The 2016 monitoring round showed promising progress in meeting the effectiveness commitments. The 2016 monitoring round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (the Global Partnership) showed encouraging progress among Arab and DAC providers towards meeting the development effectiveness goals agreed at the meeting on aid effectiveness in Busan in 2011. In general, providers of development co-operation show a good level of alignment to national priorities and focus on results at the level of projects and programmes, as well as strong engagement and support to enable civil society’s contributions to development. Most providers recorded good levels of transparency, making more information on their programmes publicly available in a more timely and comprehensive way. Similarly, the annual predictability of development co-operation improved for several providers, and many increased the use of partner countries’ own public financial management systems in delivering their co-operation.

Sharing Good Practice on Implementing Effective Development Co-operation

As an inclusive, multi-stakeholder platform, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (the Global Partnership) is well placed to convene development actors to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Following the Nairobi High-Level Meeting in December 2016, and given the renewed mandate of the Global Partnership to organise more focused dialogues on topics related to effective development co-operation, this session will facilitate a deeper discussion on some of the findings from the 2016 Monitoring Report. Good performers are welcomed to share their lessons and innovations in mainstreaming selected effectiveness commitments monitored under the Global Partnership including on work at the sector level (e.g. transport in Sub-Saharan Africa). Also, the session can help illustrate areas where Arab and DAC providers, jointly and individually, are facing specific bottlenecks and could work together to unlock them.

Key issues for discussion:

- How do Arab and DAC providers raise awareness and mainstream the effectiveness agenda and its agreed commitments (e.g. using partner countries’ results frameworks or country systems, increasing predictability, aid untying, transparency and information disclosure) from headquarters to country offices and embassies? How can this internal communication and mainstreaming of agreed commitments be done most effectively?

- What recent examples of good practice in Arab and DAC organisations or ministries can illustrate a positive change in implementing the four effective development co-operation principles (i.e. focus on results, country ownership, inclusive partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability)?

- How can providers facilitate and enhance peer-learning that is focused on ‘what works’ in the implementation of the effective development co-operation principles?

Expected outcomes:

- Identify good practices and encourage mutual learning on key Global Partnership commitments for providers to stimulate action and encourage change on the ground.

- Agree on priority actions that Arab and DAC providers could take, jointly and individually, to accelerate the achievement of key commitments for more effective development co-operation where bottlenecks have been identified during the Global Partnership’s 2016 monitoring round (e.g. medium-term predictability, use of partner country systems, aid untying, strengthening mutual accountability at country level).

The 2016 monitoring round showed promising progress in meeting the effectiveness commitments

The 2016 monitoring round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (the Global Partnership) showed encouraging progress among Arab and DAC providers towards meeting the development effectiveness goals agreed at the meeting on aid effectiveness in Busan in 2011. In general, providers of development co-operation show a good level of alignment to national priorities and focus on results at the level of projects and programmes, as well as strong engagement and support to enable civil society’s contributions to development. Most providers recorded good levels of transparency, making more information on their programmes publicly available in a more timely and comprehensive way. Similarly, the annual predictability of development co-operation improved for several providers, and many increased the use of partner countries’ own public financial management systems in delivering their co-operation.
While these gains are encouraging, they are coupled with an overall need to adapt to a dynamic and evolving development landscape, as well as specific areas where concerted effort is required to unlock bottlenecks. These challenges include the need to broaden the participation and transparency of country-level processes for mutual accountability around development co-operation; and finding ways to strengthen and further rely on partner countries’ national systems to deliver development co-operation (including local planning, budgeting, procurement, monitoring and evaluation systems), going beyond public financial management systems.

Echoing these findings, the broad community of development co-operation providers renewed its commitment to address these effectiveness challenges in the Nairobi Outcome document (Dec 2016).

In the context of Agenda 2030, increasing the focus on results, strengthening country ownership, and enhancing transparency and accountability are two sides of the same coin

The detailed analysis of results of the 2016 monitoring round revealed that providers are experimenting with a variety of practical solutions to address persistent bottlenecks in achieving more effective development co-operation – which often include developing long-term, broad-based engagement with partner governments, and non-state actors at country level. For example:

- Multi-donor trust funds, such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, are used to structure a comprehensive response to local development challenges, as jointly identified with the partner country, while channeling the resources for government-defined programmes by using some elements of country systems and by sharing risks among multiple providers. Other practices involve civil society in the steering committees of multi-donor trust funds, thereby creating greater alignment to country needs as well as domestic pressure for effective and transparent use of funds.

- Many partner countries have started the process of embedding Sustainable Development Goal targets into their national development plans and sector strategies, offering an entry point for providers to support results-based planning and monitoring while simultaneously strengthening the alignment with locally defined results.

- The EU Joint Programming being applied in 56 developing countries is also helping synchronise providers’ programming processes with that of the partner country’s national plan and results framework, while adopting the partner’s planning horizon. Each joint strategy includes a local framework for monitoring its implementation and the results achieved against agreed indicators.

- Whenever appropriate, the reliance of bilateral providers and development banks on demand-driven modalities of development co-operation (e.g. concessional lending, which engages parliaments in approval/oversight and relies on local budgeting and public financial management systems for delivery) have helped providers to better align their programmes to locally-defined development priorities, as well as to increase the participation of partner countries’ own institutions.

Mutual learning as a key driver of change

Across all the areas monitored by the Global Partnership, there are several providers that have demonstrated their ability to make progress on the agreed effectiveness principles. This indicates great potential for identifying success factors, sharing lessons and facilitating mutual learning to accelerate the global development community’s efforts to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Effective practices and lessons identified in one country or by one provider can accelerate progress amongst others.

Venues and platforms exist to facilitate the dialogue and mutual learning between providers, such as the Arab-DAC Dialogue on Development, the DAC and Arab providers’ respective own communities, and the Global Partnership itself. The potential for mutual learning on effective implementation of the effectiveness principles remains significant, and needs to be fully tapped into.