

International Task Force on Global Public Goods - Terms of Reference

Non-Paper - Proposal for discussion

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In an interdependent world, national development goals can often not be met by national policies alone; and complementary international as well as regional cooperation is required in order to produce locally desired development outcomes. Recognizing these interdependencies, Sweden, France and UNDP propose the establishment of an international task force with a mandate to foster an enhanced provision of international public goods, which are of critical importance to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), notably the objectives of reducing poverty. In an interdependent world, extreme poverty and its manifold consequences are of concern to all; and it is thus in the enlightened self-interest of all to ensure a life in dignity for all. It is in our common interest to secure sustainable development in all its dimensions; environmental, social and economic.

Background

While the notion of international public goods is gaining widespread recognition in the international development debates, the concept is met with circumspection and reservation, calling for a further clarification and discussions. Considering in particular, that the notion refers to issues of *global, i.e. common concerns of all*, voices have thus been raised suggesting to initiate a participatory process in order to gain a better understanding of the analytical as well as practical-political relevance of the concept of international public goods and on how to translate it into concrete policy actions. It is in this light that a temporary international task force, which would work in a highly consultative matter, is proposed.

Objective

The task force should systematically assess and clarify not only the notion of global and regional public goods but also the policymaking dimensions of determining to which public goods to accord policy and expenditure priority. It should identify key international public goods from a perspective of poverty reduction and of common interest for sustainable development, and make recommendations to policy makers and other stakeholders on how to provide and finance them. It should also have an objective to define responsibility for follow up of adequacy and effectiveness.

Tasks

Task I - Defining international public goods

With the current debate on international or global public goods as a point of departure the task force should provide recommendations on adequate and pragmatic definition(s) of international public goods. This task should be approached with rigour and pragmatism with the objective of bridging the international academic discussion with ongoing policy processes within the international community, including in developing countries and the civil society.

Task II - Priorities in the provision of international public goods for development

a) Selection of key international public goods

The task force should identify a short-list of key international public goods relevant from a perspective of reaching the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the objective of halving poverty by 2015. The selection will be made through a participatory process with concerned stakeholder and actor groups, including representatives of governments, civil society and the private sector. The interplay between the global and regional level and national development efforts should be given special attention.

b) Learning lessons from past experience: management issues

The task force will analyse the existing institutional framework involved in setting priorities and the provision of the identified international public goods, including the division of labour between relevant stakeholders at national, regional and global level. It will also consider possible changes of the provision system to enhance the provision of the identified international public goods.

c) Learning lessons from past experience: financing issues

The task force should explore the wide spectra of financing options, including market creation, regulations, private and public sources, partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms. Special attention would also be given to exploring the lessons to be learned from international public goods, which are currently well-financed through private and public sources, including and excluding aid. These tasks should be undertaken with a view of providing recommendations for appropriate financing options and arrangements for the identified prioritised international public goods.

Task III - Recommendations for future actions

Based on its findings the task force will present recommendations and provide guidance to relevant policy making processes for accelerating progress towards the goal of poverty reduction and sustainable development through an enhanced provision and financing of international public goods.