

## **Speaking notes**

by Roberto Bissio (coordinator of Social Watch)

speaking on behalf of the Civil Society Financing for Development Group

### **at the Thematic review: Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world: Multi-stakeholder perspectives at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations**

New York, July 11, 2017

#### *1. Presentation of the CS FfD Group itself*

The CSO FfD Group is an open civil society platform with the single criterion for membership being representation of a public-benefit civil society organization. It is an open virtual list containing more than 800 organizations (with more than 950 individual members). The CSO FfD Group includes the Women's Working Group on FfD and it cuts across multiple constituencies both in terms of Major Groups (women, NGOS, trade unions, young people) but also in terms of thematic/issue focus. We contribute to the process by being critical, raising key issues, contributing evidence, making it open and therefore credible, helping make the process accountable and therefore relevant.

#### *2. Cross-cutting challenges in the implementation of the SDGs*

We focus on FfD and therefore on MoI, which is by definition a cross-cutting challenge. FfD is about THE Global Partnership for Development (among governments and with international organizations focused on development). This is not just about ODA but also about fighting evasion, recovering the assets (frequently stolen or resulting from tax evasion) hidden in tax havens. Tax collaboration is essential and it should happen at the UN. Yet, there is a trend not to complement the Global Partnership but to SUBSTITUTE it with multiple PPPs that are non-transparent and not accountable. Recent Latin American experience additionally links PPPs with CORRUPTION on a massive scale.

#### *3. What are some lessons learned regarding building coherence across sectors, policy processes, and among MGoS themselves, to eradicate poverty and achieve prosperity?*

Main lesson is around the need to recover the public space and not be led by "fashion" when thinking of financial mechanisms. ECLAC identified four types of "innovative funding mechanisms" to complement the "traditional" ones (ODA, FDI and remittances):

- a) taxes and fees, including on global activities
- b) voluntary solidarity contributions (including philanthropy)
- c) debt instruments, bonds, etc, and
- d) market-based state guarantees, incentives, insurances and other mechanisms collective known as PPPs

The latter is only one instrument and not always the most adequate.

- 4 "First, do no harm" This centuries-old motto of healthcare providers suggesting that often abstaining from doing the bad thing is the best approach. While the financing for development discussion usually is about where the resources will come from, we need to be reminded that refraining from doing damage doesn't cost anything and it can save trillions: military expenditures, harmful fishing and agriculture subsidies, open and hidden subsidies to fossil fuels... getting rid of those would save enough money to eradicate poverty and save the planet.

Thank you.