



What kind of a post-2015 development framework will bring about the real change we need?

Side Event, co-organised by CIDSE, Social Watch and the Global Policy Forum, New York, 23 September 2013

How can the post-2015 framework bring about the real change to find a way out of the current systemic crises, was the vital question representatives from civil society and governments discussed on September 23 at the CIDSE panel debate. Co-sponsored by the Global Policy Forum (GPF) and Social Watch, the side event in the UN Church Center called for a re-thinking of development and showed that the new agenda can lead to a real paradigm shift.



The debate was opened by CIDSE Secretary General **Bernd Nilles** who framed the context for the discussion by clarifying what CIDSE and its member organisations mean by a paradigm shift. He explained that the shift calls for a new value system where human dignity and rights to access basic goods are prioritised over the current objective of wealth accumulation.



Following a brief introduction by panel moderator and Trócaire Head of Advocacy **Lorna Gold**, **Roberto Bissio** from co-sponsor Social Watch kicked-off the panel discussion. He stressed that the economic growth of the emerging countries comes together with an alarming increase in inequality which can be observed in almost all countries. This effect becomes even more obvious when taking the purchasing power parity (PPP) with a base year of the 1970s into account. Moreover, he criticised that poverty and countries' welfare cannot be just measured by income, but has to consider also the human, social and other financial aspects of poverty.

Against this background, the erstwhile Minister for Development of the Government of Finland, **Heidi Hautala**, called for considering alternatives, such as the Gross National Happiness (GNH) in Bhutan, to measure welfare and countries' performance. She argued that voluntary regulation of transnational companies (TNC), such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), is not sufficient and that binding and concrete accountability and transparency frameworks need to be implemented.





Ignacio Saiz, Executive Director of the Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), advocated a strong rights-based approach and proposed that human rights can be the Trojan horse in the post-2015 development agenda. He likewise emphasised that according to the definition of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, poverty refers not just to the chronic deprivation of resources but also of capabilities, choices, security

and the power necessary for enjoying all human rights.

Addressing developed countries' responsibility, **Mariama Williams**, Senior Research Fellow at the South Centre pointed out that agricultural subsidies and other industry subsidies lead to oversupply and a waste of resources in Northern countries. She therefore called developed countries to reduce their subsidies so that developing countries have a fair chance to take part in the international trade system.



Wael Hmiden, Director of CANInternational, explained that the factor “time” is often neglected in the discussion of development and that accordingly today’s industrial countries can fall behind in their development if they further pursue the path of non-sustainable growth. He also raised the concern that few simple goals might be desirable at a first glance, but that a too simple approach might fail to embrace the complexity of sustainable development.

In the following open discussion, the panel agreed that economic growth should not be the sole basis for the new post-2015 development agenda and that sustainable consumption always has to consider national circumstances. Regarding the means of implementation, the new framework needs to be financed in a truly integrated way which will address all three pillars of sustainable development in a balanced manner.



The debate was closed by **Justin Kilcullen**, Director of Trócaire. Summarizing the key points of the discussion, he stressed the important role civil society plays to ensure that the post-2015 framework will initiate a real change in economic practice.