



# **STRENGTHENING OWNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

A Synthesis of Key Findings and Messages produced for  
the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4)

The Cluster A - Ownership and Accountability - of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF)



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## Abbreviations

AAA	The Accra Agenda for Action
AWEPA	Association of the European Parliamentarians for Africa
CD	Capacity Development
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCD	Development Co-operation Directorate
DeLoG	Development Partner Working Group on Decentralisation and Local Governance
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
GovNet	The DAC Workstream on Aid and Accountability
HLF4	Fourth High Level Forum
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
LenCD	Learning Network on Capacity Development
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PD	Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Harmonisation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UN-DCF	United Nations Development Cooperation Forum
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WF-EFF	Working Party on Aid Effectiveness

## Preamble

The process launched in Rome, pursued in Paris and Accra, will culminate in Busan in November 2011. It has started as a dialogue and negotiation followed by government commitments. On the way, it has become a vibrant forum for many stakeholders.

What was originally conceived as a technical agenda – the goal of which was to fix certain side-effects of the aid system – has become a political discussion about the contribution of aid to development effectiveness in the past years. The G20 emerged as a group where developed and emerging economies provide development finance to developing countries, and where South-South cooperation is recognised as a significant component of the global development cooperation system. This has important implications for the ways to approach aid effectiveness, ownership and accountability.

### *From Country Executive Ownership to Inclusive Ownership*

Although the Paris Declaration (PD) included recommendations on the role of parliaments and civil society organisations (CSOs), it was assumed that partner government executives would and should take full leadership and exclusive control in the design and implementation of national development strategies. Donors would then be able to align on these strategies and support them. Insufficient space was given to other actors outside the partner country executive. The executive was seen as the cornerstone of accountability of both donors and recipient governments towards their respective citizens and Parliaments. Stakeholders such as line ministries, local government bodies, parliaments, and CSOs were bypassed or limited in consultation processes, where they felt their voice could not be fully heard. This has impeded progress towards aid effectiveness.

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) placed more emphasis on empowering non-state actors. Since 2008, there has been a growing consensus on the importance of including all stakeholders in national development processes, i.e. the design of strategies, decision-making processes and the assessment of achievements. The rationale is that all actors count and make complementary contributions to development. Aid influences the power equation, particularly in aid-dependent partner countries. But there is no real consensus on the division of labour and the distribution of roles and powers between stakeholders. This issue must be addressed at the Fourth High Level Forum (HLF4) on Aid Effectiveness in Busan and after. The stake is to understand how aid can contribute to inclusive, equitable and effective domestic modes of decision-making, arbitration and peaceful conflict resolution in the management of public affairs. How can stakeholders play an effective role in decision-making so as to achieve development results? This issue requires specific thinking and solutions in fragile contexts. Specific, long-term approaches and solutions with a focus on inclusiveness and coordination of actors and initiatives are particularly necessary in fragile states and situations, as underlined in the New Deal for International Engagement in Fragile States (International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, 2011).

### *From Mutual Accountability to the Promotion of a Culture of Accountability and Transparency*

In Paris, the focus was put on mutual accountability between donors and recipient governments. The discussion was dominated by the lack of aid predictability and the inconsistency and fragmentation of donor interventions on the one hand, corruption, fiduciary risks and low management capacity on the other.

In the aftermath of Accra, domestic accountability and its links with mutual accountability were recognised crucial to aid effectiveness. In aid-dependent countries especially, accountability tends to be oriented towards donors and not citizens. The challenge of development cooperation, therefore, is not only to ensure mutual accountability, but to understand the complex system of domestic accountability with all its dimensions and facets (local and regional governance, public-private mechanisms, constitutional checks and balances, etc.). In their “do no harm” approach, donors should support capacity for domestic accountability. They could act as facilitators in supporting citizens’ initiatives to hold states to account. They could also go with the grain of reforms, avoid blueprints and improve their understanding of political economy so as to better tailor support to context. All stakeholders – partner countries, CSOs, local governments, parliamentarians, political parties, the independent media and development partners - must hence work together to build robust, coherent and mutually supportive accountability systems.

Moreover, evidence gathered in the Paris Declaration Phase (Wood et al., 2008) shows that lack of transparency is a major obstacle to accountability in the aid system as a whole. This deficit stems from the absence of effective mechanisms and platforms and from the reluctance of each actor to make information available to other actors, for fear of criticism.

### *Capacity Development and its Ambiguities*

In Accra, development actors underlined that capacity development and ownership/accountability are two sides of the same coin. Indeed, people and institutions can fully “own” the development process and guarantee a culture of accountability only if they can access, understand and use available information and if they are aware of the issues and options at stake.

All actors of the aid system are in favour of promoting capacity development (CD). They can build on years of experience in designing and implementing CD initiatives. However, good practice in the field implies to go against significant institutional barriers and disincentives at the basis of traditional technical assistance, such as the search for visibility, the pressure to reach quick value for money or the persistence of vested interests and asymmetric power relations.

Evidence suggests that considerable gains in aid effectiveness can be achieved if country-based organisations and institutions are empowered, and if the aid system is oriented towards meeting their needs. This implies an in-depth reform of the aid system and raises the question of the actual level of political will on each side of the aid relationship to invest in capacity development for the purpose of reducing aid dependency.

### *Recommendations*

- **Start from the country level and learn from the country context.** Governments must create a good environment for national stakeholders to participate effectively. In turn, parliaments, local government, CSOs and the private sector should seek to improve their own responsibility and effectiveness as defined in AAA. Donors will continue to respect country ownership and leadership.
- **Support countries priorities and programmes.** This includes the elaboration of national visions, aid management strategies and locally-driven monitoring frameworks with annual performance targets to measure the quality of aid and results. These will increase accountability of individual providers and enhance peer pressure between them.

- **Strengthen collaboration among all development actors.** Each actor must be recognised as an actor in its own right. Each actor is special and should play roles that are appropriate to their mandate and commitment to development effectiveness.
- **Take stock on a regular and mutual basis.** Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of implementation and progress should include all stakeholders. Independent assessments and peer-reviews must feed into updated action plans.
- **Establish procedures and tools to ensure transparency** across the aid system.
- **Define and negotiate *ex ante* arbitration and common conflict resolution procedures** to overcome divergence between actors when they arise. These could be created at the national or regional level.

### *Topics to be Discussed in Busan*

This document is based on hundreds of pages of material, including analysis, case-studies and substantial evidence. It contains important and detailed recommendations and messages.

As the aid effectiveness agenda fundamentally is a political one, different perspectives and mind-sets remain and will remain amongst stakeholders within the aid system. However, as a Cluster, we have searched for common ground in order to contribute to inclusive and equitable decision-making and arbitration, within the terms and limits of national legal frameworks in partner countries. The implication for donors is two-fold: they need to be sensitive to the political consequences of their acts and to show self-restraint; for this purpose, they must develop a thorough understanding of each country context. National actors should follow the jointly-agreed “rules of the game” regarding the way aid is invested, managed and accounted for. The following issues hence ought to be considered and addressed:

- Whose leadership and ownership count when it comes to defining the partner country’s interests and priorities? There is growing consensus that while the Executive is critical in country representation towards donors, pluralism must prevail, as implied in the concept of “inclusive ownership”.
- How can all aid actors better contribute to a culture of accountability? This culture and trust between donors and partners can mutually-reinforcing. What mechanisms and architecture could enhance this culture both at the national and international levels?
- Under what conditions, and how can capacity development *practice* contribute to genuine institutional development and the reduction of aid dependency? Current approaches to aid as a catalyst for inclusive and equitable development are useful in that sense.

## Introduction

The Cluster A on Ownership and Accountability of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) brings together several multi-stakeholder Task Teams and various constituencies eager to encourage commitments in the context of the Paris Declaration (PD) and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). The Cluster was co-chaired by the Government of Tanzania and Switzerland, in cooperation with BetterAid.

The Paris Declaration (2005) established “country ownership” as a key principle of aid effectiveness whereby “partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and co-ordinate development actions”. In the PD, ownership is measured by the government’s “operational development strategy” and donor alignment on this strategy. The AAA widened the focus of the Paris Declaration from state-to-state relations to a full recognition of the roles of other development actors such as CSOs, Parliaments and Local Governments.

Mutual accountability is the fifth principle for aid effectiveness whereby “donors and partners are accountable for development results” and commit to joint assessment through country-level mechanisms. The Phase One Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration concluded that “mutual accountability is the area of thinnest reporting and progress registered in the evaluations” despite the fact that potential mechanisms were identified for that task (Wood et al., 2008).

The present document builds upon research presented during recent Cluster meetings as well as additional contributions from four groups and sources gathered under the Cluster A umbrella: the Broad-Based Democratic Ownership Group, the Task Team on Mutual Accountability, the Work-stream on Aid and Accountability (GovNet) and the April Key Messages from the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and the Enabling Environment. Interested constituencies associated with the Cluster such as parliamentarians – through the Association of the European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) -, civil society organisations, the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), United Cities and Local governments (UCLG), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Development Partner Working Group on Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG), the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA international) and the Commonwealth Secretariat also contributed through consultations. Finally, this document builds on interviews of experts of specific themes related to ownership and accountability. References to interviews are made throughout the text and a list of interviewees can be found in annex. Interviews were carried out, and the first version of this document was drafted by Brian Tomlinson (Canadian Council for International Cooperation).

A large body of research, case studies and meta-studies inform the challenges and issues faced by international cooperation in strengthening country ownership and accountability. This Report provides only an overview of the research and of the presentations and discussions produced by Cluster A over the past 18 months. It is not a comprehensive summary of the often-detailed evidence; rather, it aims at presenting a synthesis of findings and recommendations to identify Cluster A key messages in the perspective of Busan.

Findings and proposals are selected and guided in conformity to the Cluster’s mandate. In determining its key messages, it became clear to Cluster A that findings and proposals cannot be separated from past experience of using country systems, transparency, the predictability of aid flows and the need to strengthen financial management capacities. Further examination of such linkages is needed but is beyond the scope of both the Cluster’s mandate and this Report.



## Main Findings and Messages for Busan

### 1. Inclusive Ownership and Policy Dialogue

#### *Understanding Ownership as an Endogenous Political Process*

AAA represented a major improvement in recognising broad-based and inclusive ownership as essential pillars of aid effectiveness. With the Paris Declaration, donors acknowledged that aid funds and political power gave them disproportionate influence over developing countries, at the expense of sustainable development outcomes. But significant differences on the meaning of “ownership” and its interpretation by various development stakeholders remain.

Whose ownership? The answer to that complex question and the desired degree of “inclusiveness” are strongly influenced by the subjective positioning of each stakeholder in the aid system (Collins, 2010; Interview with Theisohn). Some distinction has been between inclusive ownership and rights-based democratic ownership (Interview with Dereymaeker; Interview with Long; BetterAid, 2010a; Hauck & Land, 2011; Interview with Hauck). Some consider that “democratic ownership” is more precise because it focuses on the institutional structures and processes that allow constituencies in developing countries to claim their rights and control over development priorities and resources. This report refers to “inclusive ownership” because the term is broadly accepted within the WP-EFF.

Different stakeholders have different perspectives on ownership and accountability. For developing country governments, “ownership” emphasises their exclusive leadership and power to encapsulate country interests and respond to the imperatives of international cooperation. The 19th paragraph of the AAA refers to some principles related to national sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> Other partner country stakeholders - parliamentarians, CSOs, social actors or community-level associations - seek to reflect different interests in “country ownership” (Interview with Collins; Interview with Eyben; Interview with Dereymaeker). “Ownership of development” is a value-driven political concept (Hauck & Land, 2011; BetterAid, 2010a) that can only be shaped through endogenous processes of citizen participation and engagement in development activities and policy deliberations. For many CSOs, ownership is not a discretionary choice by government but rather refers to the right of citizens to participate.

Within the context of the Working Party, ownership is now largely understood as deeply affected by donor-recipient power relationships, which may in various ways compromise recipient “ownership” of - or commitment to - development plans and outcomes (Eyben, 2010; Whitfield, 2009). Several studies, however, indicate that ownership should not only be seen as a condition for successful aid but rather as an end in itself. This is how the Accra commitment to broadening and deepening the dialogue on development should be understood and taken forward (Keijzer et al., 2011).

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 19 in AAA makes a reference to “non-interference in internal affairs, equality among developing partners and respect for their independence, national sovereignty, cultural diversity and identity and local content”.

### *Ownership and the Political Dynamics of the Aid Relationship*

Ownership has been described as a complex set of relationships characterised by a myriad of actors in constant and changing interaction (Hauck & Land, 2011). The political realities affecting ownership are country-specific and depend on a number of factors – aid dependency, government commitment to development objectives, policy space and government openness to various stakeholders. The latter include not only domestic development stakeholders, but also donor agencies, private foundations or non-state organisations. However, five years after the Paris Declaration, most studies point to a continued and often overwhelming influence of donor-driven agendas on development policy choices for many aid-dependent partner countries (Eyben, 2010; BetterAid, 2010a; Whitfield, 2009; Open Forum, 2010a). Several studies established that growing demands from constituencies in donor countries to measure the “value-for-money” of aid funds and quick results have resulted in increased pressures on partner countries (Eyben, 2010; Hauck & Land, 2011). Other studies point out that, in some cases, leaders lack political will to take ownership of the development process.

Therefore, the question about the conditions favourable to more equitable compromises between donors and partner countries in aid negotiations remains open. Given country specificities, what are the factors affecting the potential for strong country ownership of development strategies and leadership of aid negotiations (Interview with Collins)? Some case studies demonstrate that aid dependency results in a detrimental “state of permanent negotiations with donors”. This situation does not always lead to a significant loss of ownership, but decades of aid conditionalities and austerity have weakened public services, fragmented development strategies and increased political entanglement of interests between donors and elites in developing countries (Whitfield, 2008).

### *Enabling Conditions for Inclusive Ownership*

Opportunities for more inclusive ownership at the meso or micro level can arise from deliberate donor/partner efforts to work with or facilitate coalitions for reform with like-minded actors. These relationships often build a bridge between state and non-state development actors, which may in turn have unpredictable influence on development outcomes in the wider policy arena (Eyben, 2010; Keijzer et al., 2010; Hauck & Land, 2011; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009). Local governments, with their roots in the social, economic and political fabric of communities, are important avenues for inclusive local processes of ownership and bottom-up transformative change (UCLG, 2010). Where their capacities are strong, members of parliaments are becoming more engaged in aid processes. Increased interaction between local actors and civil society tends to strengthen the performance of all stakeholder groups (Interview with Balch). As actors in their own right, CSOs mobilise constituencies for development and emphasise catalytic change to overcome the root-causes of poverty. They bring to the fore the various interests of women, children and marginalised populations living in poverty (Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness, 2011a & 2011b). Practical expressions of ownership should not be considered as mere tools serving donor or government objectives but as political ends per se (Hauck & Land, 2011; Advisory Group, 2008).

A number of lessons have been learnt for the promotion of inclusive ownership:

- **Respect the diversity of policy perspectives from various development actors**, such as CSOs or local governments. Their contributions must inform national strategies, but their activities may not always align on the government’s strategies.
- **Strengthen parliamentary processes**, because parliaments are a representative voice of the people and an essential actor of democratic governance.

- **Provide, promote and monitor an enabling environment for CSOs** in order to maximise their contribution to national and local strategies and to the development process as a whole (Task Team on CSO development Effectiveness, 2001c). The efforts made by CSOs to enhance their own effectiveness and accountability as development actors must continue and be encouraged.
- **Coordinate local, regional and national levels** to support effective decentralisation and de-concentration policies. Better multi-level governance creates synergies between local processes and national and international development strategies. In this logic, the local level influences national and international strategies, which in turn are nurtured and improved by the knowledge of local realities.
- **Focus on people and relationships within international co-operation** with emphasis on capacity-building oriented towards the creation of cross-cultural, cross-political networks and relationships between all actors at all levels (Eyben, 2010).
- **Ensure access to knowledge** produced by diverse sources (increasingly from the South) and made available to all actors. Donors should acknowledge the value of existing knowledge held by governments and other social actors in partner countries, strengthen the essential areas of knowledge identified by them and understand the political economy context in which development interventions take place (Hauck & Land, 2011).
- **Increase monitoring and evaluation.** A new approach to investments in this critical sector is needed to give priority to sound and coherent systems that are owned and mastered by national actors. Parallel and isolated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, as well as those superimposed by donors, whose contribution to inclusive ownership is uncertain, should be avoided (Keijzer *et al.*, 2011). Ownership and accountability lead to development results, which must be defined by partners and aligned on their strategies.
- **Foster capitalisation of experience** by limiting the rapid rotation of donor officials at the country level, taking into account the different perspectives from relevant development actors - including outside capital cities - and encouraging collective work through appropriate modalities and reduced fragmentation (Hauck & Land, 2011).
- **Focus on Capacity Development.** This means to focus on learning from experience, to accept complexity and diversity, to understand power dynamics and to avoid hands-on approaches.

### **Can Ownership be measured?**

As a complex process of social and political interactions, the achievement of inclusive ownership of development strategies is hard to measure but some enabling conditions can be highlighted. A review of more than 170 current indicators for governance, state fragility and development outcomes provides data to better understand enabling conditions for ownership (Collins, 2010). Different methodologies - such as good practice case-studies and careful analysis of outcomes underlined by empirical studies using indicators of citizen participation - should be developed to enhance such understanding.

Fonteneau and Huyse reviewed indicators for CSO participation in policy processes and its outcomes. They list many indicators documenting the capacities of civil society, but they conclude that few actually measure participation. And there is little experience-based analysis that applies those indicators (Fonteneau & Huyse, 2010). Donor agencies have also grappled with conceptual and methodological challenges to measure the overall impact of their programs aimed at supporting civil society. They find it

difficult to reach a balance between encouraging M&E practices able to empower civil society, and learning from experience, because their excessive demands can reduce the partners' capacities. A large numbers of donor-supported interventions are not easily aggregated and related to effectiveness indicators (Giffen & Judge, 2010; Keijzer et al., 2011; Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness, 2011b).

### ***Strengthening Capacity Development for Inclusive Ownership***

The OECD DAC Capacity Development Unit is working closely with the informal Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD), made up of capacity development (CD) analysts and practitioners. They are applying CD lessons to strengthen implementation of the AAA capacity development commitments.<sup>2</sup> A broad consensus on CD has emerged within these networks and international CSOs in the past decade. There is also broad agreement that aid practitioners do not “do capacity development”, but that CD results from complex political and technical processes over time. In supporting CD, donors, civil society or government should focus on facilitation and accompaniment (LenCD, 2011; Interview with Guizzardi & Theisoehn). But there is a gap between these norms and lessons for CD and actual donor practice (DCD, 2011).

Experience in the field of CD suggests that increased capacity calls for behavioural change (DCD, 2011). On the donor side, human resource and financial commitments are essential conditions of such change. Donor officials' commitment to build open and trustful relationships is also critical. But such capacities are often invisible ingredients in aid effectiveness (Eyben, 2010 and Interview).

Several actions can strengthen donors' ability to build effective relationship:

- **Promote facilitation and engagement capacities** - including listening skills - in the recruitment of donor staff.
- **Give donor officials permission and leverage to invest time in relationships.**
- **Allow longer-term appointments in country offices** in order to create opportunities to learn from country contexts.
- **Reduce mechanistic monitoring and reporting activities** (Eyben, 2010 and Interview; Whitfield, 2009).

In an examination of CSO support for capacity-building in partner countries, several issues were identified:

- **The proliferation of fragmented, short-term, supply-driven initiatives.**
- **The lack of enabling conditions for recipients to seize CD opportunities.**
- **The lack of consideration for the risks and distortions** that might result from donor-directed approaches.
- **The difficulty to measure the impact of CD** (LenCD, 2011).
- **The real weaknesses and needs of partners are not always known and clearly identified.**

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<sup>2</sup> In *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice* (2006), the DAC defines capacity as “the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully”. Capacity development “is the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time”.

Finally, experience points to the need to change incentives with respect to CD in the implementation of donors' result management frameworks. Result management and reporting frameworks must be flexible and adapted to CD approaches. CD skills - including those related to relationship-building – must be promoted for development results (DCD, 2011; Interview with Eyben). Partner Countries must elaborate capacity development frameworks.

## 2. Accountability

Accountability and respect of past commitments is an important dimension of the partnership for sustainable development envisioned by the Heads of State in the Millennium Declaration and in the Monterey Consensus in 2002, and should therefore encapsulate the commitments of all partners. Accountability in the use of development resources, coupled with transparency, plays a key role in promoting poverty reduction and good governance at national, local and international levels<sup>3</sup>.

In the Paris Declaration, donors and partner countries agreed to be accountable in their commitments to make aid more effective. To do so, they agreed to jointly assess progress in implementation through mutual assessment reviews, which should be in place by 2010. The Accra Agenda for Action broadened the understanding of accountability in the context of aid effectiveness. Accra put stronger emphasis on transparency, on the role of parliaments and civil society both in donor and partner countries and accountability towards citizens for development results.

### *A mutually-reinforcing set of accountability*

Progress on mutual accountability has been extremely uneven and remains one of the weakest points of the Paris Declaration implementation. The United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (UN-DCF) analysis has highlighted the progress made by the international community towards accountability between aid recipients and aid providers. It shows that “in spite of recent considerable progress, very few countries have strong mutual accountability mechanisms which are making a major impact on the effectiveness of aid in achieving development results” (ECOSOC, 2009).

In a context of tensions and potential complementarities between all the actors involved, the following actions should be promoted for increased accountability in the design and implementation of development programmes and finance:

- **Ensure that donors and partner countries are accountable to their own taxpayers and citizens** through different governance channels like parliaments, independent oversight bodies, CSOs and the media.
- **Guarantee that donors and partner countries are also accountable for their international commitments** - to each other, to their peers, and to civil society. However, mutual accountability is impeded by aid's asymmetric power relations and the lack of enforcement mechanisms. Recipient governments risk donors' sanctions when commitments are not met. For example,

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<sup>3</sup> Findings and messages presented here are based on research on accountability conducted by OECD DAC GOVNET, an analysis on Parliamentarians' role in implementing the AAA carried out by AWEPA, the Commonwealth Secretariat's case-study on the linkages between mutual and domestic accountability (Whitty, 2010), UN-DCF surveys and analysis of mutual accountability and the European Centre for Development Policy Management's piece on domestic accountability (ECDPM, 2010). It also builds on recent African sub-regional partner country meetings: in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania for East and Southern Africa, and in Accra, Ghana, for West and Central African countries.

funds can be withheld. On the contrary, mutual accountability uses ‘soft’ measures such as reputation, peer pressure and the culture of mutual trust to incentivise donor behaviour. The World Development Report 2011 (World Bank, 2011: 6, 56) highlights a “dual accountability dilemma” to refer to a situation in which “international actors, whether bilateral or multilateral, are accountable first to their domestic constituencies and shareholders, and only second to their counterparts or to the citizens of recipient states”.

- **Acknowledge that all development actors have a responsibility to be accountable** for their aid and development efforts and share responsibility to promote each other’s accountability (Task Team on CSO development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 2011c).
- **Enhance mutual accountability in all aspects of the aid relationship**, through finance and coordination at the country-wide, at the sector level, in projects and programmes. Evidence from the Commonwealth Secretariat suggests that despite transaction costs, focusing on sector-wide approaches and on the project level is both manageable and efficient because actors can build on their shared interests and expectations and on mutual trust between individuals (Whitty, 2010).
- **Develop a holistic approach to accountability**. In this approach, linkages between inclusive ownership, domestic accountability and mutual accountability are crucial and must be reinforced (Whitty, 2010; Busia, 2010; Interview with Dereymaeker; Interview with Attridge), with the objective to maximise development results. Actions will take into account the “integral nature of all parts of the management cycle (planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, auditing and evaluation)” and seek to strengthen existing country systems around a unique, consensual set of indicators, the proliferation of which will be avoided (OECD/BMZ, 2011).

### **Transparency for Accountability**

Transparency is a vital ingredient for accountability. Since Accra, progress has been made in that field. A number of initiatives are working to make aid providers - and those who receive aid resources - more transparent. At the country level, citizens and their representatives need to be able to access and use information so as to hold decision-makers and implementers to account – be it governments, donors, CSOs or the private sector. In this scenario, transparency leads to accountability and development results. At the international level, donor accountability requires independent but effective monitoring, based on increased transparency and peer pressure on non-complying players. Accountability is not just about tracing “what has gone wrong or off-track” ex post. Accountability systems must be up-front processes – mutual or domestic - that involve a range of stakeholders in decisions that affect people’s lives.

The work of GovNet and other case study research underline dynamic linkages between the quality of bottom-up domestic accountability and mutual accountability (GovNet, 2010a; Hauck & Land, 2011). However, mutual accountability for development results cannot easily be achieved and gain legitimacy (Busia, 2010). Accountability of government to its citizens is a deeply political issue, strongly associated with democratic culture, the rights of association, free press, decentralisation, the quality of the parliamentary process and oversight (BetterAid, 2010a; Interview with Dereymaeker; Interview with Eyben; Folscher, 2009; UCLG, 2010). Accountability at all levels is therefore affected by the restriction of policy space for civil society organisations in a number of developing countries (Tiwana & Belay, 2010; Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness, 2011a).

## Recommendations

- **Get on with it.** Recent meetings of partner countries in Africa stressed that no new principles of mutual accountability are required. What is needed is *implementation*. Implementation requires to develop a culture of accountability and to improve relationships. The focus should be put on trust and results. The EU's recent Council Conclusions on transparency and accountability will provide an incentive for the European Commission and the Member States to prioritise action on mutual accountability (Council of the European Union, 2010). The Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness emphasises in its key messages that "all development actors have a responsibility to be accountable for their aid and development efforts, and share responsibility to promote each other's accountability" (2011c).
- **Strengthen mutual and domestic accountability.** This applies to all aspects and sequences of aid relationships, i.e. the definition of the development strategy, the choice of aid instruments and policy implementation. Efforts must be based on the "do no harm" principle and have a positive impact on mutual as well as domestic accountability. There is a need to 'walk the talk' on AAA commitments, and in particular to strengthen the role of parliaments, local governments, civil society and the private sector. Accountability mechanisms must be consolidated with a focus on results, transparency, and capacity. This can be done by relying on the capacity of sub-national governments to interact with citizens and on participatory decision-making. Instead of supporting a single actor, thus enhancing fragmentation, donors should work with partners to develop holistic approaches and programmes that sustain dynamic national accountability systems, such as budget processes and service delivery. In that sense, donors should improve their understanding of each context and of the interactions among the different institutions involved in the accountability process.
- **Acknowledge that accountability is a political as much as a technocratic process.** Findings from various studies - by the Commonwealth Secretariat (Whitty, 2010), ECDPM (2010) and DAC GOVNET (2011a: 3) - highlight that a political economy analysis - in recipient and donor countries - is vital to understand how accountability relationships play out in practice and to find pragmatic solutions at the country level.
- **Take stock on a regular and mutual basis.** Monitoring and evaluation of implementation and progress should include all stakeholders. Independent assessments and peer-reviews must feed into updated action plans.

## Donor Practices that Support or Undermine Accountability

Power asymmetries in the current aid architecture lead actors to focus on accountability by partner country governments, ignoring the negative impact of non-compliance by other stakeholders on development results. Largely absent from the discussion on domestic and mutual accountability is the impact of changing political dynamics and accountability failures in donor countries (Eyben, 2010 and Interview; Interview with Attridge; Interview with Long). Political oversight and parliaments in donor countries create expectations for reporting on aid results which in turn restrict the possibilities for government regulation and control of spending. This affects the ways in which donors honour the commitments they made in Paris and Accra.

The Busan outcome document could propose specific aid effectiveness targets - for all donors and partner countries - and tools for the coordination and improved monitoring of joint progress. In doing so, stakeholders could draw on lessons from experience and the following proposals.

Analytical work conducted by the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (ECOSOC, 2009) points to a number of components that help to change behaviours and encourage mutual accountability at the national level:

- **All providers of development cooperation** (including South-South providers, emerging donors, vertical funds and international NGOs) **should encourage and support partner countries to develop national aid policies** and define targets that may be more ambitious or clearer than those listed in the Paris Declaration. They should also commit to agreeing donor-specific annual targets – such as the Partner Performance Assessments - and mechanisms to monitor them annually.
- **Partner countries should organise an annual national high level forum to assess progress** of individual providers of development cooperation (including through independent analysis), and elaborate plans to address existing barriers and boost progress. The forum should gather stakeholders of the partner country, all donors and national parliamentary committees. This can be done as an integral part of aid co-ordination or government performance monitoring mechanisms and under clear partner government leadership. High level donor officials should jointly commit to participate in these forums in Busan.

Additional actions could be considered:

- **Increase the share of programme aid.** While the Paris/AAA agenda gives preference to programme aid (budget support) modalities, many donors prefer to deliver aid through projects. Project aid raises issues since most of it is off-budget and sometimes off-plan, creating a risk of undermining accountability for the use of resources. When it is not possible to increase the share of programme aid, projects should use country systems in order to ensure that citizens and their representatives are better able to hold decision-makers to account for all aid.
- **Establish joint donor trust funds and find a new approach to technical assistance.** Likewise, GOVNET work has shown that in some cases, technical assistance leads to a proliferation of uncoordinated initiatives that focus on specific issues or actors – at the expense of wider systems of accountability (2011a: 13-15).
- **Develop mechanisms to resolve tensions and disagreements between actors.** Setting up an independent and effective mechanism at the international level (such as the QuODA4 and the Commitment to Development index) could create appropriate incentives to improve donor behaviour and facilitate consensus. The call for mechanisms to resolve tensions and disagreements between actors - and move away from the current unilateral action of donors - is emphasised by developing countries.
- **CSOs commit to continue their efforts and progress towards accountability** and to apply self-managed accountability, transparency mechanisms and standards towards their primary stakeholders, developing country governments and donors.

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<sup>4</sup> QuODA is an assessment of the Quality of Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided by 23 donor countries and more than 150 aid agencies. Aid quality draws on 30 indicators grouped in four dimensions of high-quality aid: Maximizing Efficiency, Fostering Institutions, Reducing Burden, Transparency and Learning.



### *The leadership of partner countries*

Partner countries should commit to strengthen their capacity on mutual accountability as an integral part of their aid management efforts. This priority must be institutionalised and internalised.

Partner countries and donors should support mutual and domestic accountability in all aspects of aid relations. Where possible, mutual accountability mechanisms should be linked to domestic accountability mechanisms (through audit processes in Parliament, for example) and involve domestic actors.

### *Country level lessons, South/South learning and access to information*

Mutual and domestic accountability can be a powerful incentive towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other domestic development goals. GOVNET country case-studies reveal partner country interest to improve their own ability to track advances in accountability systems (budget processes/service delivery/elections) and institutions at the benefit of citizens (2011b & 2011 c). To that end:

- **Mutual accountability should not just focus on the use of aid and include all contributors to sustainable development outcomes.** It should not be limited to an assessment of short-term results at the expense of efforts in the longer-term. Strong systems and institutions in areas like trade, investment, climate change, procurement, public financial management, gender equality, decent work, and human rights should be supported.
- **Information must be user-friendly and available to local stakeholders and communities.** For partner countries to hold donors accountable and for citizens to hold their governments accountable, they need transparent access to information (for example, sex disaggregated data).
- **Implementation of global and country level transparency initiatives** like aid management platforms are essential tools to ensure that central government departments, parliaments, local government, CSOs and citizens in both donor and partner countries have access to timely information on development cooperation.
- **Lessons from progress towards development results need to feed into international accountability mechanisms** - the UN DCF, OECD high level meetings and the WP-EFF - to foster change in donor policies and their internal incentives.
- **South/South, North/North and triangular dialogue, peer learning and monitoring processes must be developed**, including accountability modelled by the African Peer Review Mechanism or those encouraging the involvement of non-DAC aid providers and independent international monitoring.

## **3. Inclusive Ownership and Accountability: Key Actors**

### *The (Central) Government Executive*

The Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action need capable partner countries executives and public administrations to achieve development results.

Government is the central mediator of interests and needs amongst citizens and institutions. It is the leading and coordinating force in the design and implementation of national development strategies. In this context, robust, transparent and effective national public finance management and result assessment systems are vital. As a consequence, donors must support capacity development and use

country systems as much as possible, provided that they are compatible with basic fiduciary quality requirements.

Because other work streams within the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness have extensively explored and documented the key role of Partner Country Governments in aid effectiveness, the present document focuses on other actors within partner countries that since Accra have emerged as the natural interlocutors of the Executive and primary actors of inclusive country ownership.

### **Parliaments**

The Parliament is the people's sole elected representative body. It has a specific constitutional mandate to oversee the use and spending of both domestic and foreign resources. Parliaments have a mandate to debate and approve national development plans and budgets, to monitor and hold the government to account for the delivery of results. Although detailed remits will differ from country to country, generally speaking, parliaments engage with constituents on development issues, represent citizens' interests in policy design and implementation, scrutinise the elaboration of the Law and debate it, deliberate on the national budget and approve it.

Parliament is the pre-eminent forum for inclusive political dialogue and national debate (European Commission, 2010). The reach of parliamentary consultation, debate, and discussion extends across regions, religions, ethnicities, socio-economic considerations and political parties. When supported by political parties with explicit ideological differences, and when CSOs have legislative venues to express their interests, parliaments can distil citizen preferences and provide a broad assessment of a country's needs. In this context, the development agenda is "owned" by a country's legislature.

The institution also serves as a clearing house for issues of national interests, while members of Parliament (MPs) are in charge of setting priorities and building consensus. They examine and interpret key political issues and challenge the executive. The Parliament is hence at the top of each country's accountability system and collaborates with the Auditor-General (Supreme Audit Institutions, Court of Accounts, Administrative Court). Parliamentarians are accountable to their constituents, their political parties and the public at large. This is most typically expressed during elections but also through examination by the media and regular citizen consultations.

Parliamentary accountability guarantees that the executive and its deconcentrated agencies fulfil their responsibilities and that there are mechanisms available to hold them to account for their actions or omissions where problems occur or complaints arise. It is a key component of the democratic system of checks and balances. In order to strengthen it, development stakeholders could engage in various actions:

- **Donor country parliamentarians hold donor country executives to account** for their past commitments and guarantee value for taxpayers' money.
- **In partner countries, MPs must ensure that the use of ODA and other development resources benefit their intended recipients.**
- **Mutual accountability can be strengthened through joint parliamentary monitoring** of aid flows by MPs from both donor and recipient countries. This would create process whereby partner country parliaments would hold donor country executives to account. In turn, partner governments would rely on donor country parliaments to raise broader issues of policy coherence and development effectiveness that are critical to them.

- **Provide adequate, accessible and user-friendly information.** ODA must be recorded on national budgets to allow appropriate oversight by MPs. This applies to all aid funds and modalities: global and sector budget support as well as projects.
- **Relevant parliamentary committees must be created and strengthened so as to enable South-South and triangular peer exchanges, transparent information and mutual learning.** Donors' confidence in country financial management systems will increase if they invest in parliamentary oversight capacity.

### *Civil Society Organisations*

The Accra Agenda for Action requires to enrich and extend the Paris Declaration principles and to create enabling conditions for CSOs. This calls for an understanding of the roles of CSOs as development actors “in their own right” (Advisory Group on CSOs and Aid Effectiveness, 2008; Lavergne & Wood 2009; Open Forum, 2010c). However, evidence presented by the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment indicates that donors and governments have made little progress and in some instances reduced enabling conditions (Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 2011c).

Since the Paris declaration, democratic and legal space for CSOs has narrowed, and in particular in the fields of monitoring of government development policies and practices, advocacy, influence and the promotion of human rights (Open Forum, 2010a; ACT Alliance, 2011; Tiwana & Belay, 2010; Meja, 2011; Gaventa & Barrett, 2010; International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, 2010; ILO, 2008). The degree and forms of these restrictions vary (administrative regulation and restrictive legislation, threats, intimidation, criminalisation and repression, use of counter-terrorism discourse and measures) despite government promises to ensure an enabling environment for CSOs made in AAA (paragraph 20).

Policy dialogue for inclusive ownership goes beyond the state/society divide, challenging stakeholders such as CSOs to explore different forms of engagement and seize opportunities when space for dialogue with state institutions and other development stakeholders opens up (Interview with Hauck). Parliamentarians in some instances have pro-actively sought civil society voices, which require capacities and resources.

CSOs have identified barriers for inclusive policy dialogue (Interview with Long; Interview with Dereymaeker) as well as enabling conditions (Open Forum, 2010a; Meja, 2011; ACT Alliance, 2011). Barriers include the lack of process institutionalisation, a selection of participants detrimental to grassroots perspectives, lack of respect and understanding between actors, lack of participant preparation and training to strategic compromise-building, lack of timely and relevant information and the marginalisation of actors that challenge government policies (Meja, 2011; Interview with Long; Interview with Sherlock). Case studies suggest that associational or movement-oriented CSOs in developing countries are more influential when they capitalise from citizen participation rather than through formal NGO participation in established governance spaces (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010). Donors should support CSO networks and coalitions, strengthen their capacities, facilitate their coordination and participation in policy dialogue (Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 2011c).

Enabling broad-based participation in policy processes requires formal and informal channels for consultation, enabling conditions and political freedoms derived from human rights (assembly, speech, organisation). It also requires stakeholder capacities to seize existing opportunities (Collins, 2010; Interview with Sherlock; Interview with Dereymaeker). Several informants pointed to important civil society and government capacities that may lead to more “constructive engagement” between

stakeholders such as analytical and logistical, advocacy and influence, organisational and communications skills (Interview with Sherlock; Interview with Guizzardi & Theisohn).

On the other hand, progress to create an enabling environment for CSOs has been uneven across and within donor agencies (Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 2011a; Interview with Lindstrom; Interview with Long; Interview with Dereymaeker). In many donor countries, incentives to scale-up investments, reduce transaction costs and produce short term results have led to restrictive funding modalities that may affect CSOs' capacities to be effective development actors (Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 2011c). The Open Forum consultations in both donor and developing countries identified a wide range of concerns about current donor practices such as: the lack of clarity concerning CSO programming, short-term support, high transaction costs, directive and complex funding modalities (Open Forum, 2010a).

Donors are sometimes inconsistent and overly rigid in their requirements for funding proposals, monitoring and reporting, thus creating an administrative burden on CSOs (Task Team, 2011b). The Donor Group on CSO Development Effectiveness has showed that greater harmonisation in donor conditions and increased alignment on CSOs' systems may reduce transaction costs for all stakeholders (Karlstedt, 2010).

Donor support primarily benefits Northern-based international CSOs. Some focus on the narrow concept of "value-for-money" at the expense of CSO partnerships, whose value-added is highlighted by research (Giffen & Judge, 2010: 11) and the Task Team on CSO Development (Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, 2011c). Some, including Southern CSOs, have challenged international CSOs, current modalities of CSO partnerships and their impact on domestic civil society in developing countries (Open Forum, 2010a). In agreeing to the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness (Open Forum, 2010b), CSOs involved in the Open Forum - both from partner and donor countries - have committed to examine their own practices against these principles. To do so, they will use the guidelines and proposals underlined by the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness (Open Forum 2010a, 2010b, 2010c).

In its "Key Messages" (2011c), the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness hence makes important proposals to the Fourth High Level Forum:

- **To recognise CSOs as independent development actors** in their own right and acknowledge the importance of multi-stakeholder policy dialogue.
- **To provide, promote and monitor enabling environment for CSOs** that maximise their contributions to development in both law and practice. In doing so, they could draw on existing international and regional instruments for the respect and guarantee of fundamental rights such as those provided by UN conventions, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and others.
- **To implement donor support models conducive to the promotion of CSOs** as effective and independent development actors.
- **To encourage CSOs' efforts** to enhance their own effectiveness and accountability.
- **To establish shared responsibility** for accountability, transparency, the results of individual CSOs and their collective impacts.

### *Independent research*

Independent policy analysis is essential for effective policy dialogue. But key questions remain about who defines what information is relevant and valuable, who gets access to it and is able to use it (Interview with Keijzer).

Several factors affecting the effective use of independent research in policy making processes should be taken into account when CSOs and other development stakeholders engage in policy processes:

- **Policy-making processes must be transparent and open** for policy research to have greater impact.
- **Policy research must inform policy contexts** and be framed in operational terms.
- **Research should be inclusive** and link broader constituencies to the policy process.
- **Support to research must protect and preserve the independence and legitimacy of research organisations** (Keijzer *et al.*, 2011; Interview with Sherlock).

More evidence and case-studies on inclusion in policy-making processes should be conducted. The practices that contribute to success or reinforce barriers for effective democratic inclusion need to be identified in both donor and partner countries. Sensitive questions about the role of donors in promoting or hampering inclusive domestic policy processes must be addressed and documented.

### *Local (sub-national) government<sup>5</sup>*

Democratically elected local governments are key actors in the promotion of inclusive ownership, domestic accountability structures, enhanced citizen participation and democratisation. They bring the state closer to its citizens and are the backbone for every territorial approach to development. They are in charge of equitable delivery of essential services - including social services around health, welfare and housing – and are able to replicate successes for the benefit of communities.

There has been limited analysis of the impact of the Paris Declaration on the relationship between national and local governments. The ECDPM (2010) has investigated the impact of the increased share of sector and global budget support mechanisms and shows that these new delivery mechanisms have reinforced the responsibility of central governments in the planning and implementation of sector policies and programs and have marginalised local governments. Paradoxically, decentralisation policies and new aid modalities (sector and program-based approaches) have sometimes concentrated decision-making authority and control in the hands of national, central administration. Local governments are relegated to an executing arm of line ministries while they should be credible public institutions.

Of equal concern is the lack of involvement of local government representatives or other non-state actors in helping to inform and shape the planning and design of development policies and programs such as national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

Although local governments are part of the State apparatus, some international organisations tend to

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<sup>5</sup>The term “local government” is used in conformity with AAA and PD terminology. However, “sub-national government” is more accurate as it reflects the notion of multi-level governance (regional – provincial – municipal).

treat local governments as part of civil society. This is a denial of their legitimacy and responsibility as democratic institutions made of elected officials with deep roots into the social, political and economic fabric of communities. Local governments are close to populations, aware of the realities and challenges facing society and accountable to citizens and higher levels of government.

Clearly, the conditions required for local governance to flourish do not exist in all countries. The absence of an effective local government structure impedes poverty reduction and the achievement of development priorities; it also fuels mistrust by citizens, civil society and the private sector.

To build inclusive ownership of development strategies at the *local* level and new cooperation policies based on participation:

- **Local governments and civil society ought to work together** to raise awareness and comfort their recognition and credibility as development actors.
- **Local governments should be involved more directly and systematically in all stages of the development process**, from the design and implementation of policies and programs to their monitoring and evaluation. They should ensure the social mobilisation of the poor, the marginalised and the discriminated in a process that informs and articulates development priorities and strategies at local and national levels.
- **Partner Country Executives and development partners should support decentralisation** through programmatic and operational frameworks that promote good governance, facilitate territorial processes, participatory decision-making and the alignment of international cooperation to local needs identified. A territorial approach can improve the implementation of the PD/AAA principles at the local level and reinforce sustainable human development processes.
- **Embedding decentralised cooperation into the broader aid architecture is critical.** It allows an interaction between territories through long-term horizontal partnerships and the systematic exchange of best practices, technological, technical, organisational and managerial innovations, including decentralised South-South and triangular cooperation.

### **Political parties**

Political parties aggregate the voices of citizens who, when they are members of a party and/or when they participate in the party manifesto, have an avenue for direct influence on development policy. Political parties identify candidates for elections to parliaments, local/regional councils and members of the executive. All these elements feed into a political culture favourable to ownership, effective leadership and accountability, which in turn are reflected in the performance of parliaments and governments. Political parties present policy options and alternatives to the citizens; they offer a vision and political contract for a specific purpose and a specific period of time. Political accountability is performed through election, re-election or eviction of political representatives.

However, in many countries, political parties are not playing their part. Their representation and accountability roles in-between elections are limited, while they focus on selecting candidates in the competition for power. In such cases, political parties are not well perceived by their populations. Political parties have been identified as “the weakest link” (Carothers, 2006) in political and democratic processes.

There is a growing appreciation among donors of the importance of political parties and political party assistance (Wilton Park Conference, March 2010; OECD – DAC GovNet Seminar, December 2010). Donors have been looking at ways to address the weaknesses of political parties. IDEA International, the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development and researchers launched an initiative to promote the concept of “Effective and Quality Political Party Assistance”. The “Effective and Quality Party Assistance” initiative has been launched and a first draft of political party assistance principles presented and discussed during the OECD – DAC GovNet meeting in Paris in December 2010 to overcome these weaknesses. Principles and goals in this field can be highlighted:

- **Political parties need to be strengthened** and be able to fully play their part in democratic governance.
- **Donors could bring support and technical assistance to political institutions** (intra institutional support) **and seeks to improve their relations with other stakeholders** (inter institutional).
- **The purpose, standards, principles and activities of support to political parties must be clearly established and transparent** (Caton, 2007) because it has a political dimension and can be controversial (Busia, 2010).
- **Adopt a holistic approach to assistance to political institutions** based on consultation and coordination between actors. Actions must associate the executives, who have felt that past initiatives were donor-driven.

### *The Media*

In the aid effectiveness agenda, the importance of a free press and professional, independent media is rarely mentioned (BBC World Service Trust, 2009). The Accra Agenda for Action makes only one reference to the media<sup>6</sup>.

However, as part of a broader public sphere, the free press contributes to good governance. It represents the space between government and citizens, where citizens come together (even virtually), share information and debate on public issues. It serves as a watchdog for the public interest and holds state and non-state actors to account. It creates the conditions for inclusive policy dialogue and provides a platform for broad-based participation in policy processes. Furthermore, political leaders are more responsive to citizen needs when citizens have access to information. When the media is independent and professional, elected officials are encouraged to act in the interest of their constituents and attend committee hearings more often (Snyder & Strömberg, 2010). Finally, evidence from both developed and less developed countries shows that when the quality and freedom of the press is high, citizens are better informed, more civically engaged and likely to vote (de Vreese & Hajo Boomgaarden, 2006; Aker, Collier & Vicente, 2010; Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996).

GOVNET (2011d) has committed to support the media, alongside with parliaments and political parties, as part of its broader promotion of domestic accountability, which has so far focused on budget monitoring, access to information and aid transparency. In doing so, they should be aware that:

- **An effective media calls for editorial independence, financial sustainability, professional capacity and a lively civil society.**
- **Donor interventions can consist of legal support** (in favour of a legislation that safeguards the

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<sup>6</sup> The word media was added in the text very late in the process, only a few weeks before the High Forum in Accra, following advocacy work by the BBC World Service Trust.

freedom of the media) or **material assistance** (through the provision of laptops and transmitters to small radio stations, for example).

- **Donor support is most effective when it is oriented towards the long-term goals of financial sustainability, inclusive and holistic**, i.e. when the media is integrated in a larger system of domestic accountability.

#### 4. Issues to be discussed in Busan

- **Inclusive ownership through democratic governance**

At this stage, the Working Party and its constituent stakeholders should not take ownership as a point of departure or condition but rather support multi-stakeholder processes of dialogue at the country and global level. A lot could be learnt about essential conditions and best practices in the fields of institution-building and democratic governance. In doing so, the following questions should be tackled: How can country ownership of development emerge and be effectively facilitated? What are the elements of good practice on a) multi-stakeholder processes of dialogue at the country and global level for improved knowledge and understanding and b) concrete interventions that enable all stakeholders to strengthen national and local institutions and processes for democratic governance?

- **Institutional conditions for government leadership**

What are the institutional conditions necessary to enhance government leadership and how can actors learn about it? Institutional conditions for structuring developing country government leadership in development vary considerably, but key enabling factors include: a coordinated public service guided by specific policy objectives defined in national development plans, sound allocation of national revenue and the alignment of aid on these priorities; well-coordinated aid management systems and effective arenas of policy dialogue with donors; decentralisation of resources to local governments for local development territories and guided by the principle of equity; real parliamentary oversight of systems such as budget processes, and participation of other actors such as CSOs, the media, political parties, audit institutions, etc.

- **Incentives for effective capacity development**

How can donors better address internal incentives to give priority to capacity development and mobilise appropriate resources and approaches? How can they give priority to the implementation of evidence-based approaches and reduce some of their institutional barriers (the pressure to show quick results, rigid disbursement schedules, etc.)? How can country stakeholders best determine their capacity development needs and mobilise their own resources to improve their capacities and leadership in critical areas?

- **Inclusive accountability**

Accountability is not just about tracing “what has gone wrong or off-track” ex post but needs to be rooted in systems, processes and relationships involving all development stakeholders, including local government and marginalised communities. How can accountability systems involve citizens, local governments and excluded communities in development decisions that affect their lives? What do we know about good practices in bringing parliaments, political parties, audit institutions, local government and civil society into aid decision-making at important early stages of policy design? How can peer processes involve counterparts in both the North and the South (or South/South)? How can multi-



stakeholder dialogue support capacities for accountability and produce benefits and mutual effects for both donor and partner countries?

- **Drawing lessons and good practice from experience**

What lessons and good practice can be drawn from the rich experience of social dialogue at both global and country levels, i.e. mediation by trade unions and feedback from employers of the private sector? What are the appropriate mechanisms to institutionalise broad-based policy dialogue and negotiation? How can the respect of affected populations' rights and government leadership be reconciled? How can such policy dialogue be structured so as to bring the interests and contributions of various stakeholders to the table and increase development outcomes?

- **CSOs and the enabling environment**

Significant gains were made in Accra through the recognition of CSOs as important and independent development actors. It was also recognised that CSO effectiveness is a shared responsibility amongst CSOs, donors and developing country governments. However, research shows that there is uneven progress in the fulfilment of these commitments. In this context, how can partner governments, CSOs and donors work together to maximise CSOs' contributions to development? How can partners provide information about the diversity of principles and conditions of the "effectiveness" of different development actors? There is a need to better understand the principles and conditions of aid effectiveness and their variations across different development actors.

- **The local level and multilevel governance**

The strategic role of local governments, decentralisation policies and multilevel governance in human development processes has been recognised. Programmatic and operational frameworks can facilitate a territorial approach to development. How can sub-national levels reinforce sustainable human development? How can the different levels of governance be articulated to facilitate complementarity between local, regional, national and international actors?

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## Annex: List of interviews

1. Samantha Attridge, Commonwealth Secretariat
2. Jeff Balch, Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA)
3. Laura Collins, University of Cambridge
4. Jan Dereymaeker, International Trade Union Confederation
5. Rosalind Eyben, University of Sussex
6. Silvia Guizzardi, Capacity Development Unit, Development Cooperation Directorate
7. Volker Hauck, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
8. Camilla Lindstrom, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
9. Carolyn Long, Interaction
10. Paul Sherlock, Irish Aid
11. Thomas Theisohn, Coordinator, Learning Network on Capacity Development
12. Niels Keijzer, Policy Officer Development Policy and International Relations, ECDPM

