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Global Policy Watch

Are FfD3 and Post-2015 striking the right public-private balance?



Getting the right balance between public and private sector roles and responsibilities in the Financing for Development and Post-2015 process will be fundamental to prospects for sustainable, inclusive development. Yet early evidence suggests this balance is already awry, skewed far in favour of private interests. Are we seeing a process of outsourcing the international agenda?

by Barbara Adams, Gretchen Luchsinger

Post-2015: Measuring the (real) scope of ambition



The post-2015 development agenda aspires to global transformation. Its content so far, including the set of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) agreed in last year's Open Working Group, affirms that aim through an unprecedented commitment to inclusion, sustainability and universality. This suggests that the world might finally move beyond current imbalanced patterns of consumption and production that have left wide swathes of human deprivation and pushed the limits of planetary boundaries.

Yet the main question, after the most recent intergovernmental negotiations on the agenda in March in New York, is: will the political process live up to the agenda's promise?

by Barbara Adams, Gretchen Luchsinger

Financing for Development Conference 2015: Views from the Global South

Developing countries—emerging, middle-income, and least developed—will be going to the Third Financing for Development (FfD) Conference in Addis Ababa in July 2015 with a set of demands to reform and rebalance the international financial system in order to facilitate the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

by Manuel Montes, South Centre

Universality as Human Rights in the Financing for Development Agenda

The outcome of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3) will affect the ability of states to fulfill their human rights obligations, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets being set for the post-2015 agenda. Both human rights and the SDGs are similar in that they are universal, and entail individual as well as common responsibilities, taking into account varying national capacities to achieve them.

by Wolfgang Obenland, Global Policy Forum

Has the time come for a legally binding framework to ensure that private sector's activities contribute to (and not undermine) sustainable development?

As the negotiations on the zero draft of the Third Financing for Development Conference (FFD3) progress civil society organizations, Governments and the UN met at the occasion of the roundtable entitled Towards a Private Sector Accountability Protocol for Sustainable Development to discuss the proposal of a Private Sector Accountability Protocol for Sustainable Development. Such a framework would entail, among others, mandatory social and environmental reporting and financial transparency rules to align the private sector's activities with SDG's and human rights obligations.

by Marina Ponti, Social Watch

A 'universal' financing for development agenda?

For the first time, the international development agenda, through the FfD3 and post-2015 processes, is considered universal, applying to every country. Current deliberations, however, reveal different understandings of what universality means.

by Wolfgang Obenland, Global Policy Forum

Responding to Systemic Issues to Achieve Industrialization and Development

In the Roundtable Discussion “Systemic Issues, including Global Economic Governance and External Debt” that took place in the framework of the UN General Assembly Hearings with Civil Society in preparation for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development Marina Durano, member of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, said that we need to respond to volatile flows of finance that become external sources of instability for open economies. Colleagues have already spoken about unpredictable aid flows. We need to take a critical look at investment capital that search for gains from interest rate or currency arbitrage brought on by very loose monetary policies of developed countries. These flows affect the value of developing country currencies as well as prices in their assets markets.

by Marina Durano, Development Alternatives with Women for a new Era (DAWN)

Size matters: Corporations and small business in sustainable development

At the opening of the United Nations hearings with business and civil society, Social Watch coordinator Roberto Bissio defends Sustainable Development Goals as expression of a new paradigm. For the SDGs to bare fruit, the power of the biggest 200 corporations, with combined sales that are bigger than the total economies of 180 countries, needs to be harnessed. The UN should not tarnish its image associating its programs with big tax evaders or endorsing private-public partnerships that are exclusive, untransparent and too frequently associated with corruption. A binding legal instrument for business and human rights, while disliked by business leaders, might introduce a predictable framework that ultimately benefits the small and medium entrepreneurs that create most of the jobs in times of crisis.

by Roberto Bissio, Social Watch

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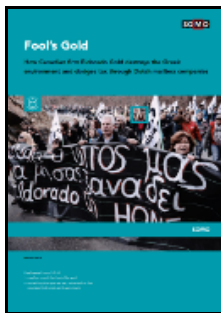
What's new

Lobbying in Europe: hidden influence, privileged access



A new report by Transparency International finds that of 19 European countries assessed, only 7 have some form of dedicated lobbying law or regulation, allowing for nearly unfettered influence of business interests on the daily lives of Europeans. The 19 countries together score just 31 per cent (out of 100 per cent) when measured against international lobbying standards and best practice in the report “Lobbying in Europe: Hidden Influence, Privileged Access”.

Fool's Gold





A new SOMO report reveals that Greece’s economic recovery is being undermined by large-scale tax avoidance – enabled by the Netherlands. At the same time, Greece endures harsh austerity measures imposed by the European Commission, European Central Bank and IMF which are supported by the Netherlands. The report, Fool’s Gold, reveals that Canadian mining company Eldorado Gold uses mailbox companies in the Netherlands to avoid taxes in Greece. This has led to tax losses of at least € 1.7 million for Greece in the past two years. There are also serious environmental and human rights concerns related to the company’s operations.

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