



Communiqué

Meeting of the Ground-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Fayoum, Egypt

We, members of the Ground-Level Panel in Egypt commissioned by the Center for Development Services (CDS) to deliberate over the UN High Level Panel's recommendations for a post-Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agenda for development and to make our own recommendations based on our 'ground level' experience, met in Fayoum, Egypt from 17 to 20 June 2013. We discussed our individual and shared experiences of poverty and marginalization and reflected our own recommendations.

As the importance of voices of the poorest and most marginalized communities is highly valued in the global policy-making processes; the Panel comprised a diverse group made up of 12 men and women living with poverty and marginalization, including urban slum dwellers, disabled people, marginalized youth, women's rights activists and people living in rural poverty. A balanced representation across the age spectrum, and between women and men was fulfilled in order to ensure a high level of diversity.

- What did the participants agree and disagree with?

Regarding the Post-2015 goals, we agree with the 12 goals but we differ with the indicators. It is important to have some flexibility; not all the indicators should be fixed by the High-Level Panel. People who experience poverty and marginalization are the most able to express their needs and to say when and how they can be fulfilled.

We would like to integrate some qualitative indicators to the quantitative indicators set by the UN High-Level Panel, but according to us the most important indicators are qualitative as they

reflect and assess our needs and how they can be achieved. From our vision, extreme poverty will come to an end when:

- “Marginalized people participate in economic, political and social life”
- “no more beggars on the streets”
- “The engagement of the poorest in decision-making process”
- “The poor can fulfill their needs”
- “ School students stop saying that they are not going to pursue their education because they don’t have enough money”
- “No more wide gaps between the poor and rich”

Our aim is to bring the number of people living on less than \$ 2 a day to zero. The \$ 1.25 fixed by the UN High-Level Panel is very low in proportion to the inflation rate. Therefore, we considered that those Eminent Persons are not the best candidates to assess our needs.

- What is missing?

We, Ground-Level Panel, elaborated our own Vision which was not really different from the one of the UN; we discussed the importance of having a high caliber of leaders¹ who can effectively implement our Vision on the ground (meaning on local community level); to ensure the presence of these requires good Governance. When Good Governance is achieved; good policies will be set and the right calibers will be working in the right place (good employment).

The UN High-Level Panel did not give attention to the importance of “Self-Sufficiency” ,being self sufficient in terms of basic resources such as water, food and others, as a country or community, to the extent it requires. We consider that “Self-Sufficiency²” is one of the main

¹ The GLP discussed that it is not enough to have a vision, goals for developing the country. It is also important to have qualified people who can work on the achievement of such vision and goals. In order to have the right person in the right place, to stress on the importance of good governance (Calibers need to be honest, transparent, ethical, not corrupt, qualified and dedicated). This will ensure that the appointment of officials and public servants are based on clear criteria and qualifications and merit of the person holding the position, away from any corrupt practices.

² The GLP discussed there are two levels of self-sufficiency: 1) The country level: the country should be able to own the resources needed for development. Without depending on other countries to provide such critical resources. Other countries may have different visions and seek their interest as a priority. Self-sufficiency means to secure enough local production of food and other basic items such as water, and fuel that are critical. Example of a critical item for country’s self-sufficiency is wheat as it is important for all Egyptians. It is used in bread which is a very important part of the diet of the Egyptians. 2) community level: especially for rural communities: it is important to own their own means of agriculture, fishing, etc. This will save them the fear of control of the provider of these means, such as private sector or even the state (especially when corruption exists)

issues to concentrate on at the national as well as at the international level because it is a direct factor contributing to the protection of Human Dignity. Every person will have Self-Sufficiency when “he doesn’t look or wish to have what other people have”.

After discussing the 5 Big Transformative Shifts and reviewing some of the Egyptian policies and laws that are supposed to protect poor and marginalized people we were surprised that these policies and laws promote Capitalists and business owners. But, at the same time we were very satisfied and proud that a lot among us were really aware of the current situation and have many insights on improving the situation of marginalized people despite all challenges faced. From our individual and shared experiences, we were able to define different categories of marginalized people in Egypt, among which were; Street Children, Low-income families, Refugees, People with disabilities, Orphans, Fishermen, Women, Farmers and Elderly People.

Recommendations:

- When international peace and security are maintained, we will have internal peace.
 - Integrate some qualitative indicators, to the quantitative indicators
 - Encourage policies and laws that protect poor and marginalized people and hinder policies that promote Capitalists and business owners.
 - Give attention to “Self-Sufficiency” to the extent it requires.
 - Pay more attention to Calibers who can effectively implement our Vision on the ground; this requires Good Governance.
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