



African youth voices response to HLP report

The HLP report which comes out after 9 months of intense consultations and engagement with various stakeholders has to a greater extent resonates with voices of African youth.

Key Strengths of the HLP Report

- We welcome the stance of building on the existing MDGs. The MDGs have worked well in certain areas and a rich experience been gained in the last 13 years in implementing them. Using this experience for the post 2015 development framework is probably the best option.
- We commend the way it has brought together poverty reduction in all its dimensions and environmental sustainability as interlinked concepts.
- The no one left behind stance to human deprivation is timely and realistic. The world has the resources and knowhow to end poverty and human deprivation by 2030.
- The five transformative shifts should be welcomed as threshold for more fair and balanced development.
- The crosscutting issues to be addressed has to a greater extent covered population groups and underlying issues that need to be addressed by the new development frame work.
- We welcome the cross cutting principle that a target should only be considered achieved if it is met for relevant income and social groups.
- The report puts a spotlight on youth issues and aims to address in all its forms- education and skills development, health and employment and entrepreneurship.
- It resonates well with Africa youth voices specially in the areas of decent job creation, education, peace and stability and democratic governance as bedrock of the development framework.

- The 12 development goals had covered most of issues raised by African youth as priority for 2015 development framework

Key weakness of the HLP Report

The following weakness has been noted:

- A brief narrative contextualizing the challenges is missing in the HLP Report. Yet the TORs of the HLP Report asks that “Recommendations regarding the vision and shape of a Post-2015 development agenda that will help respond to the global challenges of the 21st century, building on the MDGs and with a view to ending poverty”.
- The report supposes the need for five transformative shifts in the global development framework to achieve the Global impact by 2030. However, the transformative shifts do not sufficiently articulate the underlying systemic matters and imbalances that perpetuate poverty and human deprivation and slow progress on MDGs. For instance, the conception of inclusive growth does not pay sufficient attention to challenges of Small holder farmers and micro enterprises as legitimate economic actors and the challenges they face from the big businesses.
- Peace and stability and democratic governance need to be extended to global governance. It does not sufficiently attend to the challenges posed by imbalance of global dominance. The issues of peace and stability and governance at country level are interlinked with global governance.
- On new global partnership, given that similar calls were made 13 years ago and progress made was somewhat slow and unfocused. The call for global partnership needs to be normative and linked to right to development.
- Marginalized groups are not at the centre of economic transformation. Whilst the HLP Report emphasizes the importance of marginalized groups in the new development agenda, its proposals especially on the goal 8 of creating jobs, sustainable livelihoods and equitable growth further marginalizes these groups by placing them further away from economic activity. None of the suggested targets recognizes marginalized groups as economic actors in their own right who should be supported to do more.

Too much emphasis on private sector and markets at the expense of people and communities negates the transformative shift the HLP claims in earlier sections of the report.

In addition, Inclusive growth is seen from the perspective of providing jobs and not necessarily from perspective of broadening players and enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity of ordinary citizens.

- Misalignment between vision and goal. The vision section of the HLP report speaks of ending extreme poverty but the first goal talks of ending poverty. We are more comfortable with ending poverty as this is in line with the HLP ToRs that focused on setting a bold and ambitious vision.
- Lack of standalone goal on inequality, We are concerned by the lack of standalone goal on inequality. Work by African Monitor on the Voice Africa initiative clearly shows that inequality is at the centre of poverty and unemployment.
- While we applaud the HLP for calling for Peace and personal security as a foundation for development, we are concerned that the High Level Panel places heavier responsibility on conflict affected countries, with less attention to the role that international actors play in fuelling and sometimes sustaining conflict. We are also concerned that the Panel has paid little attention to the Principles of Do No Harm that calls for governments to ensure their actions and those of their businesses do not fuel conflict.
- In addition, the Indicators and targets for Peace and stability do not seem to take into account global factors such as corporate natural resource exploitation and actions of global and regional actors in fuelling and sometimes sustaining conflict given that 75% of conflicts can be linked to natural resource exploitation and use.

Conclusion

The Voice Africa's Future initiative calls on the UN Secretary General to build on the strengths on the HLP report and take a due consideration of the responses to the report in drafting his forthcoming Annual report. We expect member states to engage in national deliberation based on the HLP report to further strengthen and validate its content.