

## LDCs: Post-2015 agenda should address specific challenges faced by the world's most vulnerable countries

On 16 April, a conference on “Vulnerable developing countries in the post-2015 agenda” was jointly organized by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States ([OHRLLS](#)) and the Foundation for International Development Study and Research ([FERDI](#)) in collaboration with the Government of Burkina Faso, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) and [LDC IV Monitor](#).

The meeting brought together experts and delegates to identify some of the most pertinent challenges faced by the world's most vulnerable countries and to discuss ways in which the international community is addressing them. Opening the conference, Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) noted that although some progress had been achieved in poverty reduction, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are still facing serious challenges in their development effort and have made the least progress towards achieving the MDGs. It is of utmost importance to provide strengthened support to these vulnerable countries, Mr. Acharya stressed, while calling for a strong global partnership; adequate means of implementation for vulnerable countries; and a strong sense of national ownership and policy space in the post-2015 development agenda.

Professor Patrick Guillaumont, President of FERDI, pointed out that universality should not lead to neglecting the high heterogeneity of countries, such as the specific challenges of the most vulnerable nations. Referring to data from the Physical Vulnerability to Climate Change Index ([PVCCI](#)), he explained that LDCs are significantly more impacted by a range of climate shocks such as sea level rise or long-term changes in temperature and rainfall than other developing countries. Professor Guillaumont also stressed that, beyond PVCCI categories, a principle of equity was at stake, the implementation of which can be monitored through relevant vulnerability criteria. The next framework should thus take the vulnerability of countries into account for the allocation of support.



© UN Photo/Logan Abassi

Nathalie Broadhurst, Head of Development Policies Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, emphasized the importance of including commitments to LDCs in the post-2015 agenda, which should tackle the linkages between social development, poverty eradication and environmental challenges. Ms. Broadhurst also added that professional mobility, intellectual property rights, South-South cooperation and an effective global partnership for development are also critical.

With the post-2015 consultations ongoing, a complete assessment of how the next agenda will address the role of LDCs is not yet clear. Ricardo Dunn, Advocacy and Outreach Officer at OHRLLS, argued that the agenda's preliminary consultations do hold promise for LDCs.

In addition, various panelists and several delegations, including the ambassadors from Benin and Tanzania, as well as representatives from the [UN Capital Development Fund](#), criticized the distribution system for official development aid (ODA). The World Bank, for instance, [distributes a significant amount of development aid](#) every year through its [system of grouping countries](#) based on gross national income (GNI). Currently, LDCs are classified as “low-income” along with a list of other developing countries. This system, panelists argued, still focuses exclusively on economic factors and ignores countries’ severe structural insecurities. The post-2015 development agenda, they argued, should be part of a broader attempt to reform the distribution of ODA along more holistic and multidimensional lines.

For more information, see also:

- [Prof. Guillaumont’s presentation](#);
- [A complete report of the event](#);
- [UN audio library podcast](#); and
- [The Least Developed Countries and the Post-2015 Development Agenda webpage](#).



© UN Photo/Martine Perret

“Goals of sustainable development cannot be designed and pursued without considering the corresponding vulnerabilities (vulnerability is a risk on sustainability).”

– Professor Patrick Guillaumont,  
President of FERDI

## Box 10: Regional consultations in Africa

The [Outcome Document of the Regional Consultations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda in Africa](#), which outlines views from various stakeholders from a total of 53 African countries, including representatives from governments, regional economic communities, civil society organizations, parliamentarians, academic institutions and the private sector, calls on the future post-2015 framework to consider the initial conditions of nation States and recognize the efforts countries have made towards achieving the goals as opposed to exclusively measuring how far they fall short of global targets.

According to the African constituency, the post-2015 development agenda should emphasize inclusive economic growth and structural transformation and re-orient the development paradigm away from externally-driven initiatives toward domestically-inspired and funded initiatives that are grounded in national ownership.

A post-2015 agenda should also prioritize equity and social inclusion; measure progress in terms of both the availability and quality of service delivery; and pay greater attention to vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, and displaced persons. The core focus should be on development enablers as well as development outcomes.

Finally, the outcome document insists that the next framework incorporates the Rio+20 outcomes, as well as the outcomes of other UN and Africa-wide initiatives, including national and regional consultations and the outcomes of the ICPD+20 review.

