

“Strengthening the post 2015 agenda: establishing a global science-policy interface for progress review and implementation”

Summary

The Spanish Alliance Against Poverty which is the largest Spanish coalition of CSOs, is part of a growing human rights advocacy network focused on mobilization against poverty. The Alliance brings together more than 1,000 organizations including Spanish and international NGOs, trade unions, youth organizations, religious groups, and other CSO constituencies.

The Alliance is currently advocating for the creation of an International Panel of Experts to Eradicate Poverty and Reduce Inequality. This side event is jointly organised with the UN Millennium Campaign and The Global Call to Action against Poverty

The main objective is to present the aforementioned proposal and its potential links with the High Level Political Forum and the ongoing debates about the review process for the post 2015 agenda.

The Alliance strategy lies on the next diagnosis:

- Development progress cannot be measured simply on the basis of economic growth and, therefore, the analysis should be opened to new perspectives including other scientific disciplines beyond economics. In addition, more space for analysis and progress review is needed at the global level.
- As the Millennium Development Goal 8 states, we should try to reach a true global association for development. This is an essential point for the new agenda and one which was not fulfilled during the Millennium Development Goals era.
- For this purpose we need to strengthen the United Nations System and, particularly, ECOSOC, as the legitimate space for economic global governance.

These diagnoses are shared by different stakeholders involved in the global development system, as several declarations and political statements show. For instance, the document The Future We

Want¹ highlights the necessity of more coordination and evaluation and to open the views with different approaches and developing countries perspectives.

Furthermore, the High Level Political Forum has in its mandate as a core function:

Shall follow up and review progress in the implementation of all the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, as well as their respective means of implementation, improve cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system on sustainable development programmes and policies.,²

In order to follow up and strengthen the mechanisms that have already been created, the Spanish Alliance Against Poverty proposes the creation of an International Panel of Experts to Eradicate Poverty and Reduce Inequality. This Panel would play a similar role that the IPCC plays in its field, thus becoming the main resource for global assessment and evaluation of the post-2015 agenda.

The key points for the successful creation of this Panel and to give it a significant role in the post 2015 global agenda are:

- The engagement with the ongoing post 2015 agenda process and, specifically, with the High Level Political Forum as a proper space for it.
- To engage in the process different actors that are fundamental for sustainable development. Specially governments, but also the different UN agencies involved in development, think tanks and University Departments that lead the research and knowledge in this field, and civil society and other actors engaged in development issues.
- To think the assessment process as an inclusive one, following the IPCC model that does it through a complex but participative procedure
- To be a permanent mechanism that coordinates scientific reports worldwide, working throughout the year, obtaining data, area by area, country by country. This will allow us to know the root causes of poverty and inequality and new perspectives, as well as to obtain more accurate and relevant solutions to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality.

¹ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=S

² Page 4, AG Res 67/290: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/67/290

After the presentation by the Spanish Alliance Against Poverty, discussants open up the debate about key points:

- The relation between the Panel, the governments and the United Nations institutions. As Professor Thomas Weiss highlighted, a strong link of the Panel with the ongoing process and its institutions (particularly governments and ECOSOC) could be in a way a further limitation to the Panel scope. An independent Panel can work more efficiently.
- On the other hand, Mr. Nikhil Seth, from the United Nations Division of Sustainable Development pointed out that the debates during the High Level Political Forum showed that the future role that this institution will play in the global development system will be a strong one with influence at governmental and global level.
- Another key discussion was about the different ways that the review process could be undertaken and how it may include and engage the different stakeholders present in the agenda, as well as how it may relate to regional and national level analysis. For this, the Alliance stressed that this process should be an inclusive one in both its review and participatory scope.

Finally, the Alliance announced that an International Meeting about the Panel will be celebrated in Madrid on the 16 and 17th of October 2014 as the next step in the consolidation of this proposal.

