

# Online Consultation on Systematic Country Diagnostic

## Summary of Responses

July 11, 2016

**Consultation Dates: March 15 – April 30, 2016**

**Venue: Online**

**Total Number of Participants: 29**

**Participants List: Annex 1**

Online consultations on the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) were held from March 15 – April 30. During this period, feedback was sought from stakeholders on the SCD process, particularly in countries that have already completed an SCD. The feedback received from stakeholders will provide an important input to improving and streamlining the SCD process. There were 29 respondents from approximately 18 countries.<sup>1</sup> The summaries of responses are presented in the tables at the end of the report.

### Online Survey

Stakeholders were provided with a PowerPoint presentation on the current SCD process to help inform their response to a survey. Respondents were asked 4 questions:

1. In your opinion, are the principles of and issues covered in the SCD (slides 4-7) sufficient to capture countries' progress on sustainable poverty reduction and shared prosperity?
2. Based on what you may have experienced during the development of the SCD in your country, and/or the stated principles and objectives of the SCD, does the current SCD process allow for sufficient engagement with in-country stakeholders?
3. Based on the configuration of an SCD outlined in slide 6, and the principles outlined in slide 7, what should ideally be the areas of focus of the SCD consultation?
4. Is there anything that would make the SCD more useful?

### Brief Synopsis of Feedback

**Question 1:** Stakeholders found that the principles and issues covered by SCDs could be strengthened in a number of areas in order to improve the effectiveness of this analytical instrument in assessing the main factors behind a country's advancement towards the twin goals. Key suggestions in this regard referred to broadening the participation of stakeholders in the analysis on government-level corruption, and giving due weight to externalities related to environmental impacts such as pollution and climate change.

**Question 2:** Stakeholders found that the current SCD process could be strengthened in a number of areas to allow for adequate engagement with in-country stakeholders. It was thereby suggested to reaching out to a broader set of development partners, such as women, youth, marginalized and indigenous people. A greater engagement with the private sector, CSOs and parliamentarians was also seen as important. It was further recommended that the process follow a more flexible model for citizen and partner engagement, adapting it to country specificities.

**Question 3: Respondents highlighted the importance of SCDs taking into account as much as possible country-specific development challenges, and the consultations were seen as a key instrument for achieving this. A relatively broad range of sectors or development challenges on which the SCD should focus were mentioned,**

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<sup>1</sup> Total responses: 30 (English: 23, Spanish: 3, via email: 2, French: 2); 3 respondents did not want their names published. Regions: LAC, SAR, AFR, EAP, ECA, MENA; Countries: Colombia, Venezuela (3), India (2), Rwanda, Brazil, USA (3), Afghanistan (4), Costa Rica, Bangladesh, Laos PDR, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kenya (4), France, Tanzania, Moldova, Argentina, Tunisia (2), Nigeria; Organizations: Government (5), Foundation, Community Group, NGO (10), World Bank, Association (2), Media, Individual (3), Pvt. Sector (5),

**notably the following:** education; literacy rate; science and technology; health; economic activity; transport and communication; financial systems; gender; climate change; persons with disabilities and data and knowledge gaps. It was also suggested that the SCD consultations provided a platform for discussions on how countries are adapting to climate change and how these changes impact life at the household, community, and county/provincial level.

**Question 4:** These responses can be grouped into five categories: (1) **enhanced examination of challenges related to government spending**, related to efficiency and transparency in particular; (2) **improve the outreach of consultations**, notably to capture views from different geographical areas and government levels, and to get members of parliament involved early on in the process; (3) **improved access to and dissemination of consultation results, such as by timely translation in local languages of supporting documents**; and (4) **enhanced involvement of local researchers, and academia**, both in the SCD preparation as such and in the consultations more broadly; and (5) **more rigorous (external) review of analytical results and methodologies as well as follow up to SCD recommendations**, such as by subjecting SCD drafts to external comment.

### Overall Summary of Feedback from Stakeholders

1. In your opinion, are the principles of and issues covered in the SCD (slides 4-7) sufficient to capture countries' progress on sustainable poverty reduction and shared prosperity?

- **Participatory processes**
  - Calls for improved participatory processes, including more inclusion of people with disabilities and members of parliament.
  - Better grassroots level engagement at the diagnostic stage.
- **Governance**
  - Appropriate attention given to government efficiency and transparency in conducting business.
  - Potential to reduce poverty undermined by government waste, corruption, and bad financial systems.
  - Diagnostic should take into account the origins of misconduct.
- **Sustainability**
  - More weight given to externalities related to environmental impacts (pollution, climate change).
  - Enhanced consideration of regional, global, and national conditions and trends (e.g. for forests, fresh water, wetlands, coastal or biodiversity health, or climate resilience).
- **Research and methodology**
  - Issues cover broad spectrum of important issues, but challenging for researchers to find credible data.
  - Challenging to find independent researchers to lead on these efforts, especially when credibility of international organizations is in question.
  - Implementation methodologies should be elaborated properly to make it applicable in various context and cultures.
- **Other Comments**
  - Need for awareness raising on poverty and improved collaboration between policy makers and implementers.
  - Institute a more credible and contestable review process that apply standards and quality control.

- Take into account that poverty alleviation and better distribution of wealth will be achieved differently in each region of each country.

2. Based on what you may have experienced during the development of the SCD in your Country, and/or the stated principles and objectives of the SCD, does the current SCD process allow for sufficient engagement with in-Country stakeholders?

- **Participatory processes**
  - Requests for more information on how to actively participate.
  - Greater engagement with private enterprises.
  - Mainstreaming the involvement of NGOs communities in the consultation process, especially people with disabilities.
  - Need to engage stakeholders at broader level.
  - Increased participation from other development partners, such as women, youth, marginalized and indigenous people.
  - Ensure Members of Parliament are part of the process earlier and throughout the development stage.
  - A more participatory approach that takes into consideration the aspects from both a private and public sector angle.
  - Communication with in-country stakeholders is very limited, particularly engagement related to indigenous people.
  - Elicit feedback and inputs on the diagnostic through consultations, including with civil society and private sector organizations.
  - Follow a flexible model for citizen and partner engagement.
- **Harmonization**
  - Reduce and align number of programs being implemented in countries.
  - As most stakeholders are already engaged in the current SCD process, a more vigorous collaboration with the private sector, CSOs, parliamentarians during the consultation process would be beneficial.
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- **Better Analysis**
  - More in-depth analysis of project objectives and costs.

3. Based on the configuration of an SCD outlined in slide 6, and the principles outlined in slide 7, what should ideally be the areas of focus of the SCD consultation?

- **Sectors**
  - Education/literacy rate; science and technology; health; economic activity; transport and communication
  - Financial systems
  - Security, education and entrepreneurship
- **Country Context**
  - Getting to know your client to better understand each country's needs and realities, taking into account country and political context.
  - Critical factors driving or constraining country's economic growth.
  - Following a flexible model for citizen and partner engagement.
  - How the relation between government and citizens is structured.

- A country-specific consultation strategy needs to be adapted to an individual country situation.
- Use of country specific solutions in achieving set objectives
- **Data Gaps**
  - Identifying data and knowledge gaps.
  - Candid approach to identifying underlying assumptions and limitations of the evidence.
- **Processes**
  - Governments would benefit from working with a 'standardized toolkit' for managing certain governmental approval processes. In particular, help with internet-related portals and transparency matters would be welcome.
- **Climate Change**
  - Effects of pollution, climate change, loss of ecosystem.
  - How countries are adapting to climate change and how changes impact life at the household, community, and county/provincial level.
  - How sustainable (environmentally, socially and fiscally) is the current pattern of growth, distribution and poverty reduction
- **Diversity and Inclusion**
  - Include more persons with disabilities at countries level representation.
  - Stronger focus on gender.
- **Institutional Reforms**
  - Encouraging countries to initiate institutional reforms.

#### 4. Is there anything that would make the SCD more useful?

- **Government Spending/Monitoring**
  - Improved financial systems and better tracking of flow of money.
  - Better monitoring and analysis of government spending.
  - Identifying breakdown of government's fiscal income, such as taxes paid directly by citizens, income taxes, property taxes.
- **Audience reach and participation**
  - Define the stakeholders and make a plan for active participation and involvement.
  - Public opinion polls regarding SCD implementation.
  - Go beyond current outreach to make sure to include the grassroots level people.
  - Greater consultation with legislators and Members of Parliament on SCD process.
  - Wider consultations with non-profit organizations with experience in these areas.
  - Establishing a direct connection to regional, municipal and local leaders from each district.
  - Participation of national experts during strategic frameworks phases.
  - Assure civil society consultation.
- **Dissemination and access of results**
  - Better access to the information accrued for more effective feedback.
  - Publication of the SCD principles in the national languages and consultation with universities and research centers and individual experts.

- **Accountability and follow-up actions**

- Better transparency between sectors in charge of public policy during SCD discussions.
- Subject individual SCDs to external comment.
- Independent and rigorous review and oversight - including external reviewers.
- Impact analysis to see which short and long term goals can be achieved.

- **Other issues**

- Better ways to support business/corporate world.
- Include natural capital accounting, including carbon pricing at its full social cost.
- Be sharper in focus and introduce ROI and efficacy measurement in SCDs.
- Include security issues in the slides to analyze extremist group activities and their impact on the economy.
- Comparative analysis to highlight any synergies, conflicts and tradeoffs.

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