Development Effectiveness in the "New Normal": What Do the Changing Roles and Purposes of ODA Mean for the Effectiveness Agenda?

Rachael Calleja and Beata Cichocka

Abstract

This paper explores how the roles and purposes of official development assistance (ODA) are changing and what these shifts mean for the future of the development effectiveness agenda. Using data obtained through a survey of officials working in development agencies and partner countries, this paper maps perspectives on the changing role and purposes of ODA as well as perceptions of the continued relevance of the effectiveness agenda and the Busan principles in this changing development landscape. Our results show that providers are increasingly prioritizing global challenges and private sector development as main purposes of ODA, and that the catalytic role of ODA is becoming increasingly important. In spite of substantive changes to the development landscape, survey respondents overwhelmingly thought that the current effectiveness agenda remains relevant—however, they also expressed the need to revise or renew the effectiveness principles to keep pace with changing demands. Working from our survey responses, we propose a basic framework for considering options for the future of the effectiveness agenda and conclude by proposing four possible paths forward.

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Executive summary

Ensuring the effective spending of official development assistance (ODA) has been a core imperative for development agencies since the early 2000s. Global consensus on development effectiveness has been refined by a series of international agreements—most recently, by the Busan Partnership Agreement in 2011. Yet the development landscape has seen substantive change in the decade since, placing pressures on ODA to achieve new purposes and play new roles among other financing flows. In this new global context, development agencies increasingly find themselves operating within a "new normal," where—some would claim—the old rules of ODA effectiveness either no longer apply or have lost the ability to command political attention.

Our paper tests such claims by analyzing responses from two original surveys that capture opinions on how the purposes and roles of ODA have changed and on the implications of these changes for the relevance of the effectiveness agenda across a range of development actors.

The changing purposes and roles of ODA

Findings from our survey clearly illustrate the many—and competing—pressures facing development agencies. Respondents signaled that their agencies are seeing an increasing number of purposes driving ODA allocations. Within the next five years, most agencies expect the imperative of tackling global challenges to overtake poverty reduction as the top purpose of ODA. These pressures to tackle both global and local challenges simultaneously raise important questions about what it means to work effectively in response to shifting needs and diverse demands.

At the same time, our surveys reveal that development agencies increasingly expect ODA to play a catalytic role. However, there is a discrepancy between the relative prioritization of ODA as a catalyst for providers and for partner countries, raising questions about the demand for catalytic ODA relative to its other roles.

The relevance of the effectiveness agenda

In contrast to those who see the effectiveness agenda as belonging to a world gone by, most respondents indicated that the current effectiveness agenda and the four Busan principles for effective development cooperation remain relevant. Yet respondents also indicated there was value in revising or renewing the effectiveness agenda in the years ahead to reinvigorate political commitment to effectiveness, strengthen the strategic alignment of the effectiveness principles to the emerging global context, and clarify the technical application of the principles to diverse actors, modalities, and challenges. While respondents broadly agree on the need to revisit the effectiveness agenda, there is little clarity or consensus around how it should change. Instead, responses pointed to a range of potential options for reform or renewal.

Four scenarios for the future of the effectiveness agenda

Taking cues from our survey, we identify four potential reform scenarios for the future of the effectiveness agenda. Each scenario takes a different approach in responding to key concerns raised by survey participants around the coverage of the agenda and the political will for reform. The scenarios include:

- **Align effectiveness with the sustainable development goals (SDGs):** involves an ambitious rethink and redesign of the effectiveness agenda to reflect the emerging paradigm of global development cooperation for achievement of the SDGs.

- **Revisit the current effectiveness principles:** involves revisiting the current development effectiveness framework to account for changes in the global development landscape over the past decade and renewing political commitment across actors.

- **Develop parallel principles tailored to specific challenges:** here the current effectiveness principles remain the same, but additional sets of principles for effective practice are created to address specific needs.

- **Refocusing on ODA effectiveness:** involves narrowing the development effectiveness agenda to refocus squarely on ODA flows.

While there are no "silver bullets" on the horizon, and each scenario involves unique trade-offs and challenges, together they present a starting place for considering potential options for future reforms of the effectiveness agenda.

1. Introduction

The increasingly complex and global development challenges facing the international community are raising questions about whether the institutions, instruments, and standards that govern development action remain "fit for purpose." In this emerging "new normal" of cooperation,[1] development agencies have been grappling with how to balance new and competing demands while ensuring that cooperation is delivered effectively. In this vein, some have questioned whether the current effectiveness agenda—as agreed in 2011 during the Fourth High-Level Forum (HLF) on Aid Effectiveness in Busan—remains relevant and robust for guiding actions in an evolving, global context.

In the decade since the Busan agreement, the development landscape has seen substantive change. Waves of populism in the years following the 2008 global financial crisis put pressure on development budgets and brought renewed interest in pursuing national or mutual interests as a purpose of official development assistance (ODA).[2] The poverty-focused Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were replaced by the much broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which highlight the importance of tackling global challenges—such as climate change, environmental sustainability, and peace and security—alongside traditional developmental concerns. At the same time, the continued proliferation of development actors has brought an increasingly broad range of perspectives to development cooperation.[3] Taken together, these changes are transforming the traditional roles of ODA as a source of development finance, as well as the purposes or goals that ODA is expected to achieve.

One question emerging from this changing development landscape is whether the current effectiveness agenda remains relevant. On one hand, there are good reasons to think that the shifting roles and purposes of ODA may require rethinking principles for effectiveness; after all, the Busan agreement was itself developed in response to the changing international socioeconomic climate in the years following the Paris Declaration.[4] On the other hand, the Busan principles have been viewed as a set of basic principles that can be applied to development activities across various contexts and that, in theory, could be applicable to the changing development landscape. Between these two views, the tension is about whether and to what degree the current principles remain fit for purpose and whether revision or renewal of the agenda is necessary (or desired) in response to changes in global development.

This paper explores how the roles and purposes of ODA are changing and what these shifts mean for the future of the development effectiveness agenda. We surveyed officials working within development agencies and partner countries to understand and map perspectives on

[1] Rachael Calleja and Mikaela Gavas, "Development Agencies and the 'New Normal'," *Center for Global Development*, December 1, 2021. https://www.cgdev.org/blog/development-agencies-and-new-normal

[2] See Dennis Hammerschmidt, Cosima Meyer, and Anne Pintsch, 'Foreign aid in times of populism: the influence of populist radical right parties on the official development assistance of OECD countries' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2021; Nilima Gulrajani and Rachael Calleja, 'The Principled Aid Index: understanding donor motivations," ODI Working Paper 548 (London: ODI, 2019).

[3] See Miles Kellerman, 'The proliferation of multilateral development banks', *Review of International Organisations* 14, 2019: 107–145; Nilima Gulrajani and Liam Swiss, 'Why Do Countries Become Donors? Assessing the drivers and implications of donor proliferation', ODI Report (London: ODI, 2017).

[4] OECD, 'The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation', 2012. https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/Busan%20partnership.pdf

the changing role and purposes of ODA as well as perceptions of the continued relevance of the effectiveness agenda and the Busan principles in this changing development landscape. Our results show that the changing purposes—or goals—of ODA have led to an increased prioritization of global challenges and private sector development to the detriment of poverty reduction, and that the catalytic role—or use—of ODA is becoming increasingly important for cooperation providers. When asked about the continued relevance of the effectiveness agenda as outlined in the 2011 Busan Agreement, responses from officials in development agencies and partner countries showed that, while they view the effectiveness agenda as relevant, there is a demand to revise or renew effectiveness principles to account for the changing role and purpose of ODA. Yet there is disagreement over how the agenda should adapt to remain fit for purpose.

Our motivation

This paper was motivated by conversations that occurred during the 2020 Development Leaders Conference co-hosted by the Center for Global Development and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. During this event, leaders expressed concerns that the current effectiveness principles, as outlined in the Busan agreement, were "no longer sufficient to cover the full range of modalities covered by development cooperation," and that the changing purposes of ODA, including the impetus to provide global public goods, was challenging traditional understandings about what makes ODA efficient and effective.[5] Leaders agreed that these challenges required a deeper rethink of the changing nature of ODA to understand what it means to be effective in the changing landscape.

Drawing from this conversation, our study takes the changing development landscape as its starting place for thinking about whether or how the effectiveness agenda may need to adapt. In doing so, we assume that substantive changes to the *what* and *why* of development has bearing on the how advanced by the effectiveness agenda. While our purpose is not to engage in normative debate on the *what* of development, we contend that understanding the broader changes to the roles and purposes of ODA provides important background for thinking about how effectiveness principles apply or how the agenda may need to evolve.

Defining "effectiveness"

For the purpose of this study, we understand "effectiveness" in terms of the globally recognized principles for effective development cooperation agreed in 2011 as part of the Busan Agreement—country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency and mutual accountability. While there are many ways to define the effectiveness of development cooperation, including in relation to the outcomes of specific interventions, macroeconomic effects, or the effectiveness of provider organizations,[6] our focus on the future of the effectiveness *agenda* necessitates a definition focused on the globally agreed principles.

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[5] Carin Jämtin and Masood Ahmed, "Development Leaders Conference 2020: Shaping Collaboration at a Crucial Time." *Center for Global Development,* December 3, 2020. https://www.cgdev.org/blog/development-leaders-conference-2020-shaping-collaboration-crucial-time

[6] Heiner Janus, Paul Marschall and Hannes Öhler, "Bridging the Gaps: An Integrated Approach to Assessing Aid Effectiveness," German Development Institute Briefing Paper 12/2020, (Bonn: DIE, 2020).

Structure of the rest of the paper

Section 2 provides a background on how the development effectiveness agenda has evolved alongside a changing development landscape—albeit with a slowing pace over the past decade. It then sets out the contours of the emerging "new normal" facing all development actors in the context of recent changes in the development landscape.

Section 3 provides a brief overview of our survey methodology.

Section 4 describes the survey results, illustrating respondents' views on the changing purposes and roles of ODA, current relevance of the effectiveness agenda, and value of revisiting or renewing the agenda.

Section 5 analyzes the main findings from across the survey instrument, highlighting key challenges facing development agencies in implementing the effectiveness agenda in a "new normal" and drawing out the main "clusters of consensus" in calls for reform.

Section 6 builds on our analysis to articulate four potential scenarios for revising and renewing the development effectiveness agenda, highlighting potential strengths and risks of each approach.

Section 7 offers closing remarks and conclusions.

2. Background

This section provides background on the evolution of the effectiveness agenda and the changing development landscape. Doing so is necessary to evidence the two premises that underlie our survey: 1) that the effectiveness agenda has been an evolving consensus, informed by broader changes in the development landscape; and 2) that the development landscape has changed significantly since the effectiveness agenda was last updated at the 2011 HLF in Busan. While our survey answers questions about whether such changes necessitate the renewal or revision of the agenda and how these changes affect the roles and purposes of ODA, understanding how the landscape has evolved in recent years provides necessary context for interpreting our survey results.

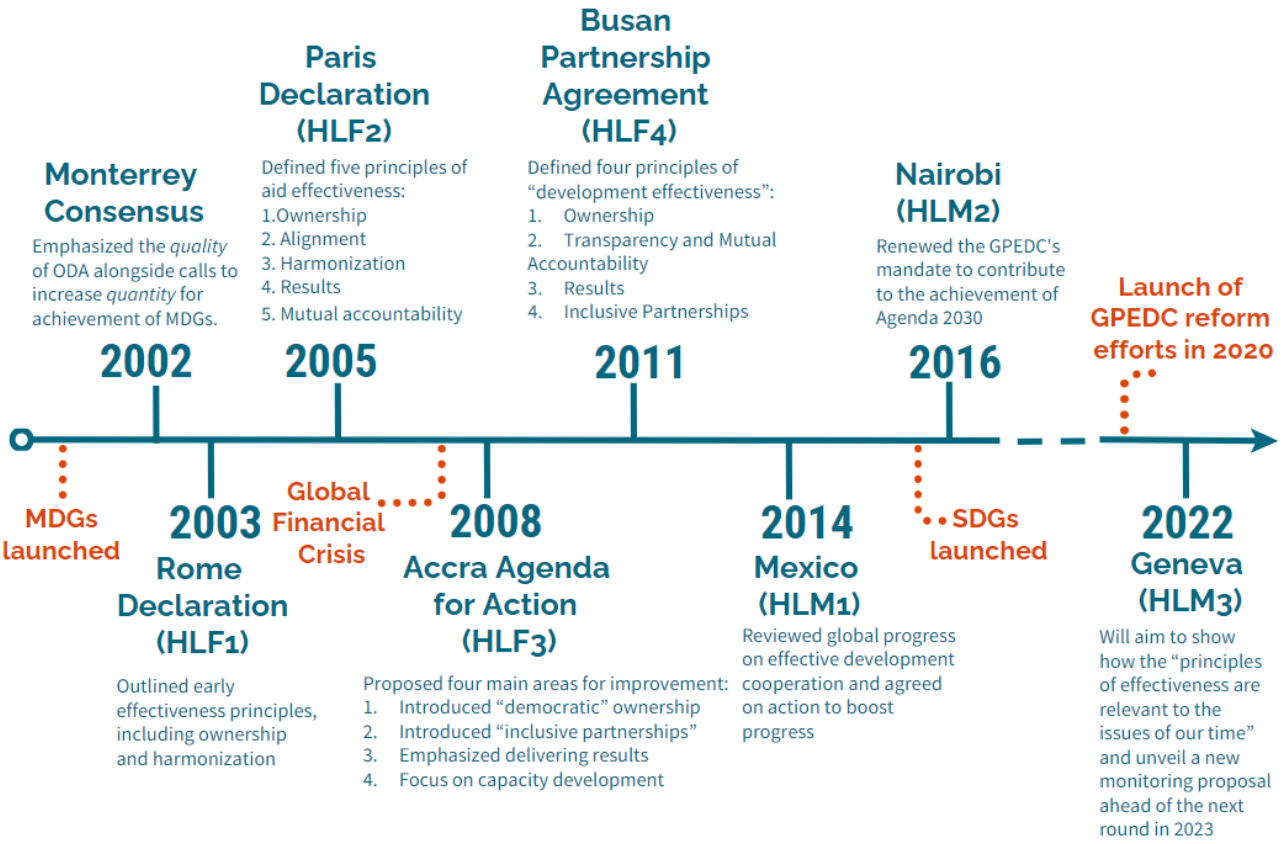
A brief look back: How the effectiveness agenda evolved within a changing global context

The development effectiveness agenda evolved over two decades via a series of international meetings that built, reviewed, and updated principles of development effectiveness alongside the changing development landscape (see Figure 1). Emerging in the 1990s, the agenda was a response to concerns that ODA allocated in the 1970s and 1980s had largely failed to deliver developmental outcomes, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.[7] Following a drop in ODA

[7] Molly Sundberg, "Donors dealing with 'aid effectiveness' inconsistencies: national staff in foreign aid agencies in Tanzania," *Journal of East African Studies* 13, no. 3 (2019): 445–464; Geske Dijkstra, "The new aid paradigm: A case of policy incoherence," DESA Working Paper No. 128 (New York: UNDESA, 2013).

volumes throughout much of the 1990s, calls to increase ODA in support of the MDGs were met with a focus on increasing the quality of ODA as well as raising its *quantity*.[8] In the years that followed, international recognition of the need for more effective cooperation appeared as part of development financing discussions held during the 2002 Monterrey Consensus and was further elaborated during the first HLF on Aid Effectiveness held in Rome the following year. [9]

Figure 1. Summary timeline of major updates and high-level meetings on the effectiveness agenda



Source: Authors' own compilation from OECD and GPEDC documents.

[8] Two seminal World Bank papers were largely credited with "kick-starting" the aid effectiveness debate, perhaps the most important of which was the 1998 report titled *Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't, And Why. See also Steven Radelet*, "Aid Effectiveness and the Millennium Development Goals," CGD Working Paper 39 (Washington D.C.: CGD, 2004).

[9] Radelet, "Aid Effectiveness and the Millennium Development Goals."

In 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness defined—for the first time—a set of five principles (ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability) of best practice for effective ODA management.[10] The Declaration focused exclusively on the processes and qualities of allocating ODA, which remained a key development flow at the time;[11] indeed, 2005 saw global efforts to scale up ODA as a source of development finance, with substantive pledges to increase ODA volumes to 0.7 percent of gross national income in alignment with commitments made at G8 Gleneagles Summit, and during the UN World Summit.[12] At the same time, the signing of the Declaration signaled political interest in the agenda and served as an agreement between providers and partner countries to improve the quality of ODA and hold each other to account.[13]

The following HLFs in Accra (2008) and Busan (2011) broadened the inclusivity of the agenda in recognition of the growing role of diverse development actors—including the private sector and "emerging actors."[14] Indeed, the global balance of wealth and influence had started to shift in the 1990s, with G20 countries rising to prominence in an increasingly multipolar world.[15] While these shifts remained absent from discussions around the Paris Declaration, the subsequent Accra Agenda for Action and Busan Agreement made clear strides towards inclusivity.

Notably, the Busan agreement aimed to respond to the changing global landscape in two ways. First, in recognition of shifting global patterns of wealth and influence towards the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and the diversification of development flows, the Busan meeting invited representatives from a broader range of actors including provider countries outside the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), civil society, and the private sector to help shape the text of the agreement.[16] Second, the Busan agreement broadened the scope of the effectiveness agenda from its prior focus on "aid" to an agenda of "development effectiveness." In doing so, the agenda covered—for the first time—financial flows and policies beyond aid, strengthening the imperative to pursue policy coherence.[17] The resulting agreement refocused effectiveness around four key principles—ownership, transparency and accountability, focus on results, and inclusive partnerships—yet de-emphasized the Paris principles of harmonization and alignment.[18] The Busan document also established the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) to

[10] OECD, 'Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness' (Paris: OECD, 2005).
[11] Nilima Gulrajani, "Improving Canada's performance as a bilateral donor: assessing the past and building for the future," in S. Brown (Ed) *Struggling for Effectiveness: CIDA and Canadian Foreign Aid* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012): 53–78.
[12] Andrew Rogerson, "Key Busan challenges and contributions to the emerging development effectiveness agenda," ODI Background Note (London: ODI, 2011).
[13] Erik Lundsgaarde and Lars Engberg-Pedersen, "The Aid Effectiveness Agenda: Past Experiences and Future Prospects" (Copenhagen: DIIS, 2019); Stephen Brown, "The Rise and Fall of the Aid Effectiveness Norm," *The European Journal of Development Research* 32 (2020): 1230-1248.
[14] Neissan Alessandro Besharati, "A Year after Busan: Where is the Global Partnership Going?," SAIIA Occasional Paper No. 136 (South Africa: SAIIA, 2013).
[15] Rogerson, "Key Busan Challenges."
[16] While such actors were invited to participate in the Accra agreement also, inclusivity was further expanded with Busan; see Brown, "The Rise and Fall of the Aid Effectiveness Norm."
[17] Pauline Ngirumpatse, "Tackling Development Effectiveness: A spectrum of unfinished business(es)," 2019. http://southernvoice.org/tackling-development-effectiveness-a-spectrum-of-unfinished-businesses/
[18] Brown, "The Rise and Fall of the Aid Effectiveness Norm," p. 1238.

support governance and implementation of its new, partner country–led monitoring framework (see Box 1).[19]

Box 1. Governance of the Effectiveness Agenda: What is the GPEDC?

The GPEDC was launched in 2012 as a "multistakeholder platform" that brings together governments, civil society, bilateral and multilateral agencies, the private sector, and representatives from trade unions and parliaments to support the governance, implementation, and political momentum of the effectiveness agenda. In doing so, the GPEDC acts as the main body for convening global conversations on effectiveness and is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the effectiveness agenda via a substantive, country-led, biennial monitoring survey that gathers inputs on provider processes from partner countries.

The GPEDC is currently led by four co-chairs, governed by a multistakeholder steering committee, and supported by a joint support team run by members of both the OECD and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Source: GPEDC, "About the partnership," accessed January 28, 2021 https://www.effectivecooperation.org/landing-page/about-partnership

Despite attempts to broaden inclusivity and participation as part of the Busan process, subsequent high-level meetings (HLMs) of the GPEDC in Mexico (2014) and Nairobi (2016), and the senior-level meeting held in New York in 2019, saw waning participation—especially from the major "dual-role" provider countries.[20] While the GPEDC aimed to "'broaden the tent' of development governance" by giving voice to previously under-represented stakeholders, an inclusive consensus largely failed to materialize due to limited enthusiasm from some actors.[21] In part, lower engagement from non-DAC countries (including the BRICS) has been linked to their concerns around the legitimacy of the GPEDC, with some describing it as a de-facto OECD DAC-led initiative (in spite of the formal involvement of the UNDP).[22] Indeed, for many "Southern" providers, existing UN initiatives, such as the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) were seen as more "internationally legitimate" spaces for discussing development cooperation.[23] Still, other analysis has argued that unresolved tensions around "burden-sharing" between Northern and Southern providers, difficulties with defining "differential" commitments and their monitoring, and practical resource constraints have

[19] Soyeun Kim and Simon Lightfoot, "The EU and the Negotiation of Global Development Norms: The Case of Aid Effectiveness," *European Foreign Affairs Review* 22, no. 2 (2017): p. 171.
[20] Gerardo Bracho, "Failing to Share the Burden: Traditional Donors, Southern Providers, and the Twilight of the GPEDC and the Post-War Aid System," *The Palgrave Handbook of Development Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda*, pp. 367–391. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillian, 2021.
[21] Jack Taggart, "A Decade Since Busan: Towards Legitimacy or a 'New Tyranny' of Global Development Partnership?," *The Journal of Development Studies*, 2022
[22] Xiaoyun Li, "Should China join the GPEDC? The prospects for China and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation," *German Development Institute Discussion Paper 17/2017* (Bonn: German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik, 2017), p. 1.
[23] Ibid. p. 6

been more important factors for Southern providers' limited involvement on the effectiveness agenda than the choice of governance platform.[24]

Still, the years since Busan have not seen major revisions to the effectiveness principles or agenda through the various HLMs held since (shown in Figure 1). Instead, the agenda has evolved through smaller reforms, seemingly designed to clarify the applicability of effectiveness principles to other key changes in the development landscape emerging since 2011. These reforms have materialized in two ways. First, alongside the Busan agreement, new sets of principles have emerged that appear to tailor effectiveness considerations to specific types of finance, actor, or activity. For instance, the 2019 Kampala Principles on Effective Private Sector Engagement in Development Co-operation, responded to the growing role of the private sector as providers of development finance and established principles to guide effective private sector partnerships. Second, the GPEDC has recently undertaken a substantive review of its monitoring process and framework, which aims—at least in part—to respond to the changing development landscape. Emerging as part of the GPEDC's agenda during its 2016 HLM in Nairobi, efforts to contextualize and define the applicability of the effectiveness principles to new modalities, contexts, and actors have been part of the GPEDC's ongoing work in the years since.[25] Part of the latest review process, under the 2020–2022 Work Program, involves adapting the GPEDC's indicator framework to allow for a "more tailored and flexible approach" to monitoring across contexts and instruments as part of a strategic and technical reform to align the monitoring exercise to the changing landscape.[26] In doing so, understanding what the effectiveness principles mean in different and changing development contexts—like the COVID-19 pandemic—is a key objective. The latest reforms are expected to feed into the next HLM, set for December 2022.[27]

Contours of the "new normal": Charting the direction of change in the development landscape since Busan

The relatively minor changes to the formal framework for development effectiveness since Busan have occurred over a period that saw profound shifts in the global development landscape. A key moment of change was ushered in by the 2030 Agenda, which formalized the imperative of tackling both global challenges and country-focused action as a core purpose of development. The SDGs responded to the changing development reality, where sustained poverty reduction over prior decades gave way to an agenda that focused on the pervasive global challenges that threatened to undo development outcomes if left unchecked. While the notion that providing global public goods (GPGs) had developmental value was

[24] On burden-sharing, differential commitments, and difficulties with monitoring see Gerardo Bracho, "The Troubled Relationship of the Emerging Powers and the Effective Development Cooperation Agenda," Discussion Paper, Bonn: German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), 2017; on resource constraints of Southern providers to influence and participate in the GPEDC see Li, "Should China Join the GPEDC?," p. 8.

[25] GPEDC, "Co-chairs' Proposal"; GPEDC, "Nairobi Outcome Document." 2020. https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-05/Nairobi-Outcome-Document-English.pdf

[26] GPEDC, "Global Partnership Monitoring Reform: Towards new evidence, better accountability and more relevance," 2021, https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-06/SCM21_session4_monitoring%20doc_countours_EN.pdf

[27] GPEDC, "Roadmap for the '2022 Effectiveness Summit," accessed 25.03.2022 at https://www.effectivecooperation.org/hlm3

not strictly new—climate change, for instance, had been part of the international agenda for several decades[28]—the SDG agenda highlighted the deepening interconnectedness of the global system and signaled that the shared nature of development challenges required a global response.

The price tag for financing the SDG agenda handily dwarfed available resources and sparked calls for new sources of finance to support global development. At the time, ODA budgets were flatlining in response to the economic and political realities that followed from the global financial crisis. In particular, provider governments faced downward pressure on ODA budgets alongside domestic austerity and populist forces; such pressures also saw the resurgence of pursuing the "national interest" as a key purpose of ODA throughout the 2010s.[29] Slow growth in ODA budgets was often coupled with calls to draw on ODA resources to tackle emergent crises; ODA was used, for instance, to cover costs of hosting refugees in the wake of the 2015 crisis in Syria as well as to fund vaccine distribution in response to COVID-19.[30] Alongside stagnant ODA, other flows—both public and private—grew in relative importance, while "spiralling investment needs" made more popular the use of ODA to "leverage" or catalyze private flows.[31]

New international financial institutions and development finance institutes, which were often created to support the catalytic role of ODA, added to the increasing proliferation of development actors and modalities appearing in the cooperation landscape.[32] Since 2011, new multilateral development banks such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank have been established, the DAC has welcomed six new members,[33] and the importance of vertical funds (especially in climate[34] and health[35]) has grown. There

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[28] J.T. Roberts et al., "Has Foreign Aid Been Greened?" Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development 51, no. 1 (2009).

[29] For example, Faust and Koch attribute a decline in European budget support to the elections of right-wing governments, which are more risk-averse, with constituencies disproportionately skeptical about aid and the potential risk of waste due to corruption. See: Jörg Faust and Svea Koch, "Foreign Aid and the Domestic Politics of European Budget Support," German Development Institute Discussion Paper 21 (Bonn: DIE, 2014); see also Gulrajani and Calleja. "The Principled Aid Index."

[30] Mikaela Gavas and Samuel Pleeck, "Global Trends in 2021: How COVID-19 is Transforming International Development," CGD Note (London: CGD, 2021); Andrew Rogerson and Euan Ritchie, "ODA in Turmoil: Why Aid Definitions and Targets Come Under Pressure in the Pandemic Age, and What Might be Done About It" (London: CGD, 2020).

[31] Gavas and Pleeck, "Global Trends in 2021," p. 8. Indeed, over time, public flows (i.e., ODA and OOFs taken together) declined relative to the share of private finance: while in 2010 public finance represented 64% of flows, by 2019, public and private flows were almost equal, see World Bank, "A Changing Landscape: Trends in Official Financial Flows and the Aid Architecture." (Washington D.C.: World Bank Group: 2021). https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/9eb18daf0e574a0f106a6c74d7a1439e-0060012021/original/A-Changing-Landscape-Trends-in-Official-Financial-Flows-and-the-Aid-Architecture-November-2021.pdf

[32] Debapriya Bhattacharya and Sarah Sabin Khan, "Rethinking Development Effectiveness: Perspectives from the Global South," Southern Voice Occasional Paper Series no. 59 (Southern Voice, 2020).

[33] Czechia, Iceland, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined in 2013, while Hungary joined in 2016.

[34] Niranjali Amerasinghe, Joe Thwaites, Gaia Larsen and Athena Ballesteros, "Future of the Funds" (Washington D.C.: World Resources Institute, 2017). https://www.wri.org/research/future-funds-exploring-architecture-multilateral-climate-finance

[35] Amanda Glassman, Lydia Regan, Y-Ling Chi and Kalipso Chalkidou, "Getting to Convergence: How "Vertical" Health Programs Add Up to A Health System," 2020. https://www.cgdev.org/blog/getting-convergence-how-vertical-health-programs-add-health-system

has been an even starker rise in the number of implementing entities,[36] further exacerbating fragmentation[37] and diluting the role of development agencies as providers of ODA, including in relation to other ministries within their own governments. At the same time, there has been a continued proliferation of non-DAC countries as providers of development cooperation. A survey conducted by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs found that the share of "developing countries" providing development cooperation increased from 63 percent to 74 percent between 2015 and 2017.[38] Others found that 88 countries are active in development cooperation, half of which are considered low or middle-income economies, demonstrating the complexity of the development system and the importance of actors outside the DAC.[39]

Significantly, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of cooperation across a range of actors, with some suggesting that the crisis has accelerated transition towards a new paradigm of development based on global cooperation.[40] Indeed, responses to the dual health and economic shocks of the pandemic showed the fallacy of a unidirectional model of development (from "North" to "South") and instead highlighted the importance of "multi-directional learning" across all countries to support sustainable development.[41] While COVID-19 has advanced a global model of cooperation, the pandemic has also deepened the absolute scale of development challenges in the years ahead by reversing decades of progress toward poverty reduction and human development. By some estimates, it will take a decade of sustained growth to bring poverty numbers to pre-crisis levels, which presents a troubling picture of the challenges ahead and increases the need for action to achieve the 2030 Agenda.[42] As the world shifts from immediate crisis response to tackling the long-term global impacts of COVID-19 and building resilience against future shocks, a key question facing the international community is whether the norms and standards of cooperation—including the effectiveness agenda—are fit to the emerging realities of the new development landscape and paradigm.

[36] According to World Bank analysis, the number of bilateral donors increased from a yearly average of 25 providers during the 2000–2004 period to 43 providers during the 2015–2019 period, while the number of multilateral donors increased from 22 to 27. The growth in entities providing official finance (i.e., line ministries or agencies) was more marked: from 191 in 2000–2004 to 502 bilateral and multilateral entities in 2015–2019. See World Bank, "Changing Landscape," pp. 26–27.

[37] That is, leading to a larger number of financial commitments but each of smaller size. The authors note that there is limited systematic evidence regarding the impact of donor proliferation and aid fragmentation on transaction costs or aid effectiveness. See World Bank, "Changing Landscape," p. 31.

[38] UN Economic and Social Council, "Trends and progress in international development cooperation," 2018. https://www.un.org/development/desa/financing/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.financing/files/2020-03/N1810230.pdf

[39] Andreas Fuchs and Angelika Müller, "Democracy and Aid Donorship," AidDATA Working Paper 68 (Virginia: AidDATA, 2018).

[40] Annalisa Prizzon, "How coronavirus is accelerating a new approach to international cooperation," ODI Blog, 26 March 2020. https://odi.org/en/insights/how-coronavirus-is-accelerating-a-new-approach-to-international-cooperation/

[41] Johan A. Oldekop et al., "COVID-19 and the case for global development," *World Development* 134 (2020).

[42] Gavas and Pleeck, "Global Trends in 2021"

3. Survey methods

The analysis and findings presented in the remainder of this paper are drawn from responses to two surveys—one with officials from development agencies and the other with officials from partner countries—to obtain perspectives on: (1) how and whether the purposes and roles of ODA are changing, (2) whether the effectiveness principles remain fit for purpose, and (3) whether there is value in revising the effectiveness agenda—and, if so, how it should change.[43]

Throughout our survey, we define the "purposes" of ODA as the goals that ODA is intended to achieve,[44] while ODA's "roles" refers to how ODA is utilized, relative to other source of finance or modalities for cooperation, to achieve the stated goals (see Box 2). We understand "ODA" as defined by the OECD-DAC as "government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries."[45] Questions about the effectiveness agenda were asked with specific reference to the current agenda as defined in the Busan agreement.

Box 2. What are ODA's purposes and roles?

Several of our survey questions ask respondents to consider the prioritization of various purposes and roles of ODA for their organizations.

Purposes of ODA

The purposes of ODA identified in our survey match work by Carol Lancaster (2007), who identifies several purposes of ODA: advancing domestic diplomatic interests, supporting poverty reduction, providing humanitarian relief, advancing providers' commercial interests, promoting democracy, supporting global public goods, and mitigating conflict and post-conflict transitions. Given that ODA's purposes can change over time, our survey includes options that reference two additional purposes which respond to recent trends and rhetoric from providers: "addressing the root causes of migration" and "supporting the development of the private sector."

Roles of ODA

Our survey captures perspectives on three main roles of ODA. First, the traditional role of ODA refers to its use in financing projects or programs in partner countries. Second, ODA has increasingly been called to play a catalytic role, where it is used to crowd-in additional finance, including from private investment, trade, or domestic resources (UN, 2015). Third, ODA can play a complementary role alongside other, already existing sources of domestic and international finance.

[43] The bulk of the surveys were conducted by email from May to August 2021. The partner country survey was also shared with an additional group of participants in November 2021, following the discovery of a new database of contacts.

[44] This definition is based on work by Carol Lancaster, who defined "aid's purposes" as "the broad goals that donor governments sought to achieve with their aid," which she argues can be viewed both through statements of ODA purposes and through allocation preferences. See: See Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

[45] OECD, "Official Development Assistance (ODA)," (Paris: OECD, 2021). https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/What-is-ODA.pdf

The main difference between the two surveys is the target population:

- **The provider survey** targeted officials working in a range of development agencies including bilateral agencies from both DAC and non-DAC providers,[46] multilateral development agencies, multilateral or regional development banks, and bilateral development finance institutions.[47] We specifically targeted mid-senior officials working in units responsible for development policy, strategy, or effectiveness within development agencies, on the assumption that such officials would have a sufficiently high-level view of their organization and its priorities to offer organizational insight. In cases where bilateral providers have institutional setups that involve more than one agency—typically a ministry of foreign affairs responsible for development policy and a separate agency responsible for implementation—we included individuals from both agencies in our sample population.

- **The partner country survey** targeted partner country officials with responsibility for the management of ODA for their country. These were often mid-senior officials working in Ministries of Planning, Finance, or Foreign Affairs. We ensured that our sample population included a broad range of countries, at various income levels, and across regions.

Both surveys used a combination of purposive and convenience sampling. While most participants were identified and targeted using publicly available information,[48] we also drew participation from our networks. For the provider survey, we contacted 330 individuals from 114 unique development agencies to participate in our survey. We received full or partial responses with usable data from 89 individuals, with an overall response rate of about 27 percent.[49] Respondents represent at least 48 unique agencies.[50] For the partner survey, we contacted 251 individuals from 90 partner countries to participate in our survey. To facilitate participation from a broad range of countries, we had our survey professionally translated into French and Spanish and shared the survey and cover email to each country based on the

[46] We requested that non-DAC providers complete the survey from the perspective of development cooperation instead of ODA.

[47] We do not include philanthropies, civil society organizations, or private sector actors as part of our survey. While we acknowledge the important role of these organizations and their involvement, implementation, and inclusion in the effectiveness agenda, the focus of this paper is on the changing purposes and roles of official and concessional development finance (ODA and similar modalities), making our survey better suited to an official development agency sample.

[48] For the provider survey, we identified potential participants from government websites and lists of participants in recent HLMs of the GPEDC; for the partner country survey, we identified participants from public lists of officials with responsibility for donor coordination or ODA management from GPEDC meetings, as well as from other public lists of contact or coordination points for the sustainable development goals or for select multilaterals.

[49] We considered responses with usable data to be those that answered 17 percent or more of the survey. At 17 percent completion, we have data on at least one substantive question beyond the introductory questions that ask respondents to self-identify their position (senior management, mid-level, etc.) and the nature of their experience (field versus headquarters). Of our total 89 responses, 76 are considered full responses, with respondents completing 100 percent of the survey. Some multiple-choice questions were only asked of respondents who had answered "yes" or "no" in a prior question, meaning that the number of responses may differ by question.

[50] Of our response sample, 11 responses did not identify their specific agency, answering "Government" or "Ministry of Foreign Affairs," making it difficult to identify whether respondents are from agencies not otherwise represented in our sample. These responses were excluded from our count of unique agencies (meaning our sample may represent more than 48 agencies) but are otherwise included in our sample.

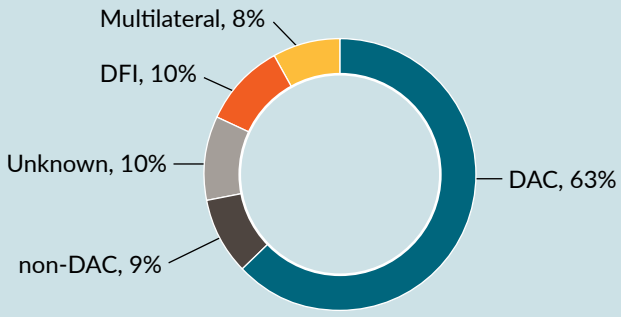
national language. We received 28 full or partial responses to this survey, with a response rate of about 11 percent. Respondents represent 19 countries across income groups and regions. A full description of the survey respondents is available in Box 3.

Box 3. Description of survey respondents

Provider survey

Most responses to the provider survey were from bilateral DAC development agencies (63 percent), followed by DFIs (10 percent), non-DAC providers (9 percent), and multilaterals (8 percent), with the remaining responses from individuals who did not specify their agency (Figure 2). Most respondents (52 percent) were "senior managers" within their organizations, with 46 percent identifying as "mid-level staff" and 2 percent as "junior staff." In addition, most of our sample—around 71 percent—were primarily located in agency headquarters over the last five years. A further 18 percent spent time in headquarters and field offices, while 11 percent worked primarily in the field.

Figure 2. Breakdown of provider survey sample by agency type



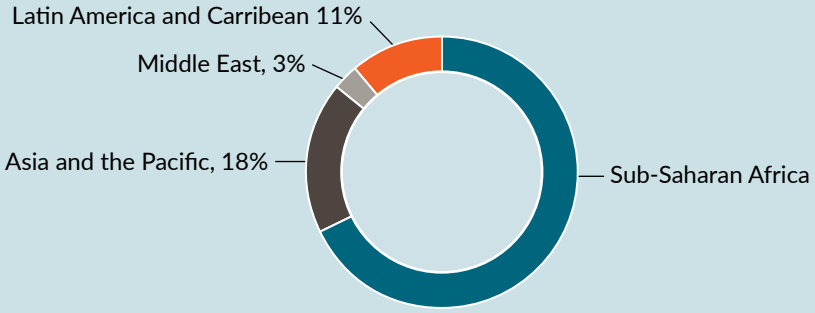
Partner country survey

The largest number of responses were provided by countries in sub-Saharan Africa (68 percent), followed by countries in Asia and the Pacific (18 percent), Latin American countries (11 percent), and one country (3 percent) from the Middle East (Figure 3). Using the OECD's income classifications for 2021, most of our respondents represented the governments of lower-middle-income countries (61 percent), followed by low-income countries (18 percent), upper-middle-income countries (18 percent), and one country that has recently graduated to high-income status but remains ODA eligible (3 percent). Most respondents identified as working in Ministries of Finance (54 percent), followed by Ministries for Planning (21 percent), Ministries of Foreign Affairs (11 percent), Offices of the President (7 percent), and Ministries for Development Cooperation (7 percent). Most respondents identify their agencies as being the primary actor responsible for managing inward development cooperation (75 percent); others are responsible for both inward and outward cooperation (18 percent) or for inward ODA on a specific topic (7 percent).

(continued)

Box 3. Continued

Figure 3. Breakdown of partner country survey sample by region



Survey limitations

We acknowledge that our survey is necessarily an imperfect exercise. Specifically, we see three main limitations to the scope of our survey and the interpretation of our results:

1. **Focus on official providers and flows:** While the effectiveness agenda covers a broad range of development actors including civil society, philanthropies, and the private sector, our survey targeted official actors only. Despite the important role of these organizations and their involvement, implementation, and inclusion in the effectiveness agenda, our focus on the changing purposes and roles of official and concessional development finance (ODA and similar modalities) makes our survey better suited to an official development agency sample.

2. **Sample size:** While we recognize that the total number of responses represents only a small portion of individuals working in development agencies or partner country governments, we believe that the broad coverage of our survey responses and the seniority of our respondents means that these results provide important insight into the changing role and purpose of ODA and the implications for the effectiveness agenda. Given the smaller sample size for the partner country survey, we use the results cautiously as a comparator and to complement findings from the provider survey.

3. **Generalizability:** Due to the use of primarily convenience and purposive sampling, we recognize that our survey findings reflect the perspectives of respondents but cannot be generalized across the broader population. Technical or regional staff within development agencies, for instance, may have different views on the changing role and purpose of ODA and the usefulness of the effectiveness agenda from the perspective of their specialty. While this is a necessary limitation of our study, this survey targets those with a strategic, overarching view of the changing development landscape and the implications of emerging trends for the full breadth of work of their agency.[51]

[51] Future work may focus on particular technical or geographical staff to capture additional details of challenges facing effective development cooperation in particular contexts.

4. Survey findings

This section maps the main findings from our two surveys, following the general flow of the questionnaire. The first part details the changing purposes of ODA, the second examines ODA's changing roles, and the third outlines findings on the relevance of the effectiveness agenda, whether it should be revised, and how it should change.

Changing purposes of ODA

Amid the changing landscape, development agencies are facing important questions about how, where, and on what limited resources should be spent. These pressures were confirmed by respondents to both surveys, the majority of whom indicated that the purposes of ODA had changed for their organizations over the past decade (67 percent for providers, 55 percent for partners).[52]

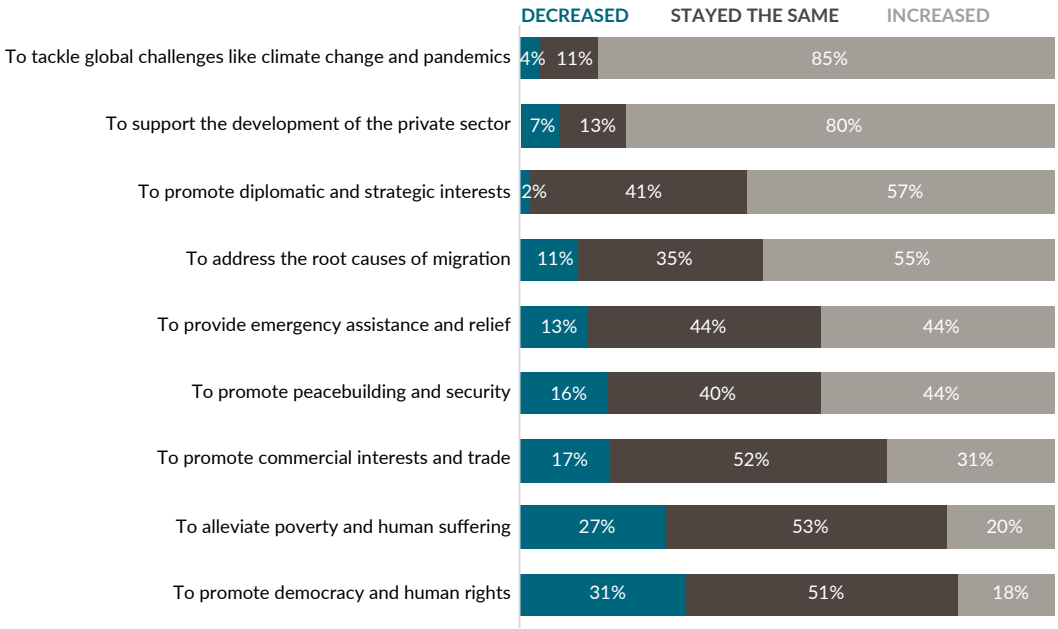
How have the purposes of ODA changed over time?

When asked *how* the purposes of ODA had changed over the past decade, respondents to our provider survey showed that most purposes of ODA are becoming more important over time, suggesting that development agencies are facing an increasing number of competing demands (see Figure 4). The largest increases in importance were reported for purposes that see "tackling global challenges" and "supporting the development of the private sector" as key goals of ODA. Our partner country survey similarly revealed that 81 percent of respondents noted an increase in the importance of "tackling global challenges" as a key purpose of ODA for their countries, followed by "supporting peace and security" and "supporting the development of the private sector," which half of respondents (50 percent) identified as of increased importance (see Figure 2A). At the same time, respondents to the provider survey answered that the use of ODA to promote "democracy and human rights" and to "alleviate poverty and human suffering" saw the largest decreases in importance as a purpose of ODA for their agencies over the last decade.

Importantly, responses to the provider and partner country surveys showed differing perspectives on the changing importance of "alleviating poverty and human suffering" as a purpose of ODA (see Figure 5). While 50 percent of respondents to the partner country survey suggested that poverty reduction has become a more important priority for their governments over the past decade, only 20 percent of provider survey respondents saw poverty alleviation as increasing in importance for their agencies; in fact, more provider respondents saw poverty reduction as decreasing in importance than increasing. While the relatively small sample size—particularly for the partner country survey—makes it difficult to draw broad generalizations, the differing perspectives on the relative importance of poverty reduction as a purpose of ODA could signal a disconnect between the type of engagements demanded by partner countries and those offered by providers.

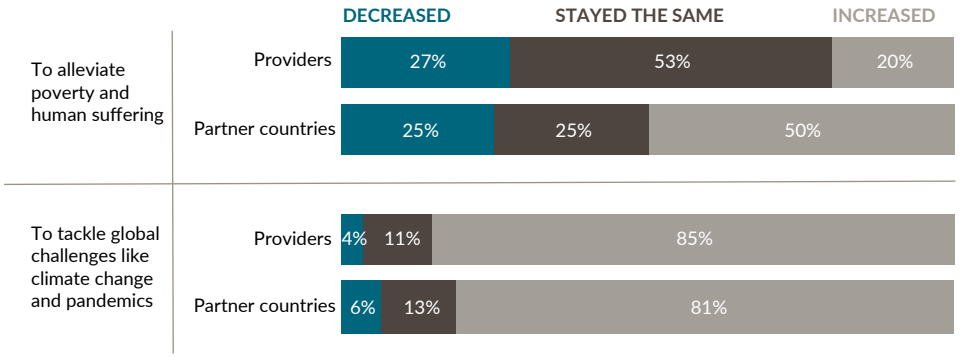
[52] Based on 82 responses from providers and 22 in the partner survey. The idea of "purposes" has important distinctions from "sectors" where ODA is channeled: while the latter refers to the *technical* aspects of areas of cooperation, the former refers to the *ultimate goals* intended to be achieved. See also Figure A.1 for respondent views on priority sectors.

Figure 4. Responses on how the purposes of ODA changed over the past decade (provider survey)



Note: Based on 55 responses asked only for those who selected that the main purposes of ODA had changed in the previous question Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Figure 5. Responses on how the purposes of ODA have changed over the past decade—comparison of selected purposes in the provider and partner country surveys

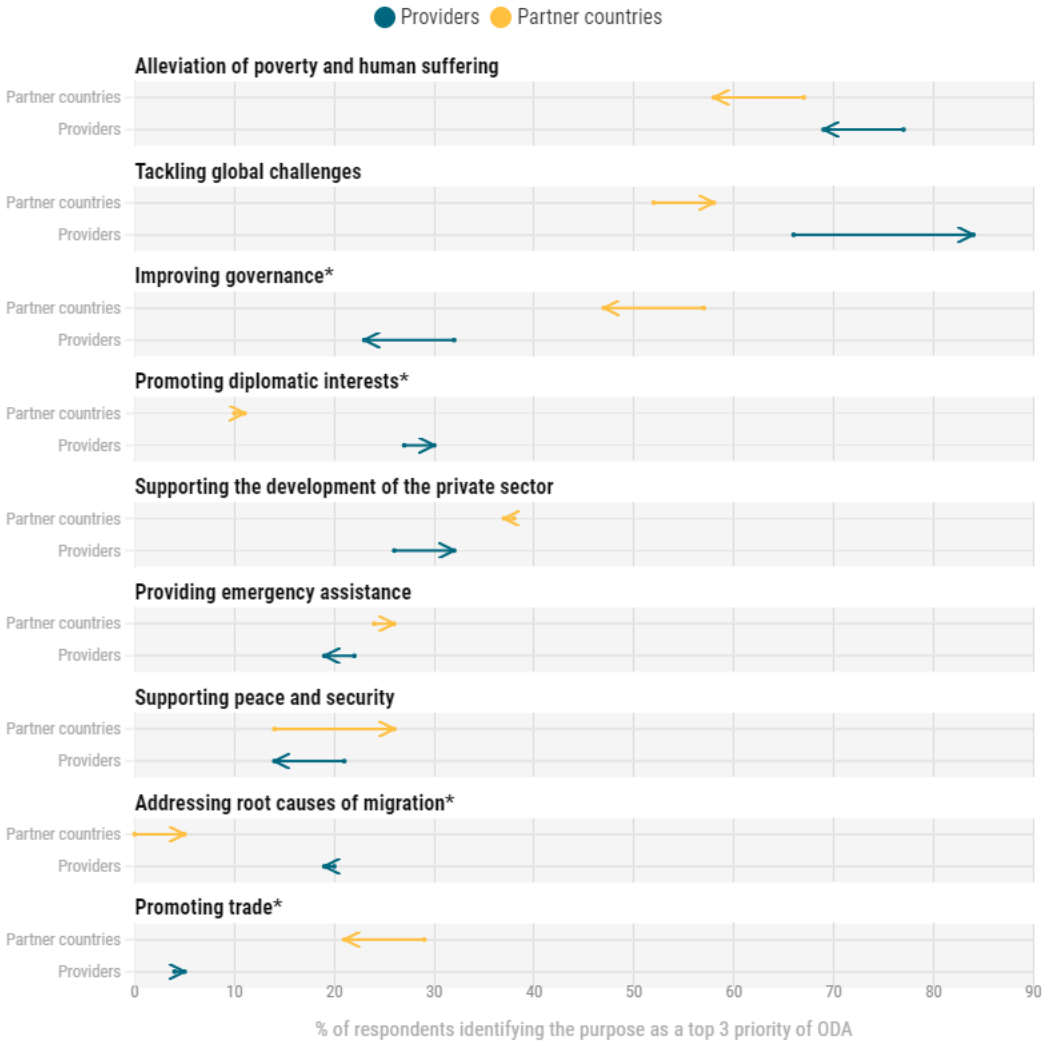


Note: Provider survey data based on 55 responses, partner country based on 16 responses. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

How are the purposes of ODA expected to change in the future?

In addition to looking backward to identify how the purposes of ODA have changed in recent years, we also asked respondents to identify both the current prioritization of each purpose of ODA from the perspective of their organization and the expected prioritization of each purpose of ODA over the next five years. Figure 6 reports results of both questions, mapping the percentage of respondents that identified each purpose of ODA as a current and future priority, for both the provider and partner country surveys. The figure uses arrows to show the trajectory of the relative importance of each purpose, i.e., whether the future prioritization of each purpose is expected to increase or decrease from current levels, and by how much.

Figure 6. Percentage of respondents identifying each purpose of ODA as a top-three priority, currently and as expected in five years



Note: Phrasing for these purposes was different in the provider and partner country surveys, though they refer to similar issues. There were 82 provider responses for current purposes and 80 responses for the next 5 years. There were 21 partner country responses for current purposes and 19 responses for the next 5 years.

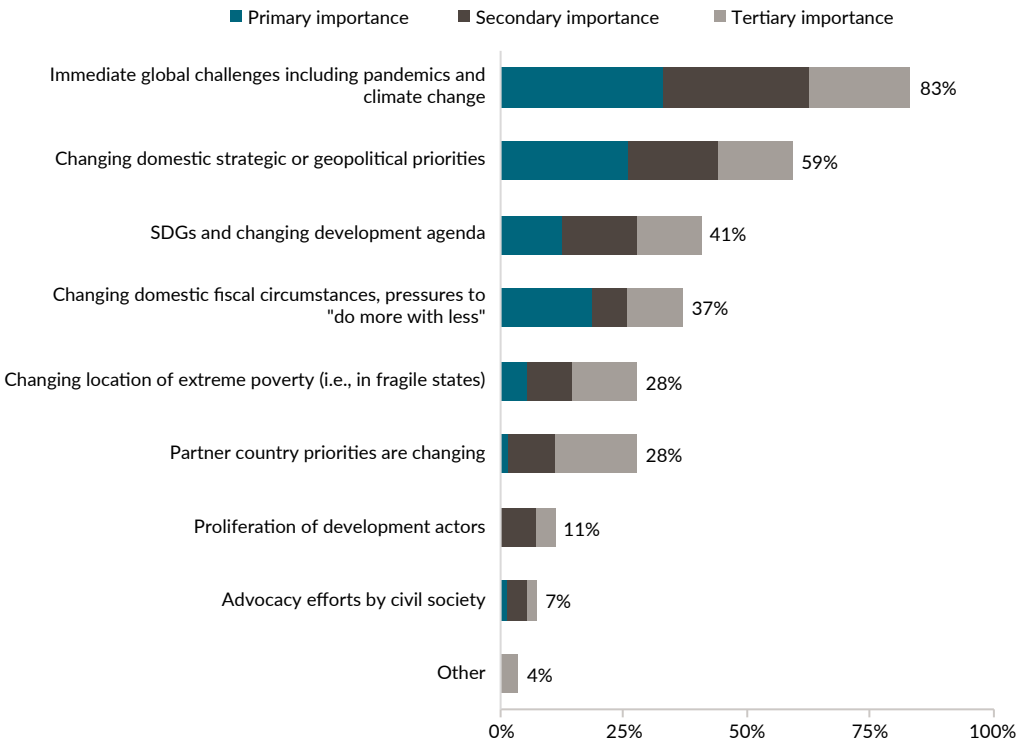
When asked to speculate about which purposes of ODA would be most important over the next five years, 84 percent of provider survey respondents answered that they expected using ODA to "tackle global challenges" to be among the top three most important purposes of ODA. This marked an increase of 18 percentage points over the current prioritization (66 percent). Moreover, the high expected priority of global challenges shows that this purpose is expected to overtake "alleviating poverty and human suffering," which ranked second with 69 percent of respondents identifying it as a top-three priority in five years, down from 77 percent of respondents seeing poverty reduction as a current top-three priority for their organization (see Figure 6 below, or Figures A.3 and A.4 for a full breakdown of providers' responses). When the same question was put to partner countries, respondents similarly placed both "tackling global challenges" and "alleviating poverty and human suffering" as the top purposes for the years ahead.

Still, the surveys reveal that providers and partner countries have some differing views on the expected prioritization of purposes, with three main trends apparent. First, while fewer provider and partner country respondents expect poverty reduction to be a priority in the future, providers expect it to be prioritized behind global challenges while partner countries expect both purposes to be in balance. Second, and relatedly, the stark difference in the expected prioritization of global challenges between partner countries and providers—and for providers over time—raises important questions about the work of development agencies and alignment between demand and supply of globally focused ODA programming in the years ahead. Third, there are several purposes where the direction of change in expected future importance differs between providers and partner countries, including "supporting the development of the private sector" and "supporting peace and security," suggesting that there could be discrepancy in the prioritization of goals in practice.

Why are the purposes of ODA changing?

To understand why the purposes of ODA were changing, we asked respondents to identify the top three factors underlying this trend (Figure 7). Unsurprisingly, pressure to respond to "immediate global challenges including pandemics and climate change" was viewed as a top driver of changing purposes by providers; this pressure ranked second for partner countries (see Figure A.5). Other top drivers of changing purposes for the provider survey were "changing domestic strategic and geopolitical priorities" and "SDGs and changing development agenda." Notably, while partner countries identified their changing domestic development priorities as the most important driver of shifting purposes, only 28 percent of provider respondents thought that "partner country priorities" were driving the changing purposes of ODA for their organization.

Figure 7. Factors driving changes to the purposes of ODA (provider survey)



Note: Based on 54 responses.

Changing roles of ODA

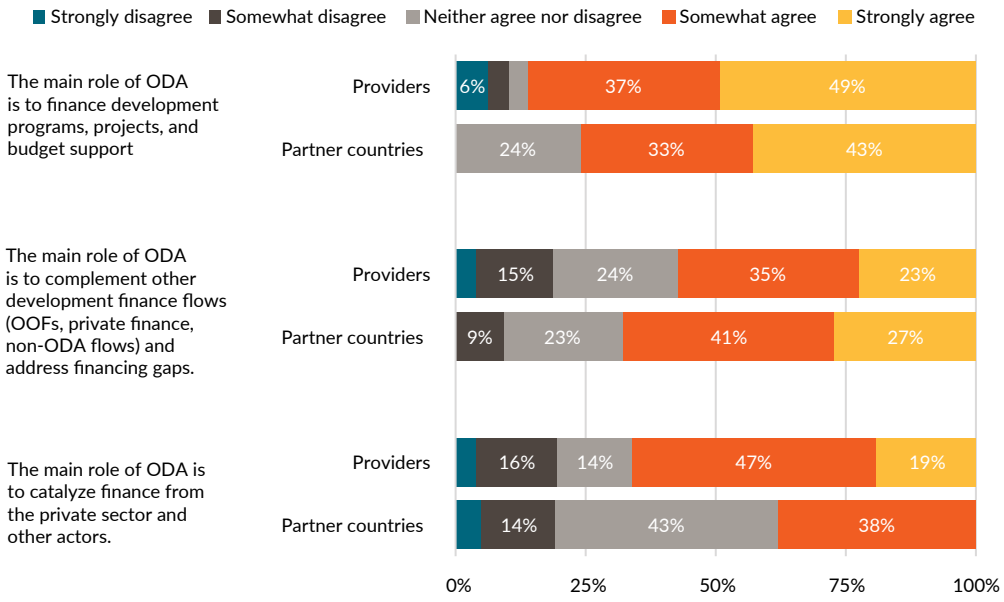
In recent years, there has been a broad acknowledgement that ODA resources alone will not be enough to meet increasingly complex and global development challenges, with increased calls to use private finance and innovative financing tools to support development outcomes as part of the "billions to trillions" agenda.[53] As a result, some have suggested that the role of ODA as a source of development finance is changing.

What are the main roles of ODA?

To understand perceptions on the main roles of ODA, we asked participants to rank their agreement with three statements that describe key uses of ODA as: 1) a source of traditional development finance, 2) a complement to other development flows and a way to address financing gaps, and 3) a catalyst to leverage finance from other sources. Responses from the provider survey show that participants primarily either agreed or strongly agreed with each statement, with the traditional role of ODA receiving the highest rate of agreement at

[53] World Bank and International Monetary Fund, "From Billions to Trillions: Transforming Development Finance," 2015. https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/622841485963735448-0270022017/original/DC20150002EFinancingforDevelopment.pdf

Figure 8. Responses on "How strongly do you agree with each statement on the role of ODA from the perspective of your organization?"



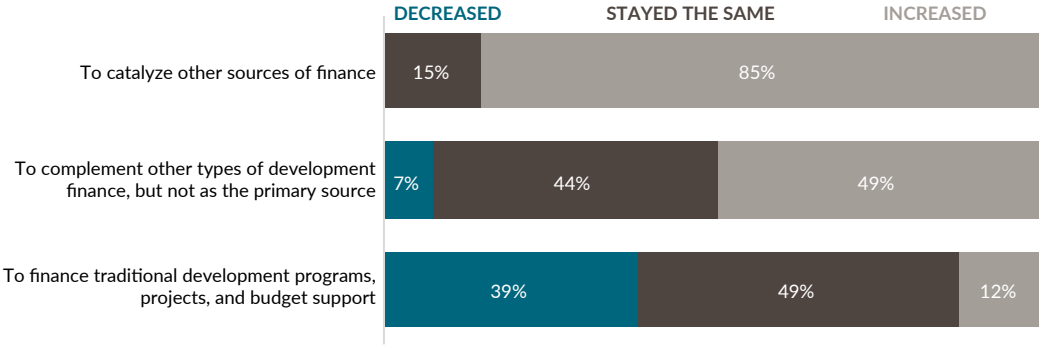
Note: Provider responses are based on 81 responses for statement one ("finance development programs"), 80 responses for statement two ("complement other development finance flows"), and 83 responses for statement three ("catalyze finance from the private sector"). Partner responses are based on 21 responses for statement one ("finance development programs"), 22 responses for statement two ("complement other development finance flows), and 21 responses for statement three ("catalyze finance from the private sector"). Values of 5% and under not labeled.

86 percent, followed by the catalytic role at 66 percent (see Figure 8). While respondents to the partner survey also showed general agreement with statements around the role of ODA for financing development programs and as a complementary source of development finance, partner respondents appear more skeptical of the catalytic role of ODA, with only 38 percent expressing agreement with the statement and no respondents expressing strong agreement.

How are the roles of ODA changing?

To better understand the relationship between the changing purposes and roles of ODA, we asked respondents to indicate whether the changing purposes of ODA have affected its use relative to other flows. Almost two-thirds (66 percent) answered "yes," 13 percent responded "no," while 21 percent suggested that the opposite relationship is true: the changing role of ODA is affecting its shifting purposes. We asked those who answered "yes" to identify how the role of ODA might be changing along with shifting purposes. Our results show that 85 percent of respondents suggested that the catalytic role of ODA was becoming increasingly important, while almost 40 percent said that the traditional role of ODA was in decline (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Responses on "How has the importance of each role of ODA changed for your organization in response to shifting purposes of ODA?" (provider survey)

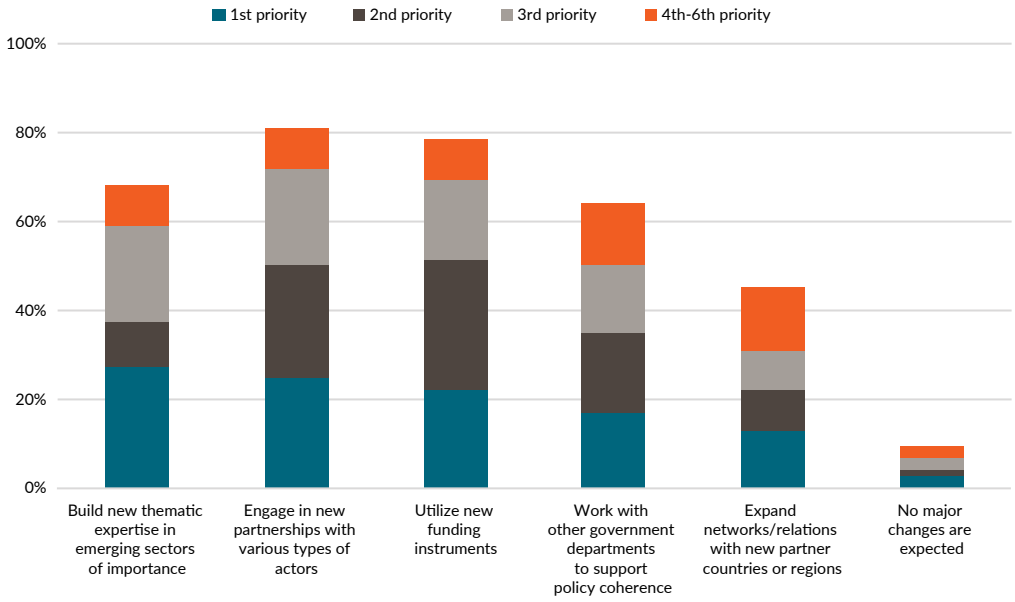


Note: Based on 41 responses.

How will development agencies need to adapt to new roles and purposes of ODA?

To understand how the changing role and purposes of ODA are expected to impact the work of development agencies, we asked participants to identify how their agencies would need to adapt over the next five years in response to the shifting purposes of ODA, and to select all options that apply in ranked order (Figure 10). The responses show a mixed but telling picture: development agencies will need to adapt to changing purposes on several fronts. Respondents suggested that, to meet changing purposes and demands, their agencies would need to engage in more diversified partnerships, utilize new funding instruments, build new thematic expertise alongside traditional development specializations, and work more across government to support policy coherence for development. For development agencies, adapting to the "new normal" will undoubtedly require investments in new skills, capacities, and ways of working to keep pace with changing demands.

Figure 10. Responses to "In the next five years, how will the work of your organization need to change to adapt to the purposes you expect it to pursue?" (provider survey)



Note: Based on 78 responses.

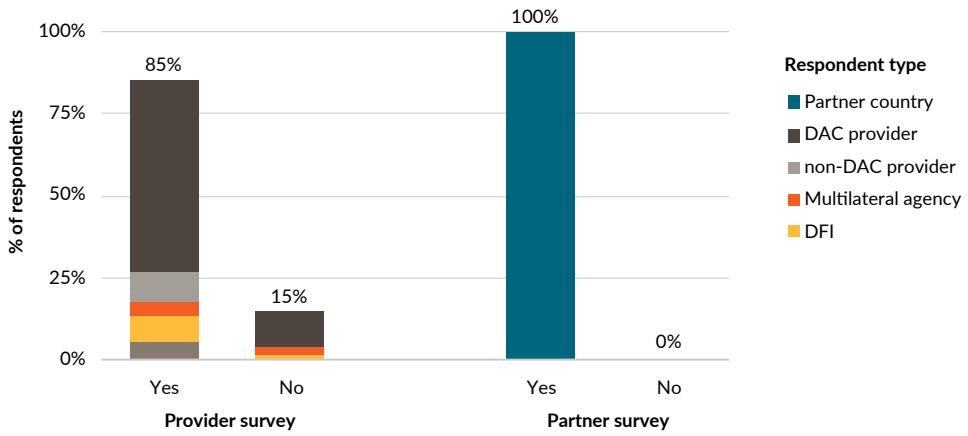
Is the effectiveness agenda still relevant?

The shifting purposes and roles of ODA raise questions about the continued relevance of the effectiveness agenda and whether potential reform or renewal is needed. To understand perspectives on the relevance of the effectiveness agenda, we asked officials to share their views on 1) whether the current effectiveness agenda is fit for purpose, and why; 2) whether there might be value in revisiting or renewing the agenda, and why; and 3) how the agenda should change to remain relevant.

Current relevance of the development effectiveness agenda

When asked whether the development effectiveness principles (as outlined in Busan) remain relevant for considering best practice in development, officials working in development agencies and partner countries were broadly in agreement, with 85 percent and 100 percent respectively answering "yes" (Figure 11). This finding held true across respondents representing different types of development agencies, including South–South Cooperation and DAC providers, DFIs, and multilateral agencies.[54]

Figure 11. Answers to "Are these principles still relevant for considering best practice on effectiveness?" by agency type



Note: Results are based on 75 responses (provider survey), and 20 responses (partner survey).

We then asked respondents to explain why the effectiveness principles were/were not relevant; Table 1 shows the responses across both surveys, which have been coded by the authors. Among those that indicated the continued relevance of the agenda, the bulk of responses (67 percent) from the provider survey and all responses from partner country officials expressed that the Busan principles continue to reflect the key practices needed to ensure sustainable development outcomes. A smaller group of provider respondents (18 percent) expressed that, while the principles continue to be theoretically relevant, their practical implementation is hampered by a lack of political will or bureaucratic mandate. Among the minority of provider respondents who indicated that the effectiveness principles are no longer

[54] Multilateral agencies had the lowest rate of "yes" responses to this question, at 60 percent, although their small sample size prevents any generalizations from this finding.

relevant (16 percent), three main reasons were given: 1) respondents indicated that shifts in the development landscape have altered implementation of ODA too much for current principles to apply, 2) respondents argued that the domestic political landscape had impacted the prioritization of the effectiveness agenda to the point where it is no longer relevant, and 3) respondents pointed to issues with the formulation of the principles and related indicators as factors affecting relevance, arguing that what makes ODA effective on the ground can be highly context-specific and may diverge from the principles' existing formulation.

Table 1. Classification of responses to "Please explain why you think the effectiveness principles are/are not relevant."

	Response Code	Provider Responses	Partner Country Eesponses
"Yes" the effectiveness principles are relevant	The principles remain fit for purpose, even if some tweaks are needed.	38 (67%)	9 (100%)
	The principles may remain fully relevant in theory, but the lack of global consensus, domestic political will, or bureaucratic mandate are limiting effective implementation.	10 (18%)	-
"No" the effectiveness principles are not relevant	Political priorities have changed too much.	3 (5%)	-
	The global development landscape and methods of implementation have changed too much.	3 (5%)	-
	The principles are either too technical or too broad and theoretical to be useful on the ground.	3 (5%)	-

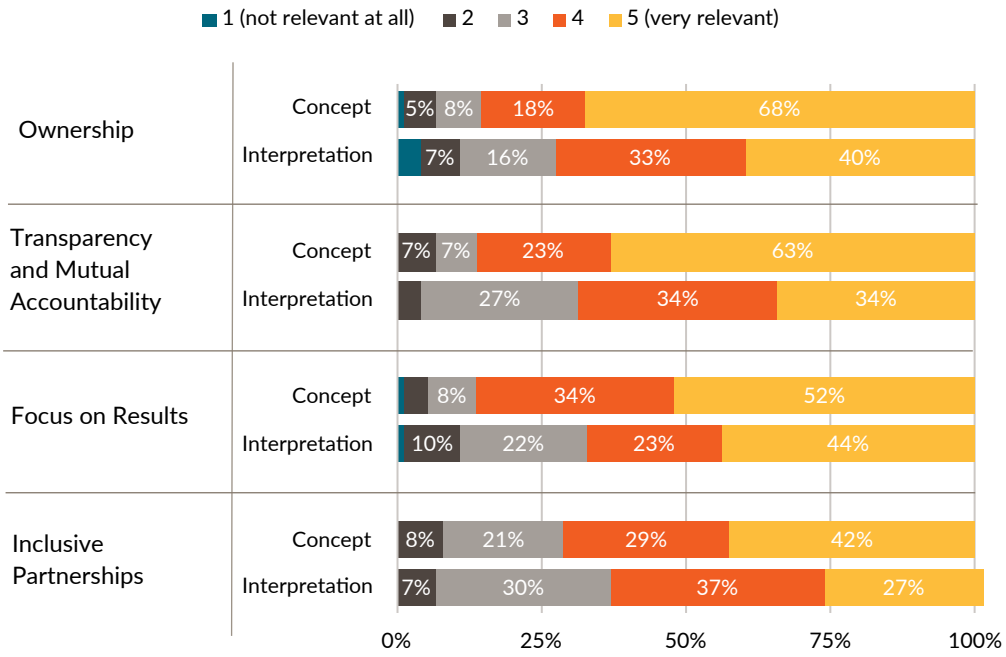
Note: Authors' own classifications, based on 57 provider responses and 9 partner country responses, where each response is assigned one code.

Relevance of the individual effectiveness principles

In addition to understanding perceptions of the effectiveness agenda's relevance, both surveys examined the individual relevance of the concept and interpretation of the four effectiveness principles defined in the Busan agreement. The concept was defined as "the fundamental idea underlying each principle" and interpretation referred to "how the principle is applied and measured as part of the effectiveness agenda." Respondents were asked to rate the relevance of each principle on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that the principle is "not relevant at all" and 5 indicating it is "very relevant."

Providers and partner country officials rated each principle as relevant, with over half the respondents ranking the principles as "very" or "somewhat" relevant—that is, a 5 or 4 on the scale (Figure 12). However, responses to the provider survey showed that each principle faced a relevance gap between its concept and interpretation. This gap was most prominent in the "focus on results" principle (19 percent more relevant in concept than interpretation),

Figure 12. Relevance of the concept and interpretation of the Busan principles (provider survey)



Note: Based on 74 responses for ownership in concept and inclusive partnerships in interpretation, 73 for all others. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Values under 5% not shown.

followed by "transparency and mutual accountability" (18 percent gap) and "ownership" (13 percent gap).[55] While the "inclusive partnerships" principle had the lowest gap between relevance in concept and interpretation (7 percent), it was also rated as having the lowest relevance overall (71 percent in concept, 64 percent in interpretation); this principle also had the lowest overall relevance according to partner country respondents (83 percent). This observation of a significant relevance gap did not hold true in the partner country survey, though generalization is prevented by a small sample size (see Figure A.6).

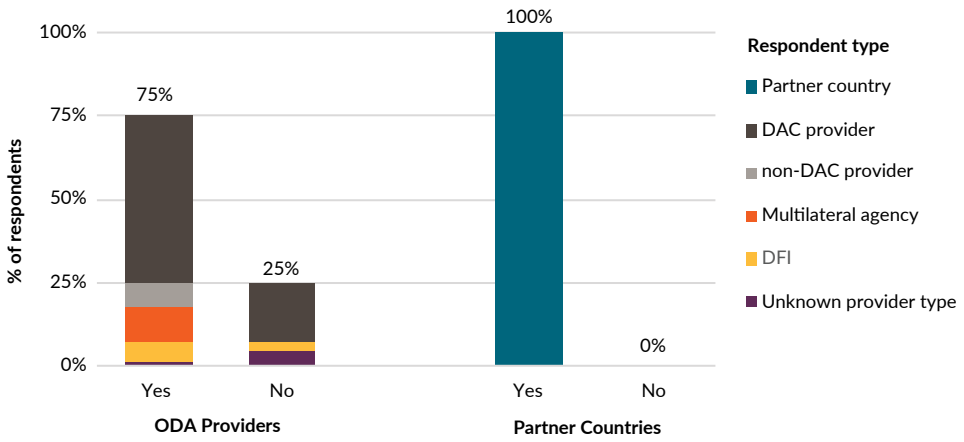
Value of revisiting the effectiveness agenda

In addition to scoping perspectives on the relevance of the effectiveness agenda, we also asked respondents from both surveys to identify whether there was value in revisiting or renewing the development effectiveness agenda. Respondents to both surveys agreed, with 75 percent in the provider survey and 100 percent in the partner country survey answering "yes" (Figure 13). When asked to explain their answer, responses from providers and partner countries shared some commonalities (Table 2). Among those that saw value in revisiting or renewing the effectiveness agenda, the most common justification was to ensure that the principles keep pace with a changing development landscape, particularly in light of new development actors, modalities, and purposes. Second, a smaller subset of respondents to both surveys expressed hope that revisiting the agenda could reignite the conversation on

[55] In each case, the "relevance gap" refers to the difference between the percentage of respondents indicating either a 4 or a 5 on the principle's relevance in concept and the percentage of respondents indicating a 4 or 5 on the principle's relevance in its interpretation.

effectiveness among bureaucratic and political leaders. Third, some responses indicated the need to move beyond the traditional donor–recipient model of development and discuss implications for the principle of ownership. Of those that suggested the agenda should not be revisited, the main justifications pointed to skepticism about the political feasibility of revising the agenda and suggestions that the problem with the agenda was one of implementation, which did not justify revising the principles—just renewing political commitment.

Figure 13. Answers to "In your personal opinion, is there value in revising and/or renewing the development effectiveness agenda to account for the changing role of ODA?" by agency type



Note: Based on 69 responses to the provider survey and 17 responses from partner country officials.

Table 2. Classification of responses to "Please explain why there is/is not value in revisiting or renewing the development effectiveness agenda"

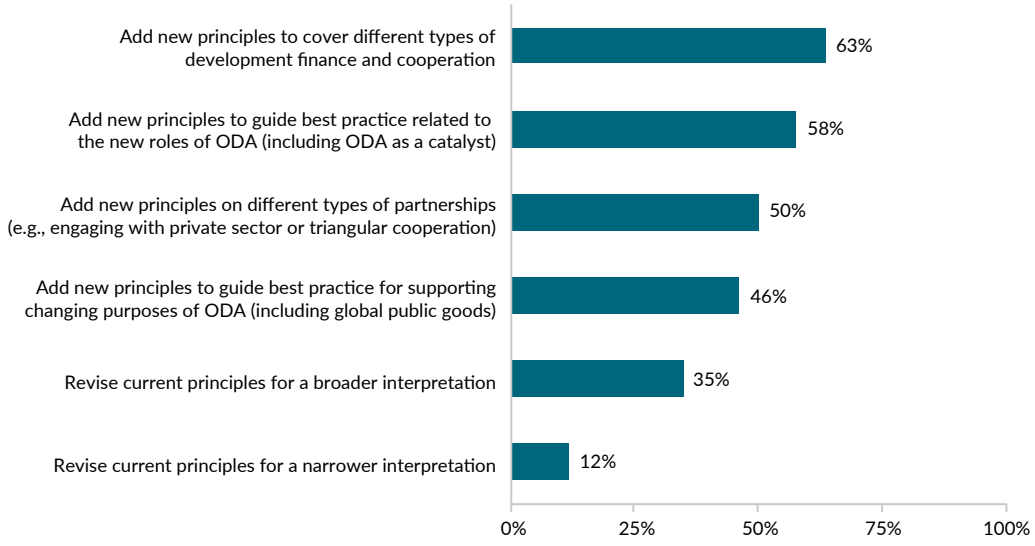
	Response code	Provider responses	Partner country responses
Yes, revisiting is needed to…	Adapt the agenda to keep pace with a changing development landscape.	30 (51%)	7 (58%)
	Mobilize the political and bureaucratic environment around the agenda.	11 (19%)	2 (17%)
	Overhaul the donor–recipient model implicit in the agenda towards more inclusive and equal representation	7 (12%)	3 (25%)
No, because…	The agenda has value as it stands—it just needs to be implemented.	7 (12%)	-
	The agenda is politically blocked, and any effort to revive it is a non-starter.	4 (7%)	-

Note: Based on 59 text responses from providers, and 12 responses from partner countries, with each response assigned one code. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

How should the effectiveness agenda change?

Lastly, we asked respondents to indicate how the agenda should change to accommodate demands for its revision or renewal; we presented respondents with several options and asked them to select all options which apply (Figure 14).

Figure 14. "How do you think the agenda should change?" (Provider survey)



Note: Based on 52 responses.

Our provider survey revealed relatively strong demand for adding new principles, particularly "to cover different types of development finance and cooperation" and "to guide best practice related to the new roles of ODA (including ODA as a catalyst)." Adding new principles was also a popular option in the corresponding survey of partner countries; however, in contrast with the provider survey, the most popular option was to add new principles "to guide best practice for supporting changing purposes of ODA (including GPGs)" (88 percent of respondents; see Figure A.7).

The partner country survey also asked respondents to "identify and explain which other principles are important for the effectiveness of development cooperation." A quarter of the responses (25 percent) said that the current agenda is fit for purpose and does not need any new principles, while a third (33 percent) expressed that while the agenda remains relevant in content, there is a need to clarify some principles to strengthen implementation and make good on existing commitments. Of responses suggesting new principles, four responses highlighted the need to bring harmonization, now with a broader range of stakeholders, back on the agenda; two responses asked for new principles which would provide greater flexibility and adaptiveness of ODA to local contexts; and one response each mentioned the need for (1) principles around predictability and timeliness of ODA, (2) new principles to account for flows beyond ODA, and (3) principles around capacity-building.

5. Main findings and discussion of survey results

Taken together, the analysis in this section highlights five key trends and emerging challenges from the survey results.

> Fundamental changes in the purposes of ODA are taking shape, with our provider survey showing that tackling global challenges is set to overtake poverty reduction as the top purpose of ODA in the next five years. These changes are likely to have important implications for the work of development agencies.

Our survey responses show that officials in development agencies are facing pressure to use ODA to achieve a growing number of goals—including global challenges—alongside traditional priorities.[56] While the increasing number and complexity of development challenges raise important allocation questions about how providers balance competing goals with limited budgets, it may also have implications for the practical work of development agencies and the applicability of the current effectiveness agenda.

The pursuit of multiple purposes raises questions of whether and how using limited budgets for multiple objectives interacts with, or detracts from, the goal of poverty alleviation. While the use of ODA for multiple purposes is not new,[57] there is some debate about whether the rising focus on tackling global challenges through ODA risks trading off focus on poverty reduction, especially if ODA budgets remain flat.[58] On one hand, it is broadly recognized that global challenges– such as climate change, peace and security, and, recently, responses to COVID-19 –have the potential to exacerbate poverty and inequality if left unchecked. By some estimates, climate change alone could push an additional 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030.[59] In this context, the increased prioritization of tackling global challenges as a purpose of ODA is not surprising; indeed, the interconnectedness between global challenges and long-term development outcomes underlies the SDG agenda. On the other hand, there is recognition that meaningfully tackling global challenges through ODA could involve trade-offs with other priorities if funded through stagnant ODA budgets. Using ODA for global challenges, for instance, may require engaging beyond the poorest countries and increasingly focusing cooperation efforts on middle-income countries as "conduits for global and regional responses to climate change, fragility, and migration challenges, as well as pandemics."[60] If pursued through ODA, there is the potential to increase globally focused spending in middle-income countries by decreasing poverty-focused spending in

[56] See Figure 4, which shows that officials perceive most (five out of nine) purposes of ODA to be increasing in importance for their organizations, and Figure 6, which shows that global challenges are set to overtake poverty alleviation as a top-three purpose of ODA in the next five years.
[57] Lancaster, "Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics."
[58] Charles Kenny, "Official Development Assistance, Global Public Goods, and Implications for Climate Finance" (Washington D.C.: CGD, 2020).
[59] Stephane Hallegatte et al., "Shock Waves: Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty" (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2015).
[60] Gavas and Pleeck, "Global Trends in 2021."

lower-income countries that remain reliant on ODA resources to fund poverty alleviation.[61] Indeed, calls to use ODA for global challenges—specifically climate change—have often raised concerns from partner countries that spending will be reallocated from other priority sectors. Such concerns were raised ahead of COP26 by a group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which argued that if climate spending was not additional to ODA, it risked reprioritizing ODA from other sectors including health and education.[62] To the degree that ODA is used to simultaneously support global and local purposes, an important question will be whether (and where and how) such spending can support both aims: that is, does the dual purpose of supporting global challenges alongside poverty reduction dilute the impact of country-focused engagement?

At the same time, demands to engage in both global and local programming raise questions about the practical skills and competencies that agencies may need to do both well. Development agencies have honed the skills needed for country-focused engagement over several decades, yet engaging in global challenges may require different skills, processes, and expertise.[63] For bilateral development agencies in particular, the demand for more specialized skills beyond those typically found in development agencies may explain the increasing use of line ministries in development spending.[64] A recent review, for instance, showed that of 29 bilateral DAC members, 22 involve ministries responsible for environment or climate change in ODA delivery.[65] Questions about how ODA spent across diverse ministries is coordinated to ensure coherent action, and also how domestic activities align with international priorities, may become increasingly important to ensure that related activities enhance globally oriented development action;[66] as a potential solution, one commentator proposed creating a "global cooperation ministry for sustainable development" with a broader mandate to coordinate cross-government international activities related to achieving the SDGs.[67] Other types of development agencies may also face questions about how changing purposes of ODA could affect their business models. Multilateral development banks, for instance, could face calls to rethink country-based lending models given that countries may be reluctant to borrow for projects with global benefits.[68] In this sense, pressure to respond to global challenges alongside local action could affect not only what agencies do, but also require considering the skills and resources needed to do it well.

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[61] Niels Keijzer, Stephan Klingebiel, Charlotte Örnemark, Fabian Scholtes, "Seeking balanced ownership in changing development cooperation relationships," Expert Group for Aid Studies Report 2018 :08 (Stockholm: EBA, 2018)

[62] Illari Aragon, "Can COP26 lay firm foundations for an ambitious new climate finance goal"?, 11 October, 2021. https://www.iied.org/can-cop26-lay-firm-foundations-for-ambitious-new-climate-finance-goal

[63] Most provider respondents to our survey noted that developing new expertise was the top priority for adapting to changing purposes of ODA (see Figure 10).

[64] World Bank, "A Changing Landscape."

[65] Nilima Gulrajani and Rachael Calleja, "Can we better manage donor institutions for tackling global challenges?" (London: ODI and CGD, 2021).

[66] Interestingly, respondents to the provider survey listed the pursuit of "whole of government" approaches as the fourth most important change needed in response to changing ODA purposes.

[67] Adolf Kloke-Lesch, "Change or Crumble! Germany needs to reposition its international cooperation," CGD Blog, September 8, 2021. https://www.cgdev.org/blog/change-crumble-germany-needs-reposition-its-international-cooperation

[68] Annalisa Prizzon et al., "Six recommendations for reforming multilateral development banks" (London: ODI, 2017).

Moreover, there are early signs that the pursuit of global challenges through ODA may have implications for the applicability of the effectiveness agenda. Some have noted, for instance, that the prioritization of thematic allocations to align cooperation with global challenges risks deepening fragmentation due to the use of line ministries from provider governments, and undermining country ownership to the degree that thematic funding priorities reflect provider rather than partner priorities.[69] Large thematic programs may also be less predictable if they are seen as political initiatives vulnerable to political change.[70] Similarly, others have suggested that the focus on long-term sustainability that underlies the SDG agenda is at odds with current development approaches.[71] For example, some have criticized purpose-specific funds, such as the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (established by the European Union to address the root causes of migration from Africa) for prioritizing immediate response and results over "long-term and dialogic approach[es]" that support predictability and ownership.[72] While more work is needed to unpack the operational concerns arising from the pursuit of multiple, complex development purposes—including response to global challenges—through ODA, there may be early signs that the incentives and constraints of such programming differ from country-focused engagements and require considering how such purposes interact with effectiveness principles.

Development agencies increasingly expect ODA to play a catalytic role—but discrepancies between the relative prioritization of catalytic ODA across providers and partners raises questions about the demand for catalytic ODA versus its other roles.

Our survey shows that provider officials see the catalytic role of ODA as growing in importance relative to other roles, including the traditional role of ODA to finance development projects (Figure 9). While the catalytic role of ODA is far from new, its application gained prominence alongside the SDGs and in response to fickle public funding in the years following the global financial crisis.[73] For some, the rising importance of ODA as catalyst raises questions about how this role will be pursued relative to alternatives and what it will mean for the effectiveness of ODA.[74]

Concerns around the catalytic role of ODA were raised by both development agencies and partner countries in response to our survey, particularly in relation to the use of ODA to catalyze private investment. One development agency official expressed that using ODA to catalyze private finance is "at best [an] expensive risk-transfer and a profit guarantee" for the

[69] Sebastian Paulo, Heiner Janus, and Sarah Holzapfel, "Thematic Aid Allocation: What Are The Benefits and Risks?" German Development Institute Briefing Paper 19/2017 (Bonn: DIE, 2017). https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/BP_19.2017.pdf

[70] Paulo, Janus, and Holzapfel, "Thematic Aid Allocation"

[71] Niels Keijzer and David Black, "Ownership in a post-effectiveness era: Comparative perspectives," *Development Policy Review* 38, 2020: 1-12.

[72] Ibid., p. 4.

[73] Role of ODA provider survey respondent 47.

[74] UN DCF, "Workshop in preparation of the Third International Conference for Financing for Development: the role of catalytic aid in financing sustainable development," 2015. https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Catalytic-aid_Programme-and-Note-for-FfD-Workshop-at-DCF.pdf

private sector. Recent analysis has called for a reality check on the ambitions of private sector partnerships employing innovative financing mechanisms such as blended finance, with impacts likely to be "marginal, not transformational."[75] While the scale of public institutions' leverage in attracting dollars that would otherwise not have been invested is notoriously hard to determine, current evidence suggests that, especially in the poorest settings, the "additionality" of ODA is much lower than had been foreseen.[76] Indeed, it is possible that an inability to see the benefits of catalytic ODA on the ground could be driving our finding of a gap between provider and partner country preferences regarding the catalytic use of ODA; recall that while two-thirds (66 percent) of our provider sample agreed that using ODA as a catalyst was one of its main roles, just 38 percent of partner countries agreed (Figure 8). Others have also shown that lower-income countries, though initially enthusiastic about such operations as a source of additional finance for the SDGs, are now "gradually becoming more cognisant about the risks that underpin the operationalisation of blended finance deals," many of which stand in clear contrast with the aspirations of the effectiveness agenda.[77] Some such concerns include "information asymmetry, capacity constraints, efficiency concerns, implementation gaps, subsidisation of the private sector, distortionary effects in the money market, crowding out investments elsewhere, and lack of inclusivity of outcomes."[78] Likewise, reviews of blending facilities have pointed out that frequently these are not designed in a way that contributes to the ownership of partner countries and are not in alignment with their national plans and strategies.[79]

Combined with broader challenges around the use of development cooperation to leverage private sector engagement (PSE), which include a "lack of safeguards of public resources," poor focus on development results,[80] and "limited transparency, accountability and evaluation of PSE projects," efforts to improve practices related to ODA's catalytic role could help to reduce the gap between provider and partner perceptions on the importance of ODA's catalytic role.[81] Indeed, such efforts are presumably underway in light of the 2019 Kampala Principles of Effective Private Sector Engagement. With the expectation that the catalytic role of ODA will become increasingly important in the years ahead, understanding (and rectifying) the reasons underpinning partner countries' hesitation towards this type of engagement will be critical to ensuring that cooperation—including through catalytic ODA—remains driven by partner priorities and demands.

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[75] Charles Kenny, "Marginal, Not Transformational: Development Finance Institutions and the Sustainable Development Goals," CGD Policy Paper 156 (Washington D.C.: CGD, 2019).

[76] By recent estimates, one dollar of MDB or DFI financing was, on average, able to mobilize $0.75 of private finance in developing countries and just $0.37 in LICs. See: Samantha Attridge and Lars Engen, "Blended finance in the poorest countries: the need for a better approach" (London: ODI, 2019).

[77] Debapriya Bhattacharya and Sarah Sabin Khan, "Is Blended Finance Trending in the LDCs? Perspectives from the ground," Southern Voice Occasional Paper Series 49 (Southern Voice, 2019), p. 32

[78] Ibid., p.32

[79] Javier Pereira, "Blended finance: What it is, how it works and how it is used." 2017. https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620186/rr-blended-finance-130217-en.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, p. 21

[80] It has also been pointed out that the private sector's natural orientation towards short-term and predictable results is at odds with the more long-term and abstract aspirations that underpin both the SDGs and the current effectiveness principles; see Keijzer et al., "Seeking Balanced Ownership," pp. 51–53.

[81] GPEDC, "Kampala Principles on Effective Private Sector Engagement in Development Co-operation," 2019. https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/Kampala-Principles-on-effective-private-sector-engagement-development-cooperation.pdf, p. 4

Most survey respondents stated that the effectiveness agenda is relevant, yet they raised concern that its implementation was suffering as low political commitment remains an ongoing challenge.

Our surveys showed that respondents recognize the importance of the effectiveness principles as best practice in development engagement. Indeed, many respondents argued that sustainable development is impossible without the broad and fundamental principles included in the agenda. When asked to explain why, officials expressed that the principles "were worked up over many years with a lot of buy-in" and that "there's plenty of evidence" from "decades of international cooperation" to prove that they are the key elements in effective engagement.[82] Some respondents also signaled that the principles form the basis for accountable partnerships and are an ethical imperative of cooperation.[83]

Despite the continued importance of the theory behind the effectiveness agenda, many respondents pointed to poor implementation as an ongoing challenge.[84] Indeed, evidence from the latest GPEDC monitoring report in 2018 highlighted some of the concerns around implementation, showing that providers' alignment with partner country priorities and results frameworks—key indicators of provider commitment to ownership—declined from the prior monitoring period.[85] So too did progress on the predictability of cooperation spending and the share of cooperation that is recorded on partner countries' budgets. These findings were echoed by responses from partner country officials, who noted that "the results [of the effectiveness agenda] so far are below those expected" in their countries and that "although the principle of ownership includes alignment with national regulations, in reality … cooperation providers continue to impose themselves."[86]

Importantly, several provider respondents linked the poor implementation of effectiveness principles to the declining *political* relevance of the agenda. Domestically, several officials felt that their political leaders and diplomatic colleagues were uninterested in the agenda.[87] While respondents suggested that the principles continue to serve as best practice, they argued that the lack of political relevance means that agencies have not been equipped with the "internal structures, incentives and capabilities" to make good on commitments.[88] Similar sentiments were shared by respondents who argued that the increasingly geostrategic nature of ODA and pressures to align ODA with the providers' national interest have become "a more powerful

[82] Quotes come, respectively, from respondents 130, 61, and 89 in provider survey.
[83] Quoted from response 99 in the provider survey.
[84] Indeed, while our findings on the continued relevance of the agenda held true when probing deeper on perceptions of each of the four effectiveness principles, the survey exposed a notable gap in each principle's perceived relevance in concept and the relevance of its practical interpretation (Figure 12 above).
[85] GPEDC, "Making Development Co-Operation More Effective: Headlines of Parts I and II of the Global Partnership 2019 Progress Report" (Paris: OECD, 2019).
[86] First quote from role of ODA partner country survey, respondent 43 (in response to why the effectiveness agenda needs to be revised), second quote from partner country respondent number 35 (in response to "please identify and explain which other principles are important for the effectiveness of development cooperation"). Both quotes translated into English.
[87] Role of ODA provider survey, respondents 77 and 78.
[88] Quote from provider survey, respondent 43.

force than the principles of Busan, which are losing ground."[89] This consideration is exacerbated by the perception that the agenda has difficulty inspiring global collective action, placing individual providers in somewhat of a double bind: while our survey confirms feelings that the "principles are not well shared with emerging partners," provider respondents noted that they can "only [be] relevant if all donors (traditional, new, emerging) abide by them."[90]

Political disinterest in the effectiveness agenda is not new. Some have argued that the effectiveness principles—even from their conception in the Paris Declaration—never successfully addressed the political context within which development cooperation is embedded.[91] In this view, the principles offered only technocratic solutions for implementation, which "limited prescribed actions to mostly procedural commitments"[92] but ignored the powerful political, institutional, and individual disincentives for providers to follow the established principles.[93] This sentiment was echoed by one survey respondent, who said that the interpretation of the Busan principles "has been so technical that the discussion has lost its meaning to improve the effectiveness on the ground."[94]

In the post–financial crisis period, when the political economy of ODA re-emerged as the sine qua non of cooperation along with the prioritization of the national interest, the what questions of ODA allocations were increasingly prioritized over the how questions of the effectiveness agenda.[95] As one survey respondent noted, long-term considerations of development effectiveness have been "superseded by more short-term priorities."[96] Amid the recent "onslaught of emergencies," the political context is one where the focus is "no longer on enabling partner countries but rather on containing the worst part of the problem."[97] Indeed, the increased use of ODA as a tool to deal with the crises of the day has been noted by others as a challenge to ODA's traditional long-term orientation.[98] This has had important implications for the interpretation of the effectiveness agenda—and especially for the time-horizons of cooperation projects envisaged by providers and the types of results prioritized.[99] Responses to our survey echoed such concerns, noting that while ODA is better suited to

[89] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 83. While the use of ODA to pursue the national or mutual interest is not inherently at odds with effectiveness principles—some have suggested, for instance, that a relationship based on mutual interest may provide a contractual basis for a relationship among equals and could contribute to deeper ownership than relationships based on altruism—the risk is that "the interests of the partner country coinciding with, or set off against, those of the donor country are shared by society-at-large" (Keijzer et al., "Seeking Balanced Ownership," p. 32).
[90] Role of ODA provider survey, respondents 79 and 4 respectively.
[91] Svea Koch, et al., "The Rise and Demise of European budget support: political economy of collective European Union donor action," *Development Policy Review* 35, no 4. (2016): 455–473.
[92] Ibid.
[93] One such example: agency officials' career mobility depends far more on responding to their own government's priorities and flying their country's flag than on effective and coordinated collective efforts for stronger recipient ownership. For more, see Brown, "Rise and Fall."
[94] Role of ODA provider survey, quote from respondent 79.
[95] Lundsgaarde and Engberg-Pedersen, "Aid Effectiveness Agenda," p. 27.
[96] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 70.
[97] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 14.
[98] For instance, on how the use of ODA to address irregular migration interacts with some effectiveness considerations, see: Anna Knoll and Andrew Sherriff, "Making Waves: Implications of the irregular migration and refugee situation on Official Development Assistance spending and practices in Europe" EBA report 2017: 01 (Stockholm: EBA, 2017).
[99] Lundsgaarde and Engberg-Pedersen, "Aid Effectiveness Agenda."

contributing to long-term change than achieving immediate results, development agency staff felt increasing political pressure to deliver safe and reliable outcomes, rather than being innovative.[100] Other studies, as well as LDC-led initiatives, have identified such pressures to achieve results within short timeframes as a key barrier to wider ODA effectiveness.[101]

At ten years on from the Busan agreement, at a point where implementation of effectiveness principles has seemingly stalled despite the agenda's continued relevance, key questions are whether and how political will for the effectiveness agenda can be renewed. Indeed, as the international community moves into the next development paradigm in the post-COVID period, ensuring that development conforms to best practice will be crucial to global recovery and efforts to meet the 2030 Agenda. While it is unlikely that any iteration of agenda can fully unify the diverse political preferences and incentives that govern development cooperation, considering how to generate new political interest, or what might be needed to reinvigorate the effectiveness conversation, may be an important starting place for future efforts.

Despite the continued relevance of the effectiveness agenda, there is demand to revise or renew effectiveness principles to ensure the agenda is fit for the challenges ahead.

As new purposes and roles of ODA have emerged, respondents—across both the provider and partner country surveys—widely supported an effort to clarify, adapt, or renew the consensus around development effectiveness. The basic sentiment underlying most responses was similar: that the world has changed since Busan and that an update of the effectiveness agenda is needed to ensure that the agenda remains fit for purpose. Indeed, as one partner country official put it, "situations and circumstances continue to change with time, and therefore there is always an imperative to continue to update, revise, and renew the development effectiveness agenda."[102] Taken together, calls for revisiting the effectiveness agenda were justified by technical, strategic, and political motivations.

At the *technical* level, respondents expressed the need to regularly revisit the agenda to ensure that the principles remain applicable to different modalities of development cooperation. For instance, in light of pressure on ODA to play a more catalytic role, numerous respondents expressed the need to "adapt the agenda to … the growing importance of blended finance and other similar financial instruments."[103] One respondent from a DFI shared the perception that the principles had been designed for grant aid and suggested that applying the existing effectiveness principles to their work has been akin to "hammering a square peg into a round hole."[104] In the meantime, as ODA's traditional role—based on direct funding of

[100] Quotes from role of ODA provider survey, respondents 103, 14, and 105.
[101] See for example: Alfred Ortiz Aragón and Kent Glenzer, "Untaming aid through action research: Seeking transformative reflective action," Action Research 15, no. 1 (2017): 3–14; LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR), "Delivering our Climate-Resilient Future: Lessons from a Global Evidence Review," (LIFE-AR, 2019).https://www.ldc-climate.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/LIFE-AR-Evidence-Review-English.pdf
[102] Role of ODA partner country survey, respondent 11.
[103] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 59.
[104] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 11.

programs through modalities like budget support—has seen a decline in importance, respondents called for a revision of the traditional government-to-government cooperation model seen as underlying both the Paris and Busan agreements.[105] One respondent, for instance, said that the agenda needs to be updated because it currently has "too strong a focus on traditional State–State cooperation with [General Budget Support] as the norm," which no longer "reflect[s] how most donors work."[106] Indeed, the relative decline in bilateral budget support, and the concurrent need to broaden concepts beyond central governments, were mirrored by several officials in the partner country survey, who noted that as "more actors (public, private, social, local) are joining and playing important roles," these should be "made visible" in the effectiveness framework.[107]

At the strategic level, respondents mentioned that revisiting the agenda was necessary to spark discussion on what ODA is meant to achieve and how best to achieve it, especially in the context of intensifying global challenges and shifting development needs. Such strategic considerations were often underpinned by a vision of development as a "common endeavour"[108] underscored by the SDGs, which calls for a more inclusive form of partnership to face global challenges.[109] Indeed, officials from both provider and partner countries called for a new agenda that could "go for global approaches to global problems [and] let go of the North–South divisions" and enable the "co-construction of a global cooperation framework."[110] Moving towards a global cooperation paradigm—including through effectiveness discourses—was a common theme across the responses in both surveys, particularly in the aftermath of COVID-19. As global challenges amplify the risk of reversing development trajectories, respondents noted that "sustainability needs to be integrated" within the effectiveness agenda,[111] so that the past successes in ODA can be "safeguarded" against factors like climate change and pandemics while "future ODA is tailored to reflect the changing risk landscape."[112] Specifically, one partner country respondent also noted that "it is necessary to describe what the principles refer to" in light of the SDGs, as they find that current cooperation modalities "do not adjust to reality, especially post-pandemic."[113]

Despite most calls for revisiting the agenda in light of the new global cooperation paradigm, several respondents suggested reinvigorating past principles on ODA effectiveness—from Accra or Paris—which they thought were lost at Busan but remain relevant. Indeed, one respondent even noted that they saw the Busan agreement as a "bit of a setback" in comparison to Paris.[114] In particular, partner country respondents argued that the principles of harmonization and alignment, which were core to the Paris agreement but lost emphasis

[105] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 25.
[106] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 89.
[107] Role of ODA partner country survey, respondent 38 mentioned declining budget support as a reason to revisit the agenda, while respondent 37 mentioned the need to include subnational and private sector actors in the agenda in response to the same question.
[108] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 78.
[109] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 25.
[110] First quote from provider survey respondent 105, second quote from partner survey respondent 39.
[111] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 4.
[112] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 43.
[113] Role of ODA partner country survey, respondent 38, translated into English.
[114] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 101.

with Busan, remain vital for development best practice.[115] At the same time, several provider respondents argued that the concept of democratic ownership, which had been introduced as part of the Accra Agenda for Action, had in practice shifted back to a narrower state-focused interpretation with Busan and needed to be broadened to a "whole of society" approach.[116]

Finally, a smaller set of respondents justified efforts for renewal on *political* grounds. The general argument was that renewing the agenda could bring political momentum back to effectiveness conversations and create a space to reinvigorate dialogue on good practice. Indeed, one respondent argued that the agenda "needs to be renewed and regularly discussed to keep [the principles] at the forefront."[117] Others were concerned that the Busan principles had not been fully embraced by key global actors—including many of the major South–South Cooperation providers whom Busan aimed to engage—leading to calls to "further probe" the challenges to more meaningful collaboration on effectiveness via renewed engagement.[118] Notably, partner countries appear in two minds about the necessity of reengaging BRICS countries in the agenda: while some feel the inclusion of countries like China was important to ensure that effectiveness principles covered the range of approaches used,[119] elsewhere, partner country representatives have suggested that engaging disinterested actors is unnecessary and could weaken effectiveness commitments.[120] At the same time, those who saw little value in renewing or revising the effectiveness debate also pointed to lack of political will as the reason, arguing that the agenda is either politically blocked beyond rescue at the domestic level, or that, even if a new global conversation were to be initiated, "there is no way to make all actors agree" in a new geopolitical context.[121]

Our results suggest that the shifting roles and purposes of ODA are driving calls for renewal of the effectiveness agenda, yet there are divergent opinions around how the agenda should be revised.

While the results of our survey point to a demand to revisit the effectiveness agenda, there is a clear lack of consensus around the direction of change. The survey points to a wide range of possible options for the future of effectiveness, spanning from inaction (for those who view the lack of political will for the agenda as a deterrent to its continued usefulness) to a full rethink of the theory behind what constitutes development effectiveness in the current global context. Each option will have different implications for *what* is revised, *who* is involved, and *where* the governance of the effectiveness agenda sits.

[115] Role of ODA partner country survey, respondents 19 and 38.
[116] In fact, the Busan Partnership Agreement does include one reference to "democratic ownership," but this is much reduced in scope from Accra's ambitions.
[117] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 38.
[118] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 8.
[119] Such comments were reflected in the role of ODA partner country survey, respondents 38 and 39.
[120] See quotes from interviews by Taggart: Jack Taggart, "A Decade Since Busan: Towards Legitimacy or a 'New Tyranny' of Global Development Partnership?," The Journal of Development Studies, 2022, p.9
[121] Role of ODA provider survey, respondent 37.

On one hand, calls to clarify how the effectiveness principles should be applied to the changing roles and purposes of ODA suggest demand for a modest reform to the effectiveness agenda. Based on the parallel findings that, while the effectiveness principles remain relevant as standards of best practice in development cooperation, the interpretation of the principles and their application to the changing development landscape lag behind, there seems to be space for rethinking the applicability of the principles to the changing contexts. In fact, this type of clarification is underway through the GPEDC reform. Other efforts to clarify the application of effectiveness principles to different modalities and challenges have, in some cases, led to the development of parallel principles for specific types of action. Consider, for instance, the Kampala principles, which build on the Busan agenda to specify the application of the concepts for private sector engagement and actors.

On the other hand, broad emphasis on the lack of political momentum for the effectiveness agenda—and the need to revise or renew the agenda to give greater attention to effectiveness—could point to the need for a fuller rethink of development effectiveness, both to ensure that the principles are aligned with the changing nature of partnerships and responses to global challenges, and to generate political buy-in from the leaders of today. Admittedly, such an exercise is no small feat and would require a broad and global effort, which some argue has been lacking from the current process. Indeed, an important mediating factor of any rethink of effectiveness is political will. In a sense, the problem is one of the chicken and the egg—reforming, revising, or renewing the agenda is seen as needed to increase political energy for effectiveness, yet political will is needed for any reform, revision, or renewal process to occur.

As we reach the midway point for the SDGs, now is an important moment to take stock of the challenges ahead and meaningfully consider what is needed—and desired—to ensure that the next phase of development cooperation is effective. Yet the question remaining is: where do we go from here?

6. Future of the effectiveness agenda—where to now?

Our survey results demonstrate that, while the effectiveness agenda continues to be seen as a relevant—and important—standard for the development community, there is impetus to revisit the agenda. Yet respondents have not pointed to a clear consensus on what or how the effectiveness agenda should change.

In this section, we propose four potential scenarios for the next phase of the effectiveness agenda. The scenarios are based on a combination of survey findings and our reading of the academic literature that details the challenges that have faced current and past iterations of the agenda. While the scenarios are necessarily imperfect, and each will involve different trade-offs, we hope that they provide a starting place for thinking about some of the options available to revise the agenda in the years ahead.[122]

[122] In addition to the main considerations we present along two axes below (Figure 15), some such trade-offs and questions that will need to be considered when defining the future of the effectiveness agenda could include those around the primary function of the agenda and its governance system (from fostering global knowledge-sharing on effectiveness practices to acting as a more binding accountability mechanism) and considering the roles and appropriate representation structures for actors with varying resource and capacity constraints—including, notably, partner countries.

Four options for reforming the effectiveness agenda

Instead of pointing to a clear trajectory for reforming the effectiveness agenda, our survey responses highlighted two key questions that underlie decisions on the future of the effectiveness agenda.

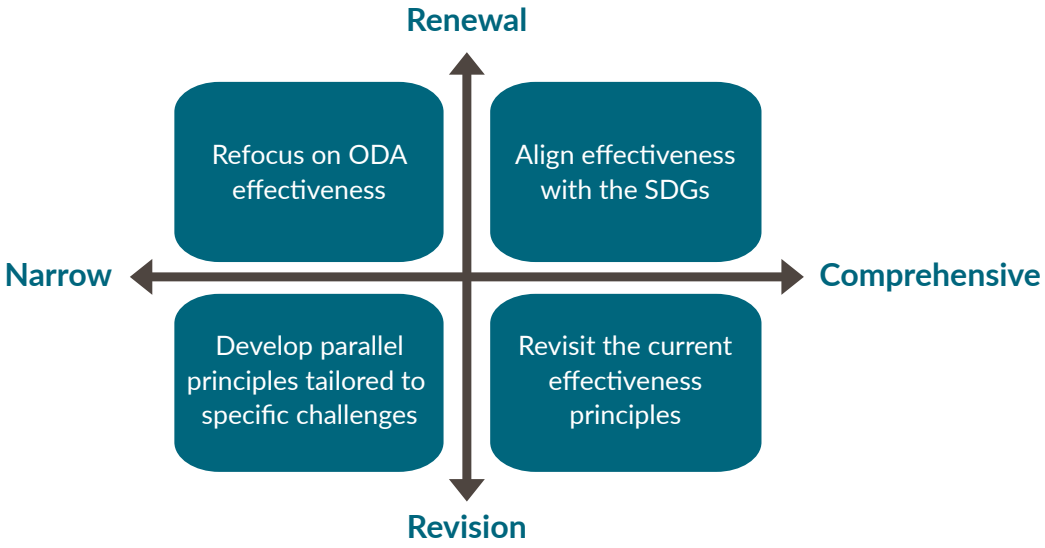
The first question asks, "what should the agenda cover?" In the context of a changing development landscape and an expanding range of actors, challenges, flows, and types of cooperation, this question is not straightforward. On one hand, there is value in having a single agenda that is inclusive of both actors and types of cooperation. In theory, inclusivity of actors breeds legitimacy, while covering the spectrum of flows in a single agenda is—on the surface—simpler to understand and apply. On the other hand, the legitimacy of an inclusive approach is lost if key actors disengage; the withdrawal of non-DAC providers from the GPEDC processes has been seen as a key challenge to the legitimacy of the current process.[123] At the same time, a broadly applicable agenda may not provide the degree of nuance needed to provide meaningful guidance on best practice across an increasingly diverse range of flows and contexts. This concern was raised by survey respondents, particularly in relation to the emerging catalytic role of ODA and its uses to support global challenges.

The second question asks, "is there the political will for reform, and to what degree?" The reality is that any attempt to reform the effectiveness agenda will require some level of political will as a basic enabling factor. Our survey showed that low political engagement is a barrier to implementing the agenda, let alone engaging in potentially prolonged negotiations to rethink the current process. Assuming there is some political impetus for reform, then the question becomes a matter of degree. If strong political will exists across actors (or specific groups of actors), then there may be space for a fuller renewal of the effectiveness agenda. However, if political will is more limited—and depending on which actors show a willingness to engage—then a modest revision of the agenda may be more realistic.

Using a simple 2x2 table, we use these questions as a basic framework for thinking about the potential options for reforming the effectiveness agenda. Figure 15 shows the full framework. The x axis captures the intended inclusivity of the agenda, ranging from comprehensive coverage—which envisions an agenda with universal or near-universal coverage of development actors, modalities, and types of partnerships—to narrower coverage, where the principles are specifically tailored for a subset of the development community or types of engagement. The y axis considers the ambitiousness of the reforms based on differing political will, spanning from a substantive renewal of the agenda, in cases of high political appetite for reform, to a modest revision of parts of the agenda if political appetite remains low.

[123] Andrea Ordóñez, "Development effectiveness from within: emerging issues from recipient countries" (Southern Voice, 2019). http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/191112-Ocassional-Paper-Series-No.58_final.pdf

Figure 15. Four scenarios for the effectiveness agenda



Within these dimensions, we suggest there are four main scenarios that could be considered directions of change for the future of the effectiveness agenda: 1) renew the agenda with a focus on effectiveness for the SDGs, 2) revisit the Busan agenda to renew buy-in and clarify the applicability of key principles, 3) develop new and parallel sub-principles for specific types of engagement or action, and 4) renew the agenda with a focus on ODA. Further details on our rationale for and assessment of each scenario are presented in the following section.

Option 1: Align effectiveness with the SDGs

This scenario involves an ambitious rethink and redesign of the effectiveness agenda to reflect the emerging paradigm of global development cooperation for the achievement of the SDGs. This scenario would aim for broad coverage of development related flows, modalities, and actors and would likely require substantive and wide political engagement.[124]

Proposal for renewing the agenda to focus on effectiveness for the SDGs

Focus—Rethinking the effectiveness agenda to reflect a global cooperation paradigm for achieving the SDGs. The goal is to provide basic principles that cover the full spectrum of cooperation partnerships. Politically, this option would aim to forge greater consensus, buy-in, and momentum for advancing best practice in pursuit of long-term global development.

[124] This scenario has parallels with Bhattacharya and Khan's "GPEDC 2.0" option, which they call a "new game with new rules," likely held "outside the aegis of the OECD-DAC"; see Bhattacharya and Khan, "Rethinking Development Effectiveness," p. 28.

Type of actor—This scenario focuses on building broad consensus and buy-in across the breadth of development actors.

Governance—Leadership of the agenda and monitoring would transfer to the UN. This assumption is based on the understanding that a global process may best be led through a global forum.

Rationale

This scenario directly responds to the changing development landscape and shifting narratives around global development cooperation. It addresses the need to reinterpret effectiveness principles from the perspective of a cooperation paradigm that sees global efforts as necessary to tackle the complex cross-border challenges underlying the SDGs. Doing so would reflect the reality emerging after COVID-19—which accelerated the transformation of the development paradigm and changed the nature of development partnerships[125]—and would also ensure that the effectiveness agenda is well positioned to provide guidance tailored to the realities of doing development in the 2020s.[126] Indeed, many survey respondents noted the importance of the effectiveness agenda for supporting efforts to achieve the SDGs yet acknowledged that the applicability of the agenda to current challenges required further revision. As we reach the halfway point of the SDGs, there may be a moment to reflect on the lessons from the last decade and recommit to a version of effectiveness that is focused on the challenges ahead.

To give any potential redesign of the effectiveness agenda under this scenario the best chances for uptake and implementation, it may be necessary to move the governance of the agenda to the UN systems.[127] Several survey respondents noted that the effectiveness agenda—despite the ambitions of the Busan process—remains rooted in the donor–recipient norm; this finding is also reflected in the literature, which suggests that the current agenda and GPEDC monitoring exercise are still seen as de facto DAC-led processes.[128] By contrast, some have argued that the UN system, specifically the DCF, has been viewed as a more legitimate arena for development engagement from some non-DAC providers, notably the BRICS.[129] To the degree that future iterations of the effectiveness agenda aim towards deeper engagement from a broader range of actors, then relocating the governance of the agenda to a more neutral space may be necessary to increase the likelihood of buy-in and participation.

[125] Prizzon, "How Coronavirus Is Accelerating?"

[126] Some have suggested, for instance, that the need to move from "billions to trillions" to achieve the SDGs necessarily requires rethinking "traditional accountability tools for development cooperation," including those that underlie the effectiveness principles, to ensure that such tools are "fit for purpose so as not to become mere political rhetoric without practical meaning" (Mahn, "Accountability for Development Cooperation," p. 28).

[127] In fact, as Bhattacharya and Khan (2020) propose, this may also necessitate the maintenance of "a non-negotiating atmosphere for the diverse providers from the North and the South, where state and non-state actors, including private philanthropy, come together and exchange ideas" and instead the establishment of a new, mutual learning platform.

[128] Bhattacharya and Khan, "Rethinking Development Effectiveness," p. 18.

[129] Li, "Should China Join the GPEDC?," p. 6.

Assessment

A core strength of this approach is its **potential for inclusivity**. In line with the SDGs, this scenario would engage a diverse range of global actors towards sustainable development, with the potential for each group to amplify their contributions based on their unique strengths. Meanwhile, shifting governance to the UN could **increase the legitimacy** of the effectiveness agenda as a *global* endeavor, rather than as a DAC-led process. This could overcome one of the main criticisms of the Busan/GPEDC process, which many actors view as a continuation of the old North–South development paradigm.[130] Indeed, some have suggested that non-DAC countries have defended the role of UN development spaces, namely the DCF, "as the appropriate regime for policy discussions and coordination on development cooperation" and as a more inclusive and legitimate space than the GPEDC..[131] At the same time, the broad change implied in this scenario could also bring **new political energy to development effectiveness**. With our survey respondents noting that political will for the agenda remains a key constraint to implementation, momentum around the midpoint of the SDGs and following the COVID-19 crisis could provide impetus to re-energize commitments to effectiveness.

However, there are questions about the **political feasibility** of this option, which would rely on broad political demand from all actors for effectiveness. Given respondents' assertion that political interest in effectiveness is already low and currently hinders implementation, there is a question about whether this option would be of interest to development and/or political leaders.[132] Further, the **broad inclusiveness implied under this scenario could make consensus among disparate groups of actors more difficult** and has the potential to dilute the bold action needed for the principles, so as to avoid a "stalemate."[133] Similar scenarios outlined by others have suggested that such broad participation under a UN system may render this option more useful as a space for knowledge sharing rather than consensus building.[134] Moreover, there is a risk that the global focus of this scenario could **reduce the relative burden on traditional providers to pull their weight in terms of implementation**.[135] What's more, the proposed change in the governance structure **could involve significant costs** in terms of staffing, time, and resources needed to establish the space for convening.[136] The limitations of the UN system—which include notoriously slow bureaucracy, multipolar influences, and the perception that UN spaces are mere "talk shops"—should also be considered

[130] Li Xiaoyun and Qi Gubo, "Should China join the GPEDC? Prospects for China and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation," in S. Chaturvedi et al. (Eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Development Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda*, pp. 393–408 (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillian, 2021).

[131] André de Mello e Souza, "Building a Global Development Cooperation Regime: Failed but Necessary Efforts," 2021, in S. Chaturvedi et al. (Eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Development Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda*, pp. 349–366 (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillian, 2021). p. 351.

[132] Some authors have also argued that high-income countries have generally and historically distrusted the UN as a forum for discussing development cooperation, see Fues et al (2012).

[133] de Mello e Souza, "Building a Global Development Cooperation Regime."

[134] Bhattacharya and Khan, "Rethinking Development Effectiveness."

[135] Emma Mawdsley, "'From billions to trillions': Financing the SDGs in a world 'beyond aid'," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 8, no. 2 (2018): 19–195; Andy Sumner et al., 'A Proposal for a New Universal Development Commitment', *Global Policy* 11, no. 4 (2020): 478-485.

[136] Debapriya Bhattacharya, Victoria Gonsior, and Hannes Öhler, "The Implementation of the SDGs: The Feasibility of Using the GPEDC Monitoring Framework," in S. Chaturvedi et al. (Eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Development Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda*, pp. 309–327 (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillian, 2021).

and will take time and effort to navigate.[137] Finally, it is unclear whether the monitoring of commitments to development effectiveness under this scenario would impose new and significant burdens on partner countries, who indicate that the current GPEDC monitoring already imposes a **significant resource burden**;[138] the complexity of monitoring effectiveness for the SDG agenda could prove more arduous, particularly for those actors with strained capacity.

Option 2: Revisit the current effectiveness principles

This scenario involves revise the applicability of the current development effectiveness framework to account for changes to the global development landscape over the past decade. It would also seek to renew political commitment for development effectiveness across actors.

Proposal for revisiting the Busan effectiveness principles

Focus—Revising and renewing the Busan agenda with an eye towards providing guidance on its applicability to emerging challenge areas. Specifically, this could involve revising and clarifying existing principles and technical indicators to strengthen applicability to different flows.

Type of actor—This scenario focuses on renewing consensus across the broad range of actors involved in the Busan agreement and those that participate in the GPEDC processes.

Governance—Responsibility for leading the agenda and monitoring its implementation would remain the responsibility of the GPEDC, supported and guided by the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team.

Rationale

This scenario proposes a revision of the current agenda to clarify the applicability of effectiveness concepts to different types of development flows, actors, and challenges emerging in the new development landscape. It responds to the finding that while the current effectiveness agenda remains relevant, there is appetite to revisit and renew the framework to better align the principles and monitoring indicators with the changing contexts, and to ensure that the principles are fit for the challenges ahead. Efforts in this vein are ongoing as part of the GPEDC's current reform process.[139]

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[137] Neissan Alessandro Besharati, "Common Goals and Differential Commitments: The Role of Emerging Economies in Global Development," German Development Institute Discussion Paper 26/2013.https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_26.2013.pdf

[138] GPEDC, "Listening up: Consultations on Global Partnership Monitoring Reform," 2020.https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-11/Listening%20Up_EN_final.pdf

[139] GPEDC, "Co-chairs' proposal."

Yet beyond formal changes to the framework, this scenario also envisions efforts to renew political commitment for the agenda across actors, including those that have disengaged since Busan. The early disengagement of non-DAC members from the Busan agreement and agenda—which occurred as early as 2014—and its inability to truly mobilize cooperation providers, have been seen as primary failings of the current process. Similarly, our survey showed that low political commitment has strained implementation across providers, suggesting that a revision of the agenda is unlikely to translate into better practice without renewed political commitment. Promoting political commitment for effectiveness—perhaps via the 2022 HLM—could help to build momentum behind the agenda and increase the likelihood of ongoing implementation and relevance.

Assessment

Of all scenarios, this approach faces the **lowest barriers to entry**, as it accepts the current Busan principles and governance as broadly relevant (despite needing to clarify applicability of the principles in some cases). This is a simpler ask, both politically and technically, than revising the principles themselves or standing-up new governance arrangements. Given that it proposes working within established governance structures, this option is the **most feasible from an institutional perspective and would impose the lowest costs** in terms of time, staff, and other resources needed. This scenario would involve a continuation of current work done by the GPEDC, preserving the existing monitoring efforts and ensuring the continuity of regular data updates. In the vein of Busan, this option also acknowledges and encourages **inclusivity across actors**, which remains a critical factor for facilitating collective action.

Still, despite Busan's efforts to support "inclusivity," **it is unclear whether this option could re-engage actors that have already disengaged from the process**, such as non-DAC providers. To the degree that such disengagement is rooted in the perception of the GPEDC and effectiveness agenda as a DAC-led process, this is unlikely to be resolved under a scenario that does not revise governance arrangements. There is a risk that, without meaningful political renewal of the agenda, **technical revision of the monitoring framework alone may not contribute to deeper effectiveness**. This is a particular concern given findings that detailed the political barriers to implementation. There is also a risk that efforts to modify the universal Busan agenda to make it more applicable to current challenges **may fail to future-proof the agenda for the challenges ahead**. After all, if the pace of change in the development sector continues to accelerate, the agenda may once again face the same questions of relevance in the future, with calls for deeper reforms to the theory underlying the effectiveness principles.

Option 3: Develop parallel principles tailored to specific challenges

In this scenario, the current effectiveness principles remain the same, but additional sets of principles for effective practice are created to address specific needs.

Proposal for creating new sub-principles for emerging challenges

Focus—Creating targeted sub-principles or clarifying the specific applicability of the existing principles for specific themes, partnerships, and emerging challenges under the umbrella of the broader effectiveness agenda.

Type of actor—All are able and encouraged to engage, but those most affected by specific challenges are likely to be the main audience or group of participants.

Governance—Broad governance could remain under the umbrella of the GPEDC, but responsibility for monitoring the implementation of unique sets of principles could be co-governed with relevant multilateral bodies—the UNFCCC on climate finance, for instance. This structure aligns with one proposed by Kaul (2021).

Rationale

This scenario responds to findings that there is some demand to adopt new principles to account for the changing development landscape. When asked how the effectiveness agenda should be revised, most respondents indicated that adding principles on engaging with new actors, utilizing new instruments, and responding to emerging global challenges were top priorities. These new principles could sit alongside the Busan agreement without requiring a broad rethink or revision of the underlying agenda.

To a degree, this scenario is already materializing with several new sets of principles developed alongside the Busan agenda in recent years. Consider, for instance, principles on blended finance (Blended Finance Principles), engagement in fragile states (Grand Bargain), or private sector engagement (Kampala Principles). Other sets of principles could be developed for specific areas of interest—climate finance, for instance, seems to be a particularly promising avenue for such an exercise. The group of actors engaged in the development and monitoring of any new principles would likely differ according to the group that is more affected by the specific challenge. So while participation would remain across actors, select groups may choose to engage more readily on specific issues of interest.

Assessment

A notable strength of this path is the ability to **tailor approaches to new and emerging challenges**, without necessitating a rethink of the current effectiveness agenda. Moreover, this scenario will enable targeting different sets of like-minded or specialized groups to develop relevant principles, potentially **increasing the likelihood of meaningful engagement** by engaging those most interested in each case. Finally, by building on the pre-existing

framework through supplementary principles, this scenario is the most **agile and flexible in its ability to accommodate ongoing changes** to the development landscape without requiring more fundamental reforms.

On the other hand, adding new sets of principles risks **increasing the complexity of the effectiveness agenda**. To the degree that each set of principles requires monitoring of implementation, there is the potential for this option to become cumbersome for partner countries, who have already reported the current biennial GPEDC monitoring rounds as costly in terms of time and resources.[140] Moreover, the separation of different types of actions inherent in this approach **risks creating a siloed agenda and raises questions around the coherence of context or issue-specific principles in practice**. Finally, the lack of clarity on who would be willing to set aside time and other resources to champion each subset of principles may put this scenario at a greater risk of becoming a "**business as usual" case in the absence of meaningful improvements** to implementation in some sectors or for some actors.

Option 4: Refocus on ODA effectiveness

This scenario involves narrowing the development effectiveness agenda to refocus squarely on ODA flows. This would enhance opportunities to redefine how ODA can be most effective in light of its changing role and purposes.

Proposal for a refocus of the agenda on ODA effectiveness

Focus—Recognizing the uniqueness of ODA as a source of development finance and renewing principles of ODA effectiveness to account for the changing roles and purposes of ODA.

Type of actor—This proposal would establish a clear mandate and give primary responsibility to ODA-disbursing agencies to uphold and champion the effectiveness principles—including, where relevant, when implementing ODA-funded projects with other development partners, such as the private sector, DFIs, or CSOs. This would likely make DAC member and multilateral agencies the primary actors under this scenario.

Governance—The focus on ODA means that the governance of the agenda should shift back to the OECD-DAC. The GPEDC, which is already partly hosted by the DAC, could continue in its monitoring role.

[140] GPEDC, "Listening up"

Rationale

This scenario starts from the understanding that ODA is a unique and limited flow,[141] and that past efforts to broaden the agenda to flows beyond ODA have diluted the effectiveness principles and accountability mechanisms in exchange for inclusivity that has not been realized.[142] Combined with challenges related to monitoring the effectiveness of other flows—with some arguing that the GPEDC exercise is better placed to deliver on monitoring ODA—there are questions about whether the benefits of the current development effectiveness model outweigh the potential costs in terms of usefulness for ODA.[143] The point here is not to return the 2005 Paris Principles; the world has changed since the Paris Declaration and any revisions must account for such changes. However, this scenario proposes a critical reflection on how or whether an ODA-focused agenda might provide clearer commitments or principles for using ODA effectively, with a sharper focus on accountability and ensuring ODA is aligned with effective practices.[144]

Efforts to refocus on ODA effectiveness would require a renewal of the agenda at a political level and would likely mean a reorientation of the governance of the agenda towards the DAC. DAC members would be primarily responsible for deliberating and implementing the agenda. Other actors could still participate—there should, for instance, be an active role for partner countries to remain engaged—while actors providing ODA-like resources could engage on a voluntary basis or be granted an observer status to follow proceedings without being required to make a firm commitment to implementation. Despite remaining inclusive, responsibility would ultimately fall on ODA-disbursing agencies to uphold and champion the effectiveness principles, including when implementing ODA-funded projects in partnership with or through other actors or alongside other non-ODA development flows.

Assessment

By focusing on ODA and relatively like-minded ODA providers, this scenario **increases the likelihood of more ambitious consensus**. Refining the agenda to focus explicitly on ODA resources can **bring greater clarity both to the applicability of the principles and the actors responsible for implementation**. In this vein, a clearer articulation of ODA's uniqueness could safeguard ODA resources against domestic pressures on ODA budgets, as noted by several respondents. This scenario is likely a more **feasible and lower-cost** option, as relevant GPEDC processes are already established and capable of monitoring ODA effectiveness, and few additional resources would need to be deployed to tailor the framework to become more

[141] For example, ODA has been shown to be the most stable external resource for developing countries. Unlike private flows, it is shaped by political leadership rather than return on investment and is can play a targeted role in low-income settings. OECD, 'Six decades of ODA: insights and outlook in the COVID-19 crisis' (Paris: OECD, 2020).

[142] Bracho, "Failing to Share the Burden."

[143] Brown, "Rise and Fall"; see also Jennifer Constantine, Alex Shankland and Jing Gu, "Engaging the Rising Powers in the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: A Framing Paper" IDS, 2015. https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-06/GPEDC-Engagement-with-BRICS_IDS-Framing-Paper_New_June2015.pdf

[144] Taggart suggests that the GPEDC essentially serves as a buffer that weakens criticism of the DAC by instead drawing focus to itself, placing little pressure on DAC members to improve effectiveness practices (Taggart, "A Decade Since Busan"). In part, this scenario could respond to this criticism—that is, an ODA-specific agenda could sharpen focus on DAC members as the major ODA providers and, ideally, provide more space for holding members to account on their implementation of effectiveness principles.

ODA-specific. While political renewal could be challenging, building consensus amongst a smaller group of relatively like-minded DAC members could be more attainable than broader consensus-building.

Notwithstanding some of the advantages of a narrower focus on ODA, this scenario risks **sidelining or ignoring issues around broader development effectiveness and beyond-ODA effectiveness,** which may be increasingly important and pervasive in the context of global challenges and the provision of GPGs. What's more, reverting to an ODA-focused agenda is **likely to exclude non-DAC providers of development cooperation**, potentially undermining past efforts for engagement and raising questions about the future of the broader development effectiveness agenda. Another clear risk is that an ODA-focused agenda has **the potential to fall back on the Paris principles and the challenges that came with them**. The development landscape has changed—so much so that there are important questions about whether it has changed too much to separate ODA from other sources of development finance.

7. Conclusions

Results from our survey confirm that the development cooperation landscape is in a state of flux, with implications for the effective delivery of ODA. COVID-19 and increasingly frequent climate-related disasters are highlighting the importance of tackling global challenges as a purpose of ODA, to both safeguard past development outcomes and mitigate future risks. At the same time, development agencies are expected to continue delivering on traditional development purposes by providing country-focused engagement to support poverty reduction. In support of both newer and more traditional purposes, the role of ODA is also changing. As stagnant ODA budgets are asked to deliver on an increasing number of priorities, agencies face rising pressures to use ODA as a catalytic resource and engage with a much wider range of actors and themes. In this "new normal" of global development, ensuring the effectiveness of available ODA resources will be more important than ever.

Yet doing so will not be straightforward. The current effectiveness agenda is over a decade old and—as our survey suggests—has not kept pace with the changing demands of doing development in the 2020s. Reform, it seems, is necessary both to align the agenda with the challenges ahead and to renew political commitment for effectiveness. While our surveys highlighted demand for reform, how the agenda should change remains an open question. We have suggested four potential options for reform based on choices around the flows, modalities, and themes the agenda is intended to cover and whether there is broader political support among diverse groups of development actors for such reform.

In response to these challenges, we proposed a basic framework for thinking about the future of the effectiveness agenda, based on the level of political appetite for reform and the intended coverage of the agenda. This framework defines four potential scenarios for the future of the effectiveness agenda, each of which includes trade-offs in the opportunities, challenges, and feasibility involved. The challenge facing those responsible for deciding the path ahead is that the options that are the most politically feasible—presumably those that involve a modest revision rather than renewal—are not necessarily the most desirable if the

intention is to ensure that the effectiveness agenda is fit for the challenges ahead. From our perspective, the scenario that offers the best chance to rethink and realign the effectiveness principles with the rapidly changing purposes and roles of ODA is one that seeks to align the effectiveness agenda and principles with the actions needed to implement the SDGs. This scenario would break from the current trajectory and could signal commitment for the type of global cooperation both needed and envisioned as part of the SDGs. While this scenario offers potential benefits, it also comes with substantial risks of failure, stalemate, and ineffectiveness. In this "high risk, high reward" scenario, the question is whether these risks outweigh those of more limited action—or inaction.

As we approach the midpoint to the SDGs, this is the moment for policymakers to meaningfully rethink development effectiveness for the road ahead. Doing so will be crucial to informing actions toward addressing the complex global and local challenges that stand between current progress and achieving the SDGs. Given that the implementation of the agenda has stalled, missing this moment could risk the success of future development outcomes. Acting now could provide a stronger basis for effective and global cooperation to tackle future challenges. While decisions about whether and how the agenda should change will undoubtedly involve a long, complex process and potentially tough negotiations among actors with different viewpoints, reigniting discussions on development effectiveness is a necessary first step to ensuring the agenda can keep pace with the challenges ahead.

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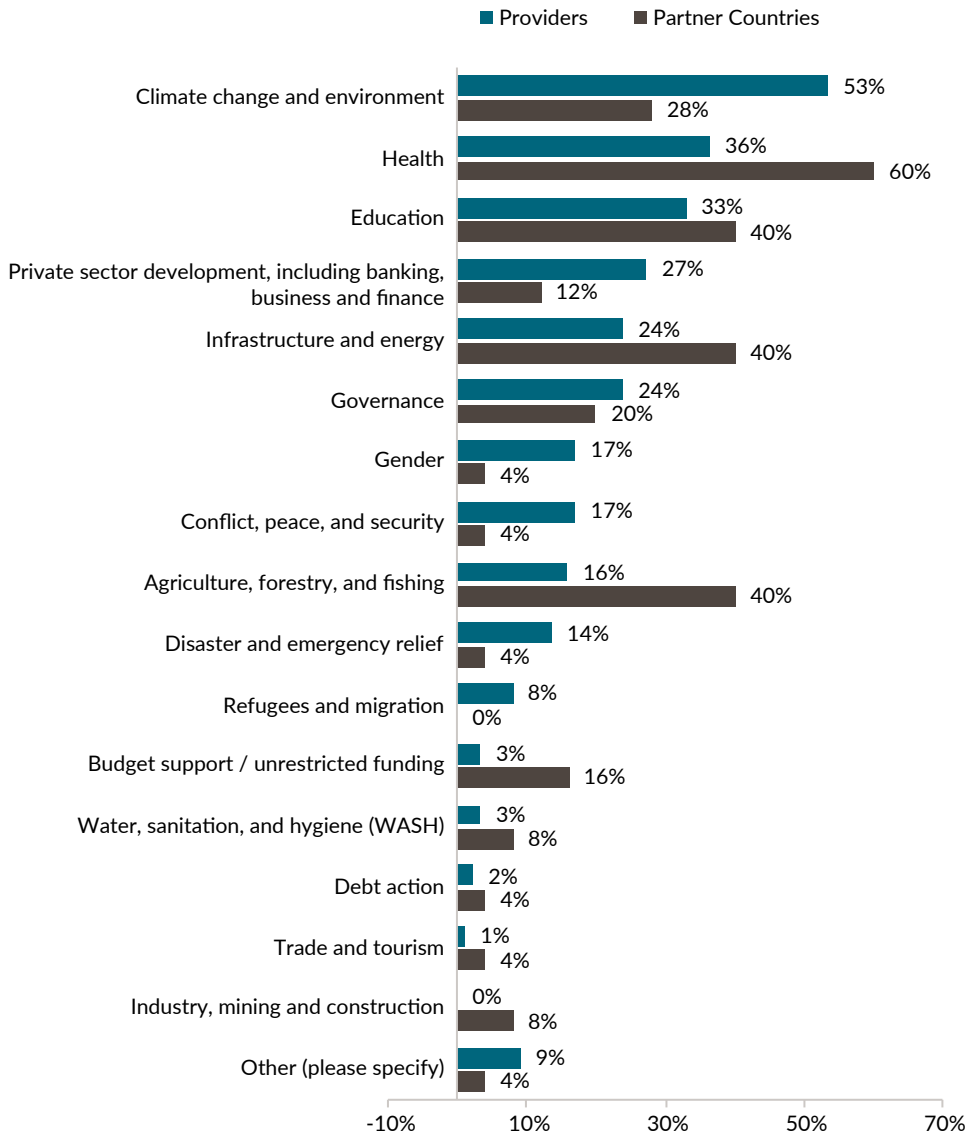
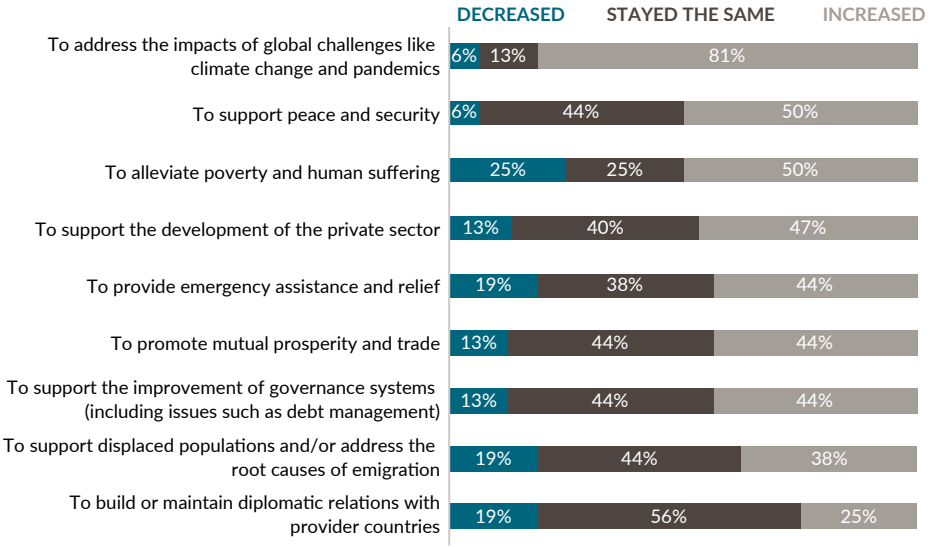
Annex 1. Additional figures from the surveys

Figure A.1. Respondents who identified each sector of ODA as being within the top three priorities of their organization (provider and partner country surveys)



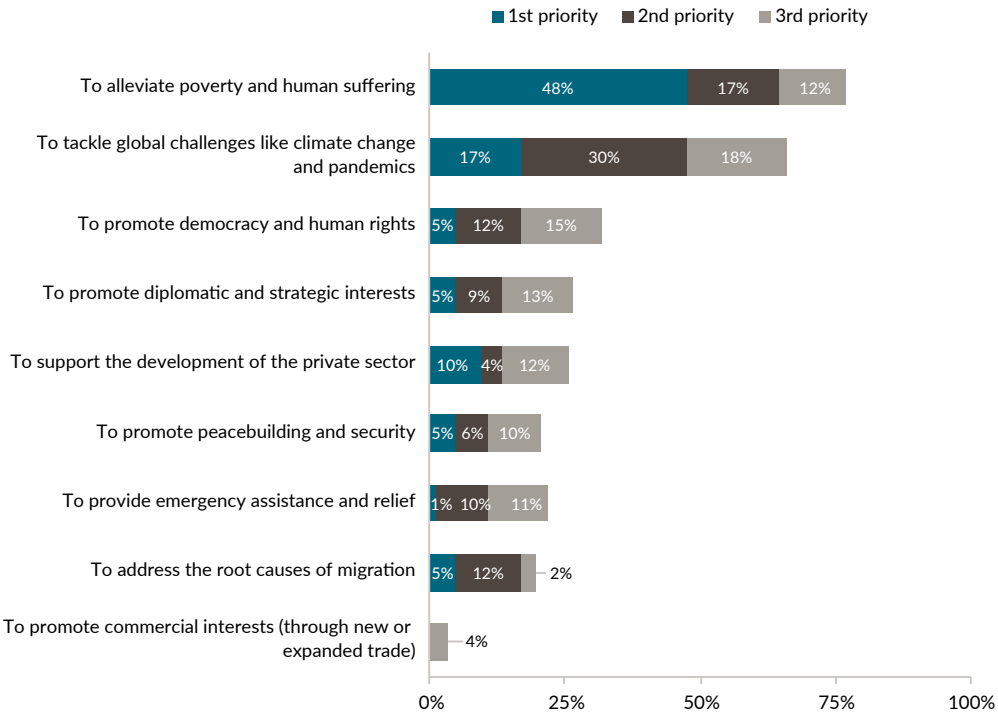
Note: Provider survey based on 88 responses, recipient survey based on 25 responses.

Figure A.2. Full breakdown of how each purpose of inward ODA has changed in the past decade (partner survey)



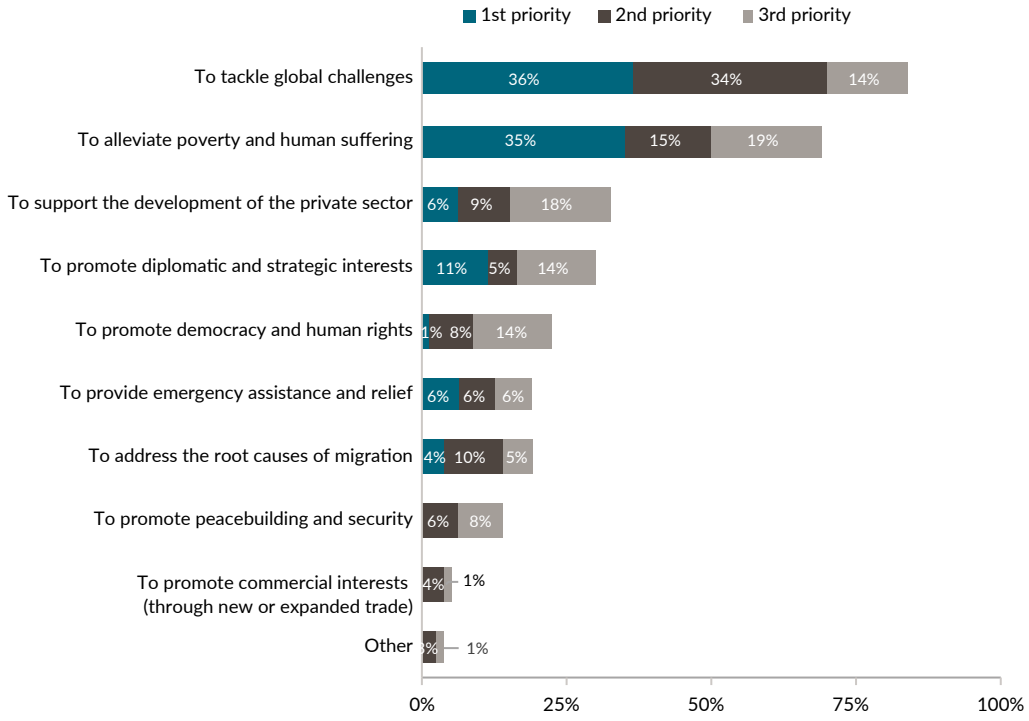
Note: Based on 16 responses. Answers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Figure A.3. Responses on what the priority purposes of ODA are currently for provider organizations



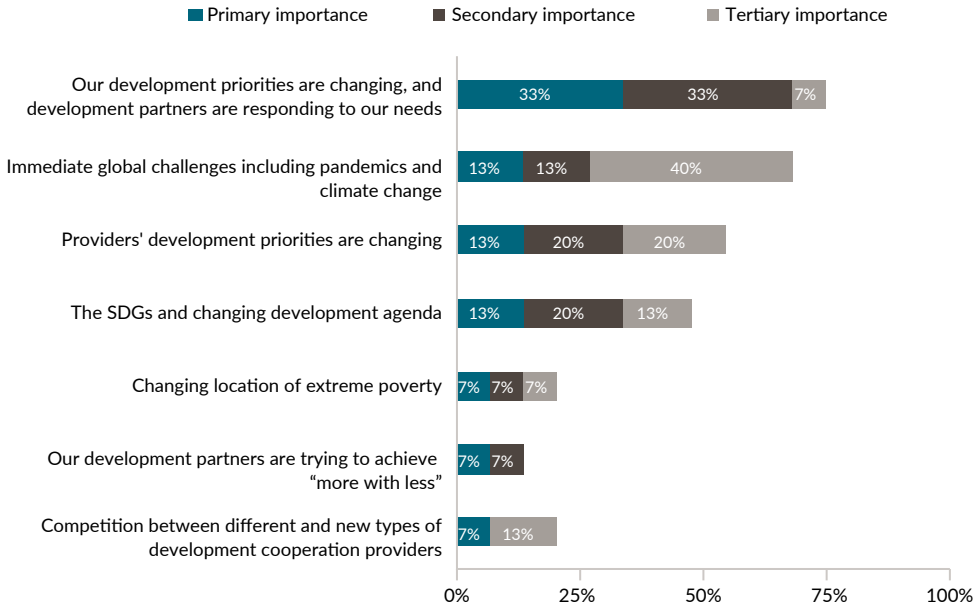
Note: Based on 82 responses.

Figure A.4. Responses on what the priority purposes of ODA are expected to be in five years for provider organizations



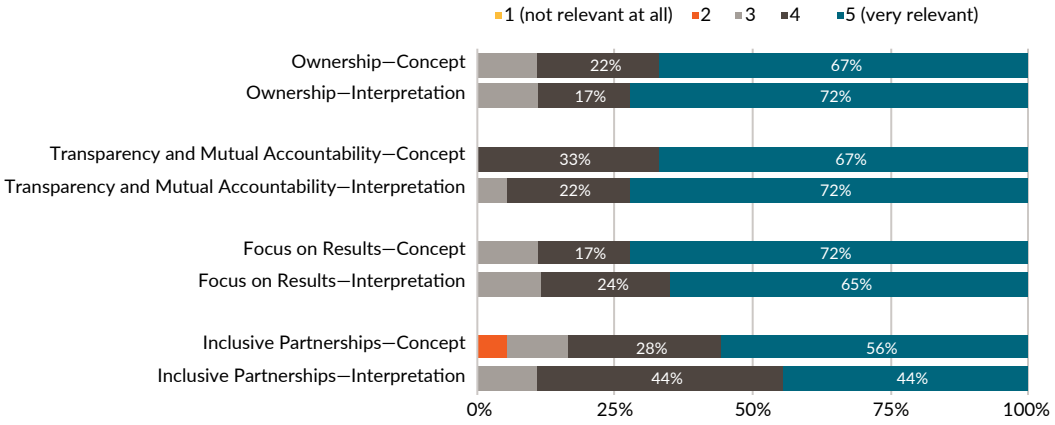
Note: based on 80 responses.

Figure A.5. Factors driving the changing purpose of ODA in the last decade (partner survey)



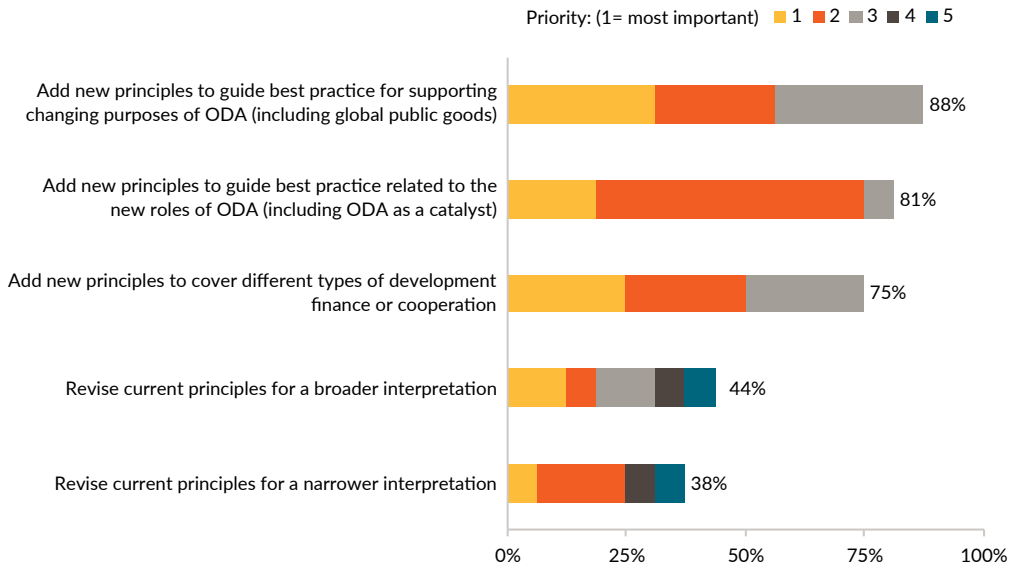
Note: Based on 15 responses.

Figure A.6. Relevance of each effectiveness principle, in concept and in interpretation (partner survey)



Note: Based on 18 responses.

Figure A.7. Answers to how the agenda should change (partner survey)



Note: Based on 16 responses.