UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY
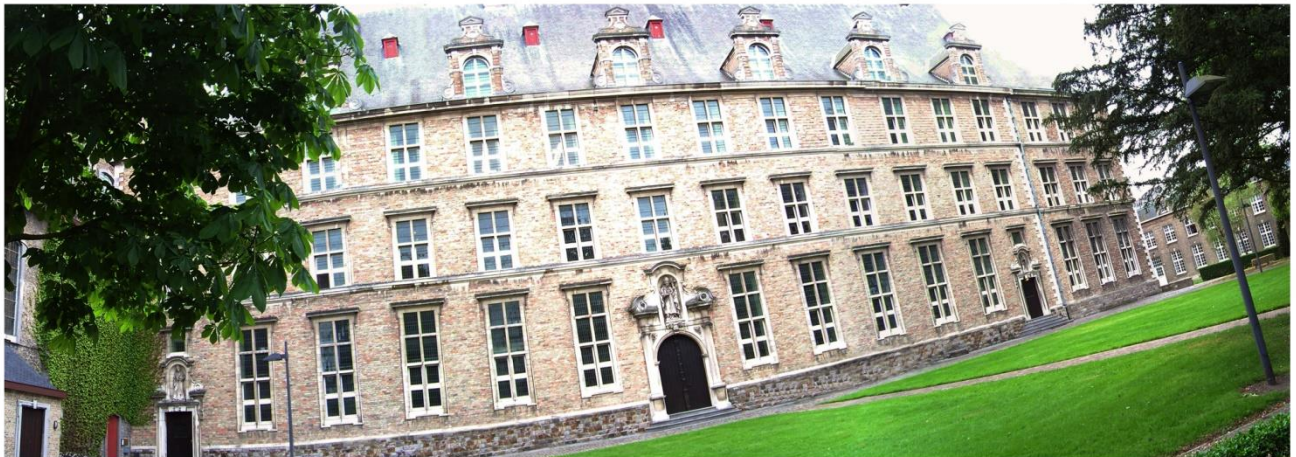
UNU-CRIS

Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies

UNU-CRIS Working Papers

W-2014/12

The Post-2015 UN Development Framework:
Perspectives for Regional Involvement

Author:

Emanuela Maria Cavaleri

www.cris.unu.edu

UNU-CRIS Working Papers

The author

Emanuela Maria Cavaleri is currently completing a Master's Degree in Cooperation between the European Union and Developing Countries at the University of Strasbourg, France. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations and Politics from the University of Catania (Italy), which she obtained with honours with a thesis on 'Experiences of civil economy in Sub-Saharan Africa – the Economy of Communion project'.

Subsequent to her thesis work, she started a journalistic collaboration with an Italian magazine dealing with civil economy. In order to gain deeper understanding of the functioning of civil economy-oriented businesses, she recently worked as an intern at Bangko Kabayan, Inc., a rural bank based in the Philippines. This experience also enabled her to further her knowledge of the mechanisms of microfinance.

Emanuela is also working on a research project for the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe on the promotion of social cohesion and intercultural dialogue through education in the European area. Her research interests revolve around development, civil and social economy, economic sustainability, equity and social cohesion. At UNU-CRIS, she has worked as a Research Trainee and contributed to a reflection on a possible regional dimension to the post-2015 UN development framework under the supervision of Dr. Philippe De Lombaerde.

Contact: e.cavaleri (@) yahoo.it

Introduction

The Millennium Assembly of the United Nations, held in September 2000, adopted the Millennium Declaration, which emphasised the need for global engagement towards developing countries. The general goals of that Declaration were later summarised within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The simplicity of these goals has made it possible for them to attract attention and "galvanise political commitment like never before" (Vandemoortele, 2011). As the time frame set for the MDGs draws to a close, the debate is underway as to the possible framework that should replace these goals, in the light of the current international context.

Indeed, there is need to reflect about what has been learnt from the MDG experience so far. Recent literature has highlighted a substantial reason why the MDGs have not fully served their purpose. The goals were initially intended to expand the development narrative beyond the concept of economic growth. However, this aim was misinterpreted and, whilst there is consensus on regarding poverty as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, the MDGs were interpreted in a way that reduces the quantification of poverty solely to income poverty, a one-dimensional problem that can be addressed through external aid, the promotion of economic growth or ready-made policy solutions. The "USD1 norm", for example, was intended to be one of multiple keys to measure the advancement of the MDGs, and was instead readily accepted as the most important indicator, thus reasserting a donor-centric perspective to development. Therefore, there is still need to shift the focus of the development discourse to a "broader, human-centred perspective of sustainable and equitable well-being". This seems to be the challenge taken up by the UN in shaping the post-2015 development framework.

As UN Member States agree on the need to develop a number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a broader reflection is underway about a possible post-2015 framework, employment building, inclusive economic growth, gender equality, climate change, energy and human rights emerge as core dimensions. Academics like Sumner and Tiwari (2010) point out that, whatever the final outline of the post-2015 framework, "the ownership of both South and North" should be ensured in the deal, so as to make the new agenda a truly universal one. The new post-2015 agenda should be made up of goals that are simple and of agreed indicators that are measurable in a reliable way. It is widely believed that these goals should be considered as global goals (Vandemoortele, 2012; Nayyar, 2012), following the pattern of the MDGs. In fact, the intention behind the formulation of MDGs was not to set standards for individual countries, but to help align national priorities with a global development agenda so as to

foster human well-being (Vandemoortele, 2011). Within this kind of framework, national governments should appropriate the global goals and formulate their objectives with reference to their specificities in time and space, making generalised goals and contextualised priorities complementary rather than alternative solutions (Nayyar, 2012).

To what extent can the regional level contribute to the formulation of contextualised priorities in the post-2015 development agenda? The joint report of the UN Regional Commissions on "A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda" (UN, 2013d) shows that there are indeed distinct regional priorities as far as development is concerned. However, enshrining these priorities in a worldwide agreement would go against the global nature of the goals that this agreement sets to define. Vandemoortele (2012) makes a suggestion to keep the sphere of global goals and that of national and regional priorities on two different levels. This would certainly help ensure that policy space is available at the country level in order for governments to define their own route to development, in line with the global agenda (Nayyar, 2012).

The space provided by the need to adapt and "translate" global goals into local priorities can indeed be filled by regional organisations, according to their competences and political will. They are an intermediate level of governance that can help countries formulate national objectives. This role for regional organisations is particularly relevant in the context of the pursuit of sustainable development, as stressed by the UN in the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference (para. 97-103). In fact, for the success of the new framework, it is important that all aspects of sustainable development, although identified in individual SDGs, be considered not as separate entities, but as issues that are profoundly interlinked. This calls for the goals to be operationalised through an integrated approach.

The regional dimension is a particularly adapted level of governance for this endeavour: regional organisations can identify regional development challenges and formulate responses that are adapted to the specific contexts and holistic in nature. In addition, many of the issues at stake (including management of water resources, energy, climate change, the environment, and the fight against illegal transboundary phenomena) transcend national borders, and therefore would be better addressed through intervention at the regional level. This consideration seems to be present in the current work of the Open Working Group on SDGs at the UN, as will be explained later. Involving regional organisations in the implementation of SDGs and the broader post-2015 agenda would thus address two main challenges that the new framework needs to fulfil: on the one hand, the search for more locally-adapted (versus one-size-fits-all) development solutions, and on the other hand, the need to formulate holistic approaches towards sustainable development.

Moving from these reflections, this paper intends to explore the possible role that regional organisations could play in the implementation, monitoring and governance of the post-2015 agenda. After defining what regions will be looked at, the paper formulates some hypotheses, drawing from recent UN documents on the post-2015 debate. A brief feasibility study is then carried out to assess the possibility of regional interventions in the framework of global development goals, by looking at whether or not regional organisations have been capable of and willing to play a role in the implementation of the MDGs so far. Drawing on these results, then, the third part of the paper zooms in on the two concrete cases of the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU), pointing out the potential of and the challenges faced by non-UN regional organisations with regard to their involvement in the governance of the post-2015 agenda.

The UN, the regions and the post-2015 development framework

Regions?

In order to analyse the possible outline of a regional dimension to the post-2015 UN development framework, it is important to start by trying to define the concept of 'region'. In post-war history, supranational regions have become a considerably relevant level of governance. This is a result of the challenges posed by globalisation, which have caused policy- and decision-making to spread over different levels of governance, from local to global. The UN has recognised the emerging regional reality since its origin and links established with the institutionalised regions have multiplied over time. In fact, the issue of linkages and relations between the UN and the regions is still on the global agenda, and is likely to be particularly important to consider in view of possible future reforms of the UN system (Baert et al., 2012).

Although the international community has not, to date, agreed on a globally accepted definition of a 'region', some suggest that it is possible to distinguish two broad dimensions of regionalism in an institutional sense (Graham, 2012): on the one hand, there are those regional entities that operate within the UN system itself, and, on the other hand, the so-called 'Chapter VIII' entities, which are exogenous to the UN system but are foreseen in the UN Charter as part of a collaborative institutional network pursuing the common ends of the international community. The first comprise a number of regional commissions, programmes, funds and specialised agencies. The regional economic commissions are probably the clearest example of regionalism within the UN system. Chapter VIII regional entities are referred to in the UN Charter as "regional arrangements and agencies" that would cooperate with the UN, provided that they and their activities are consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN[1]. Most of them have an observer status at the General Assembly and can as such participate in its work. Some also maintain permanent offices at the UN Headquarters. The UN collaborates with them on a variety of issues, from peace and security to economic and development-related issues. In this paper, when we speak of 'regions', we shall essentially refer to these two *de facto* dimensions of institutional regionalism.

---

[1] Graham (2012) identifies, among the organisations that have collaborated with the UN and participated in the Secretary-General's high level meetings, around fourteen regional or sub-regional bodies that could be seen as 'Chapter VIII organisations'. These organisations include the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, CEMAC and SADC in Africa, the League of Arab States and the GCC in the Arab region, the Council of Europe and the EU in Europe, the CIS, the PIF and ASEAN in the Asia-Pacific region, and the OAS and CARICOM in the Americas.

Involving regions in the post-2015 development framework: a UN perspective

Recent UN documents on the post-2015 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) agenda have identified regions as a key level of governance in ensuring the success of the new framework, and have started tracing the outline of the role regions could play. At least three dimensions seem to be relevant: target-setting; monitoring and reporting; and ensuring governance in the framework of a renewed Global Partnership for Development. The emerging agenda is mostly described as universal in nature yet responsive to the complexities, needs and capacities of countries and regions (UN, 2013b). This has translated into proposals for there to be global goals yet space for target-setting at country level (UN, 2013c), in which regions could probably intervene. A possible role for regions is then identified in the process of assessing and reporting on the progress made on the goals, in the framework of a hypothetic global reporting scheme (UN, 2012a). The UN could provide monitoring at the global level, drawing on information from the national and local level, as well as from "regional dialogues" (UN, 2013c).

In fact, the dimension that emerges as the most pertinent for regions in the post-2015 framework is their being spaces for cooperation and partnership to ensure the implementation of the goals at national level, in the framework of a renewed Global Partnership for Development (intended as a broad framework for cooperation in implementing and monitoring goals, rather than as primarily revolving around aid). Such a partnership should focus, for instance, on capacity-building in all sectors through national, regional and international efforts. In addition, because many of the problems the world faces are transboundary in nature, the regional and global levels should "share responsibility for supporting sustainable development, particularly in those areas where collective decision-making is needed" (UN, 2013a). This position seems to be echoed by the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on SDGs[2]. According to the OWG, the regional level of governance could intervene in policy areas of cross-border interest such as water governance, energy, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, sustainable use of marine resources, as well as fighting international crimes[3]. At the same time, according to the Group, the new global framework should encourage the creation of regional technology transfer facilities and, more generally, capacity-building at the

---

[2] The 30-member OWG is tasked with preparing a proposal on SDGs. The Open Working Group was established on 22nd of January 2013 by decision 67/555 of the General Assembly. The Member States have decided to use an innovative, constituency-based system of representation: this means that most of the seats in the OWG are shared by several countries.

[3] It is stated, for instance, that the new global framework should encourage regional initiatives for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, that it should support the implementation of regional conventions for the protection of marine resources, and that it should strengthen regional energy roadmaps and promote regional infrastructure. Cf. UN, 2014.

regional level, as central features of the Global Partnership for Development. Regional integration is therefore identified as one of the dimensions needed to implement the post-2015 agenda.

The High Level Panel on the post-2015 agenda has suggested that regions participate in the implementation of the agenda through mutual and voluntary accountability peer reviews (UN, 2013c: 22). Reporting and peer-review at the regional level could complement global monitoring, based on the premise that it is "often easier to review policies in-depth with friendly and constructive neighbours than with the whole world" (*ibid.*). In addition, according to the Panel, regional organisations and their member countries, development banks and UN regional commissions could form an improved regional coordinating mechanism which would interact with the global level, discussing and reporting on the sustainable development agenda in advance of global meetings. This could draw on the experience of the many groupings that already come together informally to discuss issues of transnational interest, including sustainable development. According to the Panel, both global cooperation forums, such as the G7+, G-20, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, and regional forums are playing important roles. Even if these groups are informal, they can be of enormous help in "providing political leadership and practical suggestions to sustain the post-2015 agenda and bring to life the spirit of global partnership in their respective forums" (*ibid.*: 24). The Panel's report also mentions regional platforms in Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Europe that are stepping in to cooperate successfully in areas of specific concern to the region and to form unified approaches towards trade, climate adaptation and mitigation, finance, infrastructure and other cross-border issues. The UN Regional Commissions' joint report on the post-2015 agenda strongly asserts that a strengthened regional dimension to policy-setting seems appropriate in the light of the major weaknesses in the mechanisms of global governance, which the recent global food, energy and financial crises have exposed. However, for such regional initiatives to achieve sufficient momentum there needs to be an "adjustment at the level of global governance structures to allow for the pursuit of regional priorities and policies". It is argued that the adoption of a framework that allows for such regional space would mark a substantive shift in the current development paradigm, since it would encourage the emergence of regional and national development strategies, and foster national ownership of these strategies. This would in turn facilitate the overall achievement of global development objectives.

Lessons learned: the Millennium Development Goals and the regions

The recent UN documents analysed up to this point seem to confer certain roles upon regional organisations within the new sustainable development agenda. In order to attempt an assessment of the feasibility of such suggestions, it may be useful to look at whether regional organisations – both within and outside the UN system – have shown capacity and willingness in the past to intervene and play a role in the governance of a global development framework. The example chosen to verify this is, of course, the framework of the Millennium Development Goals. However, by basing this "feasibility study" on the MDGs, I do not imply that the same scenarios will be automatically replicated in the post-2015 era. The fact that regional organisations intervened the way they did in the MDG agenda is not a sufficient reason to believe that they will do the same after 2015. My objective is simply to gauge the capacity and motivation of regional organisations to intervene in ensuring localised governance of global goals, by looking at their behaviour in the past. Did regional organisations incorporate the MDG framework into their discourse? Did they use it to foster relevant development policies in the regional context? Did they take action to ensure its governance? The picture is diverse.

All five UN regional commissions have played a crucial role in providing regional leadership of the UN MDG framework and addressing the challenges facing the achievement of the goals from a regional perspective. Some have played this role more decisively than others: as we will see, this might in part be related to the absence of regional leadership coming from other regional organisations in some contexts. All of the commissions have taken on a reporting role on MDG progress in their respective regions, publishing yearly or periodical reports. Another focal point of some commissions' work is MDG-related statistical capacity-building directed at states and other relevant stakeholders. ESCWA, for instance, has run a project entitled "Toward more gender-responsive Millennium Development Goal monitoring and reporting in the Arab region", whose aim was to explore and give recommendations on mainstreaming gender statistics in the Arab region (UNESCWA, 2008). A similar role is played by ECA, ECE and ECLAC. Statistical capacity building, in fact, is at the heart of ECLAC's MDG policy through the "MDG Statistical Programme". The programme has been focusing on four main areas (Quiroga et al., 2010): strengthening national statistical capacities to monitor MDGs; adapting indicators to regional specificities and proposing complementary ones; studying data gaps and discrepancies between national and international data sources; and working on statistical conciliation efforts on MDGs in the region. In addition, ECLAC ensures that the complete statistical information used for monitoring MDGs in the LAC region is published and available for consultation through its statistics portal CEPALSTAT.

The statistical information covers the official MDG indicators as well as additional indicators inserted by ECLAC to measure progress towards the MDGs from a regional perspective[4]. The same approach in ensuring data availability is followed by ECE with its regional MDG database. ECE also provides policy recommendations for MDG achievement through promoting policy dialogue and exchange of national experiences as well as through evaluations of individual countries on specific issues (e.g. the environment, cf. UNECE, 2006). This is also part of ESCWA and ECA's strategies, although the African commission does not run a formal MDG-oriented regional initiative but provides its policy advice on MDG-related policy areas, such as gender equality[5]. Finally, conscious of the transboundary nature of some MDG-related issues, ECE intervenes through regional policy-making and the promotion of regional cooperation in such areas as the use and protection of transboundary water sources[6].

How do other regional organisations intervene to complete this picture? Let us look at a sample of organisations, representing five regions: Southeast Asia (ASEAN), the Pacific (PIF), Africa (the AU), Europe (the EU) and Latin America (Mercosur). For each of these organisations evidence was found of at least a basic level of regional intervention in the Millennium Development Goals framework (which, in contrast, appears to be lacking in organisations that are omitted from this chapter, like the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and the Central American Integration System). Of course, the stance taken by each organisation largely depends on its mandate and nature, as well as on the specificities that characterise each region. However, it is possible to identify five different levels of involvement through which the organisations' positions can be compared[7]:

a) The issuing of declarations and official statements in which reference to the MDGs is made (discourse level);

---

[4] An example of such regional indicators is the one inserted under goal 1, target 1.A: the proportion of the population living below USD 2 per day (PPP), which broadens the picture to include large pockets of the population living in poverty but above the conventional threshold of USD 1 per day (PPP).

[5] UNECA's African Centre for Gender (ACG) provides technical support to member States to address gender inequality and women's empowerment through tools and evidence for policy formulation and implementation.

[6] Two major policy tools in this area are the 1992 UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the EU Water Initiative, where the UNECE is the lead organization for the section related to countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Cf. UNECE, 2006.

[7] While there is a clear hierarchy between level a and level b, and between the latter and levels c and d, there is no such correlation between these two levels (a strategy can request for the organisation to provide goods/ services at the regional level, or it can demand for the organisation to push for policy adoption at the national level, or both). Finally, level e is an independent level: an organisation can report on MDG progress (or do so together with the UN) regardless of whether or not it has established a comprehensive strategy for the achievement of the goals in the region. Levels b, c and d relate to regional implementation and governance of MDGs, level e relates to regional monitoring.

b) The development of a regional strategy that follows up on previous declarations and maps out a strategic plan for the attainment of MDGs in the region;

c) The development of regional policies for the provision of goods and services at the regional level (in order to implement the regional strategy);

d) The provision of support for MDG-related policy development at the national level (in compliance with the regional strategy);

e) A role in reporting on MDG progress in the region (e.g. drafting of annual MDG reports).

All examined organisations have pledged commitment to the achievement of the MDGs in official documents and declarations. In the case of Mercosur, this is the only relevant level of involvement for which there is evidence. To this date, three "MDG/Mercosur" meetings have been held, and in July 2013 the Common Market Council produced a joint communiqué in which the heads of state of Mercosur member and associated countries reaffirmed their political commitment to the achievement of the MDGs[8]. However, no actual regional strategy was ever adopted.

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the leadership role in governing and monitoring the MDG framework is played more consistently by ECLAC than by non-UN regional organisations.

A comprehensive strategy for the achievement of the MDGs has successfully been adopted by ASEAN and the PIF. In 2012, ASEAN adopted a roadmap[9] identifying concrete sets of actions entrusted to specific ASEAN bodies. These comprise both actions for the provision of goods at the regional level and actions for the provision of support for policy adoption at the national level[10]. ASEAN's promptness in taking action to ensure regional governance of the MDG framework must be analysed in light of the objectives that the organisation has set out to pursue in recent years, namely the realisation of one ASEAN Community – resting on the three pillars of an Economic Community, a Political-Security Community, and a Socio-Cultural Community – by 2015. In the 2012 Roadmap, clear reference is made to the importance of the MDGs in paving the way for the realisation of

---

[8] Cf. Presidency of the Uruguayan Republic (2013).

[9] Cf. ASEAN, 2008.

[10] An example of the former is the responsibility conferred to ASEAN of managing knowledge (best-practice examples as well as statistics) about MDGs. This has been made operational through the work of the existing ASEAN Regional Centre of Excellence on MDGs and through the long-running ASEAN-UN Partnership, which has a special focus on facilitating the implementation of the MDG Roadmap. ASEAN is also expected to coordinate partnerships among member states, both for funding and technical support, focusing on areas of transnational interest and scope like ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG 7). As for providing support to country-level policy-making, ASEAN has committed to foster mainstreaming of the MDG framework into national sectoral policies and promote harmonisation of indicators and disaggregation of data.

a prosperous ASEAN Community[11]. Thus, a relationship of instrumentality – or at least coherence in objectives – exists between the achievement of the goals and the realisation of the Community.

In the PIF, leaders agreed in 2009 to the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. This Compact comes closest to a regional MDG strategy, because the achievement of MDGs is therein identified as a parallel and instrumental process to the achievement of the region's development objectives[12]. Forum Compact measures aim to provide support to national development efforts, through the establishment of a peer review mechanism of country development plans and the provision of guidance in the areas of public expenditure management and accountability, and of data production and availability.

The African Union's policy shows less of a visible comprehensive regional MDG strategy, and more of a variety of 'issue-specific' regional strategies connected to the MDG framework. A case is provided by the 2012 African Union Roadmap on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for AIDS, TB and Malaria Response in Africa. The document clearly defines goals and results to be achieved, and distributes roles and responsibilities for achieving them, giving the AU Commission a coordinating role for an effective delivery. The document also pushes for initiative-taking at the national level.

As for reporting on MDG progress on a regional scale, all organisations except Mercosur have taken on this role, through the publication of periodical reports. For the AU, this reporting activity has highlighted serious gaps as far as regional statistical capacities are concerned. However, over the last few years, the AU Commission, the UNECA and the African Development Bank have developed programmes that respond to data challenges and that improve African countries' statistical capacity[13]. The EU has actively adopted the MDG framework ever since its inception, fulfilling all five levels of involvement. However, it has done so in a peculiar way: by incorporating the framework into its development cooperation policy, i.e. part of its external action, as opposed to its "domestic" policy

---

[11] "The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) mirror ASEAN's commitment to building a caring and sharing Community by 2015. The MDGs also present a set of goals and targets for improving wellbeing and reducing poverty in its broadest sense that are in line with the purposes of ASEAN" (ASEAN, 2008: 1).
[12] Cf. PIF, 2009.
[13] They include the Africa Symposium for Statistics Development, an advocacy framework for censuses; the African Charter on Statistics, a framework for coordinating statistics activities in the continent; the Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa, which provides guidance on harmonising statistics; and a new initiative on civil registration and vital statistics. A joint mechanism has been set up for continental collection and validation, to produce an Africa statistical yearbook.

(EU, 2006a, 2010a and 2011)[14]. The nexus between external and European priorities becomes clearer if we consider that the EU (cf. EU, 2010a) presents its contribution to the achievement of the MDGs as feeding into and closely interconnected with its own "Europe 2020 growth strategy", a ten-year plan for achieving "smart, sustainable and inclusive" growth in Europe (EU, 2010b). The plan opens up an interesting perspective in terms of the hypothetical future role of the EU in the regional governance of the post-2015 UN sustainable development framework.

The table below provides an overview of the levels at which the different regional organisations we have examined have appropriated the MDG framework:

	Discourse	Regional strategy	Provision of regional goods	Support to national level	Reporting role
ASEAN	x	x	x	X	x
PIF	x	x		X	x
Mercosur	x				
AU	x	?*	?*	?*	x
EU (*sui generis*)	x	x	x	X	x

* Not on MDGs comprehensively but in MDG-related policy areas.

While the UN economic commissions have all played a major role in governing the MDG framework, although to different extents, the different non-UN organisations have shown varying degrees of willingness to take on a decisive leadership role in the regional governance of the MDG framework. The UN economic commissions, in fact, have the purpose of following up on and implementing the UN agenda, and they have the capacity to help achieve that objective. As far as non-UN organisations are concerned, a pattern that emerges is that those organisations which appear to have accepted such a leadership role have done so because they see the achievement of MDGs as instrumental to the success of some existing regional strategy (like ASEAN and the PIF). We may therefore suggest that willingness to take ownership of a globally agreed development framework on a regional scale depends to a great extent on whether the global goals

[14] In its strategy, the European Commission gives impulse for action to be taken at the national level but also delivers regional goods: it has a policy-making and coordinating role, and it implements 20% of the collective EU aid effort.

have been or are susceptible to being "internalised" within a wider regional strategy. This feeds into the idea that it is important for a successful global development framework to leave enough of a margin for regions to develop their own strategies and priorities in line with global goals (cf. para. 1.2). However, our findings have shown that when such strategies are *pre-existing*, global goals will be more promptly adopted by the regional level of governance. When such strategies are not already being pursued by a regional organisation, it seems to be harder for the organisation to adopt the global framework and "create" a new strategy from scratch. Even in such cases, nonetheless, there is reason to believe that leaving policy space at the regional level would encourage incremental regional dynamics that are already at work. In this respect, the work of the UN regional commissions and the cooperation between these and other regional organisations constitute important avenues for the elaboration of localised development strategies in line with global goals. In the next part of the paper, drawing from the conclusions that have emerged for the MDG framework, some hypotheses will be formulated and applied to the question of regional involvement in the post-2015 agenda, with the help of some concrete cases.

Scenarios for regional involvement in the post-2015 development framework: the cases of the EU and the AU

Looking at how the potential for regional organisations' involvement in the post-2015 agenda might translate into practice, we come across a very diverse picture. Based on the results that were gathered for the MDG period, we have seen that the presence of clearly defined regional development priorities and of an existing development strategy at the level of a regional organisation is likely to enhance the regional organisation's willingness and capacity to play an active role in the framework of the global development agenda. Thus, where they exist, such strategies could, after 2015, complement the global agenda itself, incorporating the goals and linking them to the region's own priorities. However, only a few non-UN regional organisations are currently pursuing development strategies that could be relevant in this sense. Two organisations that could fall into this category are the EU with its Sustainable Development and Europe 2020 strategies, and perhaps, to some extent, ASEAN with its strategy to establish an Economic, Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Community by 2015 and to further strengthen it by 2020. Given the very broad analysis that would be required to consider both organisations' strategies, I will focus solely on the EU. I will briefly analyse its strategies and formulate some hypotheses as to the involvement of the Union in the governance of the post-2015 development agenda. These projections will then be measured against a preventive analysis of the Union's effective capacity and willingness

to intervene in and ensure governance of the agenda. Elsewhere, even in the absence of regional development strategies, non-UN regional organisations actively intervene in development policy, contributing to the progressive realisation of important advances. These consist of improvements in the field of statistical capacity or in the development of successful peer review mechanisms, for instance. The advances made in this respect by the African Union during the MDG era, in cooperation with UNECA and other UN bodies, illustrate this statement, and could be considered as stepping stones for the realisation of further progress in regional governance of development after 2015. I will particularly focus on the role that the AU's NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), especially in its application to development-related policies, could play in the post-2015 scenario. In order to enquire at a deeper level than the policy surface, the hypotheses made will once again be tested against the concrete challenges that the African Union faces in ensuring regional leadership of development policies, and the general challenges the African continent is confronted with when it comes to ownership of development strategies. The two case-studies will thus serve to anchor the reflection within concrete reality, going beyond abstraction and attempting to give an account of the actual capacities and constraints that non-UN regional organisations face with regard to their intervention in a global development agenda.

Regional development strategies and governance of SDGs: the case of the EU

In the outcome document of its June 2013 meeting on the Overarching Post-2015 Agenda, the General Affairs Council of the European Union established a clear link between the global sustainable development agenda and the EU's own priorities, as it laid out Europe's commitments and strategy for the region to play its part in the governance of the new agenda (EEAS, 2013). On the one hand, the Council ensured the firm resolve on the part of the EU and its member states to take concrete measures to implement existing international sustainable development commitments. On the other hand, the Council pointed to the EU's own sustainability objectives, and particularly "the pursuit of an inclusive and equitable green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication", as important tools for achieving sustainable development. The document affirms that the EU is committed to these objectives through its strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Europe 2020, and through the overarching EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

The EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) was first launched in 2001 and lays out objectives and policy measures to tackle a number of key unsustainable trends (limit climate change and its effects, break the link between economic growth and

environmental degradation, combat social exclusion and poverty, etc.), while at the same time calling for a new approach to policy-making in order to ensure that the EU's economic, social and environmental policies are mutually reinforcing (EU, 2006b; EEB). The EU SDS assigns specific roles to the regional and the national level in order to ensure that its objectives are attained. Member states must draw up National Sustainable Development Strategies based on impact assessments. The implementation of these strategies is both the object of peer reviews and of a review carried out by the Commission once every two years. The general goal of the EU SDS is to "help strengthen the alignment and integration of strategic environmental objectives with social and economic objectives" (EU, 2009). This is to be achieved through the implementation of more specific and time-bound strategies, such as "Europe 2020", which can be seen as an example of practical implementation of the EU's overarching policy agenda for sustainable development (Eurostat 2013: 35).

Europe 2020, adopted by the European Council in June 2010, is the EU's current ten-year strategy for growth and jobs. It focuses on three priorities: a) to foster smart growth through the development of an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation; b) to attain sustainable growth, by promoting more resource-efficient, greener and competitive markets; c) to make growth inclusive, through the promotion of policies aimed at fostering job creation and poverty reduction. Europe 2020 has drawn on several of the challenges addressed in the EU SDS, including resource efficiency, the '20/20/20' climate and energy targets[15], as well as poverty reduction and education. However, its particular focus is on the growth-related aspects of sustainable and inclusive development. As far as the strategy's monitoring is concerned, progress towards the targets is measured through a set of Eurostat indicators[16]. EU-level targets have furthermore been translated into national targets in each member state, to reflect particular national circumstances. EU institutions and member states share responsibility for the implementation of Europe 2020. The adoption of Europe 2020 and the continued commitment to the overarching EU Sustainable Development Strategy are indications that sustainable development priorities are high on the EU agenda.

According to Connelly (2007), however, the EU's stance on sustainable development has always been characterised by a dichotomy between the focus on environmental protection on one side and the promotion of economic growth on the other, of which the second has, over the years, inevitably had the upper hand. In 1997, sustainable development was officially enshrined as a fundamental objective of the EU under Article 2

---

[15] These are: a) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 % compared to 1990 levels; b) increase the share of renewables in final energy consumption to 20 %; c) 20% increase in energy efficiency.
[16] Available on
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/europe_2020_indicators/headline_indicators.

of the Treaty of Amsterdam[17]. Later on, in 2001, the EU adopted the SDS as a complement to the broad EU strategy for socio-economic reforms ("Lisbon Strategy"), following the Swedish Presidency's initiative to include environmental concerns within the Lisbon Strategy. Nevertheless, although the EU has stated that sustainable development is the over-arching principle of all EU policies, the issue of Europe's economic competitiveness in the face of globalisation has come to dominate the political agenda, especially since the refocusing of the Lisbon Strategy in 2005 by the Barroso Commission solely on growth and jobs (Connelly, 2007: 15). Over time, and particularly in the light of the economic crisis, the Lisbon strategy has proved particularly controversial, especially as far as the social dimension of sustainability is concerned. It has demonstrated that an approach underpinned by a "trickle down" ideology, which assumes that economic growth through increased competition will automatically benefit all, has not worked and is not sustainable (Marlier and Natali, 2010: 33). Today, the criticisms that Connelly and other authors made are particularly relevant and need to be addressed. In particular, the EU needs to further clarify its conception of sustainable development and reconcile its priorities. According to some scholars, the Europe 2020 strategy, although maintaining the focus on growth and jobs, might provide a worthwhile opportunity for progress. Marlier et al. (2010: 34-35) suggest that the strategy "holds out the possibility of a much more integrated and coordinated approach to economic, social, employment and also environmental governance". In particular, the strategy has increased the potential visibility and importance of social issues, among which are social inclusion and poverty. Addressing these issues and taking into account the role that social policies can play as "economic stabilisers" (*ibid.*) is important for the future of the European project itself. In fact, Marlier and his colleagues detect the growing sense among many EU citizens that the EU's primarily economic project has not been beneficial to them and that it may even be endangering the social standards they aspire to. They warn that such vision is calling into question the political support for the EU project and therefore its democratic legitimacy.

These considerations indeed suggest that delivering coherently on the sustainability agenda interlocks with core EU interests, and the adoption of the Europe 2020 strategy with its comprehensive layout seems a step in the right direction (Zeitlin, 2010). Whether the strategy will be effective will depend on its rigorous implementation by Member States and on a strong leadership role played by the Commission (Onkelinx 2010). Within the limits of the challenges mentioned, given the nature of its internal priorities and the renewed attention that the EU is devoting to sustainability objectives, it is possible to formulate the hypothesis that the Union is likely to become involved in the regional

---

[17] Now Article 3 of the Treaty on the European Union.

governance of the post-2015 UN sustainable development framework. This claim is further supported by the evidence that the EU is already taking active part in the debate around the post-2015 agenda. Thus, it is reasonable to imagine that the EU would accept taking responsibility of regional governance of the new global framework and that this governance could lean on and coordinate with the existing EU strategies and their well-developed monitoring and follow-up mechanisms.

Regional advances in development policy: the case of the AU

The African Union did not develop a comprehensive strategy for the attainment of the MDGs. Nor is there evidence that the organisation is currently pursuing a specific sustainable development-oriented strategy that could successfully be linked to the forthcoming global SDGs and help ensure their governance at the regional level. However, the MDG era has seen substantial progress being made by the African Union in the promotion of development efforts on the continent, which the Union can build upon in order to play a role in the governance of the new development agenda. Aside from the progress made in cooperation with the UN in areas such as statistical capacity-building, in which the AU could continue to play a role in the future, a particular feature that the African Union has developed over the last fifteen years is the New Partnership for Africa's Development, or NEPAD. In the words of its founding document, NEPAD "is envisaged as a long-term vision of an African-owned and African-led development programme" (AU, 2001: 15). While focusing on economic growth as a tool for poverty reduction, the programme also aims at developing "the capacity to sustain growth at levels required to achieve poverty reduction and sustainable development" (*ibid.*). Just over a decade after its launch, the programme has received a lot of praise and an equal amount of criticism. Its critics have pointed to NEPAD's lack of democratic legitimacy, as it is a programme that was not the product of national consultations but conceived by a few African leaders and backed by the West (Zimmermann et al., 2009: 47). On the other hand, it is undeniable that the programme constitutes an important advance in African development policy (Morbi, 2011): it is a real attempt by several African nations to work together to create an effective development programme and to promote "peace and stability, democracy, sound economic development, [and] people-centric development" (*ibid.*). In the framework of NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is broadly presented as a success. Zimmermann et al. (2009: 70) define it as "the most prominent and operational pillar of NEPAD" for the time being. The primary purpose of this mechanism whereby African leaders evaluate their peers, is

> to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful and best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building (NEPAD 2003: 1).

Countries are assisted to reach NEPAD's objectives through peer dialogue and persuasion, and sharing of information. In addition, countries receive critical scrutiny from other African countries and independent so-called "eminent persons" who assess the country on a set of objectives, standards, criteria and indicators in various domains of governance and development (Zimmermann et al., 2009). Participation in the mechanism is voluntary, but it has been broadly accepted by members of the AU: by 2013, 33 states were members and 17 had undergone peer reviews (Ocampo and Arteaga, 2014: 20). According to UNECA (cf. *ibid.*: 22), APRM has brought a significant contribution to institutionalising a culture of accountability in Africa, in that it has created a domestic accountability mechanism. Ocampo and Arteaga (2014: 22) also emphasise the importance of having set up a platform for sharing best practice for effective cooperation for development, and argue that the mechanism has "empowered and given more legitimacy to African Union members to be in control of development cooperation".

The success of this mechanism prompts the questions of whether, and to what extent, the African Union could build on it to provide governance and monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda. At a recent "Forum for Deepening Parliamentary Engagement with the MDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda", African parliamentarians suggested that the APRM be used to "monitor the MDGs and post-2015 agenda at national and regional levels" (IISD, 2013). Ocampo and Arteaga (2014) doubt that, as an accountability mechanism for internal national and regional priorities, the APRM in itself could become institutionalised within a post-2015 global accountability scheme for development cooperation. They conclude, on the other hand, that such a global scheme could draw from the institutional design of APRM. In their argument, the authors seem to refer to the specificity of the APRM and NEPAD objectives, which are necessarily distinct from the global development goals, although NEPAD can be seen as a comprehensive programme addressing most of the impediments to Africa's development (Gottschalk and Schmidt 2004: 148). However, given the relevance that national and regional priorities will have within the post-2015 development framework, the mechanism could serve to complement and support whatever specific means of implementation and monitoring will be put in place at the national and/or at the regional levels. In particular, the mechanism could be used to monitor policy coherence at the national level in relation to the post-

2015 commitments. Monitoring coherence between objectives and policies is in fact as important to the achievement of the goals as is monitoring outcomes (UNDP and ODI 2011).

However, whether the mechanism can serve this purpose effectively will depend on the possibility of overcoming its inherent flaws. Zimmermann et al. (2009) point out that, as the country review agendas contain recommendations on how to overcome governance weaknesses, the APRM could push countries to adopt reforms in compliance with the said recommendations; however, this is not the case. The system of sanctions and incentives in relation to the desired reforms should therefore be reconsidered. More fundamentally, the broad categories of the APRM ("Democracy and political governance", "economic governance and management", "corporate governance", "socio-economic development") risk overstretching the meaning of governance and jeopardising the capacities of governments to carry out a thorough assessment. Indeed, reflecting on these inherent flaws of the mechanism at its beginnings, Gottschalk and Schmidt (2004: 138) raised the questions of whether African politicians are really interested in receiving comprehensive and clear indicators and a final positive or negative judgment and of "whether the foundation of NEPAD and the AU improves the chances of a new era dawning for the continent, or whether the well-known gap in Africa between great expectations and high-flown rhetoric on the one hand, and low capabilities and inertia on the other, can be narrowed".

Ten years on, while it is undeniable that NEPAD and APRM have gained consideration and success, it is still possible to view the problems that these instruments face as consequences of the persistence in Africa of that "leadership malaise"[18] to which Gottschalk and Schmidt refer. Reflecting on this is particularly important in order to assess the extent to which the African Union can effectively play a role in regional leadership of the new development agenda. Discussing Africa's "leadership deficit", Wisdom J. Tettey (2012: 37) analyses the effects of bad governance at the national level on the functioning of regional institutions: indeed, if many leaders have exhibited an unimpressive performance at home, how can we expect collective leadership at the regional level to "jolt the continent out of its economic slumber and promote good governance"? While acknowledging the progress realised by the AU and sub-regional organisations, the author agrees with the view that substantive movement in support of good governance is still a marginal effort. That is partly due to the fact that many heads of state, at the top of regional institutions, lack the track record in their countries that gives them the "moral authority or motivation to demand good governance from their peers" (*ibid.*). In spite of these evident hurdles at the national level and their

---

[18] The expression is used by Tettey (2012).

consequences on the regional level of governance, Tettey registers the recent success of the AU and ECOWAS in expressing disapproval and condemning Laurent Gbagbo for his refusal to accept electoral loss and leave office. The author expresses the hope that the gradual strengthening of democratic culture in some member states of these organisations, sustained by the emergence of leaders who uphold such culture, might change the internal dynamics of these organisations and make their defence of democratic ideals and values more effective. However, in order for these changes to occur, it is important to address the "leadership malaise" in Africa as a priority. There is need for the establishment of a culture of leadership as a privilege and an opportunity for service rather than as an instrument to assert one's dominion over and oppression of others (*ibid.*). African leaders should recognise that "leadership begins on people's terms, driven by their needs, and must culminate in expanding opportunities for happiness, and so pursue strategic visions that unlock the potential of their people in all spheres of human endeavour" (*ibid.*: 47). This, in turn, requires a more courageous and critical approach on the part of African citizens, which includes upholding the value of ethical citizenship through their own activities and defending inclusive distribution of political goods, rather than "seek[ing] the largesse of transactional leadership" (*ibid.*). Thus, although NEPAD and the APRM are "a step in the right direction" towards the improvement of regional governance in Africa and give the continent considerable "control over its own future" (Bullen, 2011), they cannot fulfil their potential as transformative mechanisms for the continent's development unless they are accompanied by internal dynamics that tackle the most pressing leadership problems at the national level.

In conclusion, as far as the EU is concerned, in line with the hypotheses that were formulated in the last chapter, the pursuit of sustainable development strategies by the EU "domestically" might constitute the basis for the Union's involvement in the regional implementation and monitoring of the new global Sustainable Development Goals. The success of the EU's effort to ensure governance of the sustainability agenda in Europe, however, depends to a large extent on whether the Union will be able to clarify its sustainable development priorities. In particular, a lot will depend on whether it will be able to devote equal attention to and strike a balance between the three aspects of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), as opposed to economic growth only. This is also important for the very future of the European project and its democratic legitimacy. As far as the AU is concerned, there is reason to believe that the post-2015 period will see the continuation of the efforts made by the organisation in cooperation with other partners in areas such as statistical capacity-building and health, to ensure the attainment of the new goals. With particular reference to regional governance of development goals, the APRM in the framework of NEPAD has been

identified as a relatively successful mechanism that could support and oversee the implementation and monitoring of the new development agenda, in particular as far as checking on national policy coherence with international commitments is concerned. For the APRM, and the AU, to help deliver sustainable development in Africa, substantial leadership challenges need to be tackled to enhance effectiveness and bring institutional credibility at the national and regional levels. In other words, the political will to "fill institutions with concrete projects" (Gottschalk and Schmidt, 2004) must be found. There is consensus in Africa (CCR, 2013) on the idea that the new UN development framework must ensure the shaping and ownership of the development agenda by African governments and regional bodies, in order for African priorities to be addressed. This, however, implies that institutional challenges (both nationally and at the level of the AU and other regional organisations) must be addressed first, so as to avoid the weakening of inadequate governmental institutions by instability, conflict and corruption, as these factors not only hamper but negatively affect the continent's development. This, according to some (*ibid.*), has been the case with the MDGs, as they prescribed development objectives but were unable to take into account the political instability faced by the African continent.

Conclusions

The post-2015 development agenda, with a set of Sustainable Development Goals at its core, is intended to pick up on the problems left unsolved by the MDGs by addressing a more inclusive conception of human development and well-being than its predecessor framework did. The new goals, in fact, include new focuses on inclusive economic growth and decent work for all, reducing inequalities within and between countries, sustainable production and consumption patterns, peaceful and inclusive societies, safe and sustainable human settlements, and protection of natural resources, among others. As well as having the objective of "broadening the development narrative", the new framework is also meant to go beyond a set of goals meant for developing countries, and become a truly universal agenda that is not imposed but should be taken on and owned by both North and South and "translated" according to local needs and specificities. This is particularly relevant for the pursuit of sustainable development, because different regions of the world need to address different challenges to achieve sustainability, according to their geographical location, to their level of development (UNDP, 2013), etc. The new development framework needs to account for this diversity of development challenges by leaving policy space for countries to adapt the global goals and targets to their specificities. In this context, regional organisations, both within and outside the UN

system, could play a role in identifying local challenges and assisting countries on their way to achieve sustainable development. They could themselves adopt the global goals and act as intermediaries, by intervening in both policy-making at the supranational level and monitoring country progress against the goals.

The case for regional intervention in the governance of the new development framework is strong. In fact, the very concept of sustainable development entails the need for a holistic approach (UNEP, n.d.), taking into account the social, environmental and economic aspects as part of an integrated set of interventions. Given the diversity that characterises development challenges in different regions, different "combinations" will be needed in different regions. In a world characterised by the rise of the Global South and where regional cooperation platforms are emerging as relevant international actors, top-down, one-size-fits-all approaches are no longer imaginable. In addition, the transboundary nature of most of these challenges (water resource management, energy, climate change, the environment, the fight against illegal transboundary phenomena) calls for the regional dimension to intervene as the most appropriate level of governance. The UN itself has recognised and envisaged that regional organisations could play a role in assessing and reporting on the progress made on the new agenda, in translating global goals into more localised priorities, and in providing guidance and resources for the implementation of the new goals. After presenting these suggestions and identifying UN regional economic commissions and "Chapter VIII" regional organisations as the object of its analysis, this paper has sought to investigate the willingness and capacities of these organisations to take on such a role of governance of the new development agenda, by looking at their behaviour with regard to the MDGs. While UN economic commissions have successfully taken up an active role in all three relevant areas of intervention, the picture is more varied for non-UN organisations. It emerged that the organisations that have been most willing to intervene in the governance of the MDG framework (both fulfilling a reporting role and providing regional strategies and policies) have done so because they saw the achievement of the goals as instrumental to the pursuit of broader regional objectives.

What does this tell us with regard to regional organisations' willingness and capacity to intervene in the new framework? It is possible that those organisations that are currently pursuing sustainable development-related strategies will have more interest in taking on an active role. In addition, the MDG study has shown that the global goals have been an opportunity for some regional organisations to intervene in development policy areas realising considerable advances, notably putting in place mechanisms that could be used for implementing and monitoring the new framework in accordance with local specificities and priorities. However, in order to have an informed discussion on effective regional

capacities of intervention, it is necessary to look beneath the policy level and take into account regional organisations' actual capabilities and constraints. These vary from one organisation to the other and depend on a number of factors such as internal challenges, the mandate and scope of each organisation, and the political will of its member states.

The European Union considers sustainable development as one of its strategic objectives, and the EU SDS and Europe 2020 strategies address many of the priorities included in the SDGs. Thus, the EU could lean on these strategies and their follow-up mechanisms to foster the implementation of the new development agenda, articulating it with the current local context in mind. Nevertheless, it will only be able to do so effectively if it reconsiders its approach to sustainable development and manages to strike a balance between economic, social and environmental priorities.

The African Union could build on the progress made by NEPAD in promoting regional cooperation for development, and particularly use the APRM to review coherence between national policy and the commitment to SDGs. In order to do so, however, the organisation and its member states need to address a number of governance challenges that obstruct, at present, the effective functioning of the mechanism and of regional institutions in general. The regional level of governance is certainly relevant to the successful implementation of the new development framework. It has the potential to contribute to a desired shift in the development paradigm towards more ownership and diversity of development approaches.

The UN regional economic commissions provide a very successful example of regional governance of global development goals and are likely to be able to fulfil the monitoring and governance roles that the UN envisages for regions after 2015. However, when it comes to non-UN regional organisations, it is difficult to pin down specific roles without having regard to each organisation's specificities.

References

African Union (2012), "Roadmap on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for AIDS, TB and Malaria Response in Africa" (available on:
http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Shared_Res_Roadmap_Rev_F%5B1%5D.pdf).

African Union (2001), "The New Partnership for Africa's Development" (available on: http://www.un.org/africa/osaa/reports/nepadEngversion.pdf).

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2012), "Roadmap for the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals" (available on:
http://www.asean.org/resources/publications/asean-publications/item/asean-roadmap-for-the-attainment-of-the-millennium-development-goals).

F. Baert, T. Felício and P. De Lombaerde (2012), "Introduction" P. De Lombaerde, F. Baert and T. Felício, Eds., The United Nations and the regions – Third world report on regional integration, Dordrecht/New York: Springer, pp. 1-14.

Samuel Bullen (2011), "NEPAD and African Development Policy", E-International Relations Magazine, 27th November 2011 (available on: http://www.e-ir.info/2011/11/27/nepad-and-african-development-policy/, accessed on 4th July 2014).

Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR 2013), "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa", CCR Policy Research Seminar Report, Vineyard Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa, November 2013, available on: www.ccr.org.za.

James Connelly (2007), "The European Union and Sustainable Development", CEUS Research Working Paper 1.

European Environmental Bureau (EEB), "Sustainable Development: What is the EU doing?", n.d. (available on:
http://www.eeb.org/index.cfm/activities/sustainability/sustainable-development/sustainable-development-what-is-the-eu-doing/, accessed on 20th May 2014).

European Union (2011), "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change", Communication from the Commission, COM(2011) 637, 13th October 2011.

European Union (2010a), "An EU Action Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals", 2010 (available on: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millenium-development-goals/action_plan_en.htm).

European Union (2010b), "EUROPE 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth", Communication from the Commission, COM(2010) 2020, 3rd March 2010.

European Union (2009), "Final Report for the Assessment of the 6th Environment Action Programme", Executive Summary, DG ENV.1/SER/2009/0044, prepared by the Ecologic Institute, Berlin and Brussels (available on:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/pdf/Ecoliogic_6EAP_Report_EXECUTIVE%20SUMMARY.pdf).

European Union (2006a), "The European Consensus on Development", Official Journal of the European Union, 24th February 2006 (2006/C 46/01).

European Union (2006b), "Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy", European Council (10917/06), 26th June 2006.

European Union External Action Service (EEAS 2013), "EU Council Conclusions on the Overarching Post 2015 Agenda", 25th June 2013 (available on: http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_13692_en.htm, accessed on 4th July 2014).

Eurostat (2013), "Sustainable Development in the European Union", Monitoring Report of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

K. Gottschalk and S. Schmidt (2004), "The African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Strong Institutions for Weak States?", Friedrich Erbert Stiftung - Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft, Issue 4.

Kennedy Graham (2012), "The regional input for delivering as one", in P. De Lombaerde, F. Baert and T. Felício, Eds., The United Nations and the regions – Third world report on regional integration, Dordrecht/New York: Springer, pp. 189-213.

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD 2013), "African Parliamentarians Discuss MDG Acceleration, Post-2015 Priorities", News Brief, 22nd November 2013 (available on: http://post2015.iisd.org/news/african-parliamentarians-discuss-mdg-acceleration-post-2015-priorities/, accessed on 4th July 2014).

Eric Marlier and David Natali, Eds. (2010), "Europe 2020: Towards a More Social EU?", Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang.

Joseph Morbi (2011), "Is NEPAD an effective development organisation?", E-International Relations Magazine, 26th October 2011 (available on: http://www.e-ir.info/2011/10/26/is-nepad-an-effective-development-organisation/; accessed on 4th July 2014) .

Deepak Nayyar (2012), "The MDGs after 2015: Some reflections on the possibilities", Background paper for the UN Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, New York: United Nations.

NEPAD (2003), "Objectives, Standards, Criteria and Indicators for the African Peer Review Mechanism", Abuja, Nigeria, 2003.

José Antonio Ocampo and Natalie Gómez Arteaga (2014), "Accountable and effective development cooperation in a post-2015 era", paper presented at the 2014 Development Cooperation Forum DCF Germany High-Level Symposium, Berlin, unpublished.

Laurette Onkelinx (2010), "Foreword" to E. Marlier and D. Natali, Eds., Europe 2020: Towards a More Social EU?, Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, pp. 11-12.

Pacific Islands Forum (2009), Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific (available on:
http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/Cairns%20Compact%202009.pdf).

Presidency of the Uruguayan Republic (2013), "Comunicado conjunto de Estados partes y asociados del MERCOSUR", 12th July 2013 (available on:
 http://www.presidencia.gub.uy/comunicacion/comunicacionnoticias/declaracion-partes-y-asociados, accessed on 4th July 2014).

R. Quiroga, P. Stockins and I. Azócar (2010), "Vacíos y discrepancias estadísticas en los indicadores ODM: hacia una estrategia regional de conciliación estadística para América Latina y el Caribe", CEPAL - Serie estudios estadísticos y prospectivos, n.70, UN: Santiago.

A. Sumner and M. Tiwari (2010), "Global Poverty Reduction to 2015 and Beyond: What has been the Impact of the MDGs and What are the Options for a Post-2015 Global Framework?", Institute of Development Studies Working Paper 348.

Wisdom J. Tettey (2012), "Africa's Leadership Deficit: Exploring Pathways to Good Governance and Transformative Politics", in K.T. Hanson, G. Kararach, T.M. Shaw, Eds., Rethinking Development Challenges for Public Policy: Insights from Contemporary Africa, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 18-53.

UN (2014), "Compilation of Goals and Targets Suggestions from OWG-10", 19th April 2014 (available on:
http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3698FA%20compilation%20of%20proposals%20from%20OWG_210414.pdf).

UN (2013a), "Means of Implementation: Global Partnership for achieving sustainable development", Technical Support Team Issues Brief, 2013 (available on: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2079Issues%20Brief%20Mean s%20of%20Implementation%20Final_TST_141013.pdf).

UN (2013b), "Report of the Secretary General, A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015", GA Res. A/68/202, July 2013 (available on: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/A%20Life%20of%20Dignity%20for%20All.pdf).

UN (2013c), "High Level Panel Report on the post-2015 development agenda", May 2013 (available on: http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf).

UN (2013d), "Regional Commissions, A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda", E/ESCWA/OES/2013/2, New York: United Nations, 2013.

UN (2012a), "Initial Input of the Secretary General to the Open Working Group on SDGs", GA Res. A/67/634, December 2012 (available on: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/67/634&referer=http://sustainabl edevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1528&Lang=E).

UN (2012b), "The Future We Want", Outcome Document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Annex to General Assembly Resolution A/66/288, New York: United Nations, 2012.

UNDP (2013), "Human Development Report 2013. The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World", New York: United Nations.

UNDP and ODI (2011), "A Post-2015 framework for Development: Starting a Substantive Conversation", Workshop Report, 26-27 October 2011, Cairo, Egypt.

UNECE (2006), "The Millennium Development Goals, the way ahead: a Pan-European perspective", UN: New York and Geneva (available on: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/MDGs/MDG_Report_final.pdf).

UNEP, "Integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development", Post-2015 Note #1, n.d. (available on: http://ozone.unep.org/Publications/UNEP_Post_2015_Note1.pdf).

UNESCWA (2008), "Gender in the Millennium Development Goals: Information guide for Arab Millennium Development Goals reports" (available on: http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/scu/gendermdg).

Jan Vandemoortele (2012), "Advancing the global development agenda post-2015: some thoughts, ideas and practical suggestions", Background paper for the UN Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, New York: United Nations.

Jan Vandemoortele (2011), "The MDG Story: Intention Denied", Development and Change, vol. 42, no. 1, pp. 1–21.

Jonathan Zeitlin (2010), "Towards a stronger OMC for a More Social Europe 2020: a New Governance Structure for EU Policy Coordination", in E. Marlier and D. Natali, Eds., Europe 2020: Towards a More Social EU?, Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, pp. 253-274.

R. Zimmermann, M. Bruntrüp, S. Kolavalli, K. Flaherty (2009), "Agricultural Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Understanding CAADP and APRM Policy Processes", Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik Studies, 48.