country level and/or join future consortia being set up on specific focus areas (e.g. access to energy in India).

About netFWD

To learn more about past and ongoing activities of the Global Network of Foundations Working for Development, please visit www.oecd.org/site/netfwd and sign up to the distribution list.