

# **Development Partners Consultative Forum (DPCF)**

**Lesotho**

**Terms of Reference**

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## Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DPCF	Development Partners Consultative Forum
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
MDB's	Multilateral Development Banks
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UN	United Nations
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## **I. Background**

The Government of Lesotho's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) has been endorsed by development partners as the focus for all efforts to help reduce the incidence of poverty in the country. The PRS is informed by the aspirations of Basotho as articulated in the Vision 2020. Lesotho's National Vision and the PRS preparatory processes are touted to have been the most comprehensive, broad-based and consultative of any similar undertaking in the Africa. The process involved the full participation of all stakeholders, thereby ensuring ownership. Community priorities formed the basis for formulating both the long-term national perspectives as well as the short- to medium-term poverty reduction strategies. The recommendations from this process are documented as the "Voices of the People".

These two documents now form the central guiding framework for development interventions and programming, reflecting community priorities which are in tandem with the global Millennium Development Goals. Funding for the development of both the National Vision and the PRS was done through a Memorandum of Understanding that established a Poverty Fund. Contributors to the fund included the Government of Lesotho, Department for International Cooperation (DfID), Development Cooperation Ireland (DCI), UNDP, and UNICEF. The fund was managed by the PRSP Secretariat and monitored by an independent PRSP Technical Working Group. The Government of Lesotho is using these two guiding frameworks as a basis for service provision to its people as well as for soliciting assistance from development partners.

The introduction of the PRS approach, donor and partner country commitments at Paris<sup>1</sup> and donor commitments at Rome<sup>2</sup> all demanded new ways of country cooperation between donors and partner governments and among donors. These commitments were preceded by the Monterrey Consensus of 2002. The PRS approach required donors to step back and partner governments to take stronger ownership of the development process. Commitments at Rome and Paris demand that donors align their country assistance activities behind partner government plans and processes and harmonise among themselves.

## **II. General Information**

In its formative meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2005, The Development Partners Consultative Forum (DPCF) recognised the crucial importance of strong national leadership of development programming in Lesotho. The rationale for a DPCF that does not include Government membership is to complement Government's own coordination efforts by promoting internal coherence amongst the development partners.

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<sup>1</sup> OECD DAC., 2005. Paris declaration on aid effectiveness: ownership, harmonisation, alignment, results and mutual accountability. Paris: OECD

<sup>2</sup> OECD, Rome Declaration on Harmonisation (February 2003); OECD DAC Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery (2003);

## **1. Name**

The name of the development partner's forum in Lesotho will be The Development Partners' Consultative Forum (DPCF).

## **2. Membership**

Membership of the DPCF is open to any bilateral or multilateral partner who provides development assistance to the Kingdom of Lesotho. The members include International Financing Institutions (IFIs) and the donor and diplomatic Organisations based in the Southern Africa sub-region. DPCF representation will normally comprise the Head of Development Cooperation, Agency or Mission of each of the bilateral and multilateral development institutions accredited to Lesotho. Members may be represented by alternates from their organizations. At the technical level, there may be a need to have point persons who would prepare notes for their heads of mission. These may attend as alternates or back up teams.

## **3. Secretariat**

The Secretariat of the DPCF will be in UNDP. The DPCF will be chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator. The Forum will appoint a co-chair from among the resident members for a rotational six-month period.

## **4. Periodicity of Meetings**

The DPCF will meet bi-monthly at the United Nations House. The meetings will also be held taking into account the timetable for the meetings between the Minister of Finance and Development Planning and the Development Partners.

## **III. Governing Principles**

1. The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the Public Sector Improvement and Reform Programme (PSIRP) will be the principal instruments and overarching development frameworks for the Government and its development partners. They will be the organizing frameworks within which harmonisation will take place.
2. The principle of inclusiveness will be observed. Financing modalities or agency specific procedures should not exclude any development partner from participating in DPCF work related to harmonisation/coordination and implementation of the PRS.
3. Each DPCF member will seek to ensure that any individual constraints to harmonisation are acknowledged at an early stage for remedial action. A development framework will be prepared, detailing development assistance projects and programmes. A Calendar of Missions will be prepared to enable synchronisation of key activities.

4. The DPCF will undertake a self evaluation in its effectiveness in facilitating Government delivery of the PRS and PSIRP outcomes. The criteria against which this evaluation will be undertaken will be decided upon by the DPCF membership.

#### **IV. Objectives**

1. The overarching objective of the DPCF is to increase the level and frequency of communication and to promote further transparency between the development partners and the Government. The Forum will ensure effectiveness of development assistance in support of the Government of Lesotho's National Vision 2020, as well as the development framework articulated in the PRS and the PSIRP. The sub-objectives articulate how the DPCF will translate its basic principles into verifiable outcomes that can be objectively assessed with regard to improved effectiveness and closer cooperation with national partners.
2. Increase transparency between Government of Lesotho and developing partners and among the developing partners.
3. Reduce transactions costs for both the Government of Lesotho and developing partners and ensure policy coherence in all programmes supported by development partners and the Government.
4. Improve communication among developing partners and, between developing partners and Government.
5. Strengthen the Government's leadership of its own development programmes articulated in the PRS and the PSIRP.
6. The DPCF's work will move beyond information sharing toward actively seeking best practice in harmonisation through establishing stronger links with sector/thematic groups.

#### **V. Scope of Work**

DPCF cooperation cannot be prescriptive as it is premised on voluntary engagement and peer support. The DPCF will be a forum governed by the principle of consensus and it is respectful of differences regarding policy and modalities. This section describes how the objectives of DPCF will be achieved through the conduct of DPCF meetings.

1. Each meeting may consider a topic of special interest, informed to a large extent by forthcoming national meetings and events (budget; Poverty Week; special days such as World AIDS day, World Population day, etc.) or by identification and nomination by DPCF members. These special issues should attempt to meet the objectives of the DPCF.
2. A common matrix of activities together with financial and/or technical commitments shall be developed and shared with the Government. This matrix shall be updated on a quarterly basis. The matrix will also form an input into the database of

development partners programmes to be developed and maintained by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The database will be one of the main instruments for coherent monitoring and coordination of donor efforts by the Ministry.

3. Standard information sharing will involve drafting of standard briefs to be distributed to members before each monthly meeting (economy, food security, HIV/AIDS, PRS implementation and review etc.) Questions regarding these briefs may be raised at DPCF meetings.
4. The DPCF will schedule its activities in tandem with those of the Government in order to reduce excessive demands on government resources, avoid clashes between partner events and promote collaboration and information sharing.
5. The schedule of meetings will be issued in advance by the Secretariat to members of the DPCF to facilitate forward planning.
6. The Secretariat will assist the DPCF in the dialogue between them and with the Government through provision of supporting services and facilitating information sharing.
7. The DPCF may elect technical committees from competent staff in their respective organizations to analyse and recommend potential interventions on topical issues.
8. The DPCF shall undertake to carry out periodic joint monitoring and evaluation of various interventions, all aligned with Government's budgetary cycle.
9. The DPCF shall actively seek to enhance and strengthen Government's donor coordination capacities through dialogue and technical support to facilitate the establishment of a donor coordination secretariat in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.
10. The Scope of Work will be reviewed whenever felt to be appropriate to ensure that DPCF work remains meaningful and focused.
11. Conclusions will be formulated and agreements made on the basis of voluntary consensus. The DPCF will agree amongst its members how work will be taken forward, particularly with regard to follow-up discussions with Government.

## **VI Organisation**

1. The DPCF will be chaired by the Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Lesotho, and co-chaired by every other development agency present in Lesotho on a six-month rotational basis.
2. DPCF meetings will normally be chaired by the Chair and co-chair. The Forum can decide on a member/s to represent the views of the Development Partners to the

Government depending on the nature of the issues as well as the said representative's comparative advantage.

3. The DPCF may nominate any member to represent or speak on their behalf when appropriate.
4. DPCF co-chairs will abide by these Terms of Reference and will respect the inclusive and harmonious nature of the DPCF. The incumbent co-chairs may represent, and speak on behalf of, the DPCF, only when specifically mandated to do so.
5. At the time of issuing notice of a meeting, the Secretariat will circulate a draft agenda. The draft agenda will be drawn up in consultation with the co-chairs, and will include reports from individual members and other issues which members of the DPCF consider necessary to raise. Individual members may propose issues to be included on the agenda. These proposals may be made at prior DPCF meetings or directly to the Secretariat.
6. The UNDP mission in Maseru will provide the permanent Secretariat and maintain the records of the DPCF.
7. The Secretariat will draft and circulate minutes of the previous meetings, together with the agenda for the forthcoming meeting, to members at least one week before the DPCF meeting.
8. The DPCF's key interlocutors will be the Development Planning and Economic Policy departments in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.