ADDIS ABABA ACTION AGENDA: FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND CLIMATE PROCESSES

Dr. Surajit Ghosal

Assistant Professor
Department of Economics
Faculty of Business and Economics
Assosa University, PO Box 18, Assosa, Ethiopia.

Abstract

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), basically, the financing plan for the sustainable development goals (SDGs) widens the scope of development financing to include private and domestic financing moving from billions to trillions and it also affirms space for financing climate processes concerned to especially rich countries affected by environmental degradation with rise in temperature. This paper attempts to assess critically the agreements of this forum over the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) considered in Monterrey Consensus (2002) and Doha Declaration (2008) and suggest to prioritize the goals. For appropriate monitoring the implementation of these targets, it is the high time to fix the highest priority of AAAA in addition to MDGsconstitutingof 8 goals and 21 targets and SDGs constituting of 17 goals and 169 targets.

Key Words: Climate change, Financing, Development goal, Prioritize, Synergy, Technology.

1. Introduction

The State Heads and top state representatives, joined at the United Nations Third International Conference on Financing for Development, being held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 13 to 16 July 2015, agreed on a series of bold measures to overhaul global strong political commitment to address the challenges of financing and create an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development with the spirit of global partnership and solidarity. The groundbreaking agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), provides a foundation for implementing the global sustainable development agenda that world leaders adopted in September 2015. The agreement was reached by the 193 UN Member States attending the Conference, following negotiations under the leadership of Ethiopian Foreign Minister Tewdros Adanom Gebreyesus.

The Action Agenda builds on the 2002 Monterrey Consensus and the 2008 Doha Declaration considering the goals to end poverty and hunger, and to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions through promoting inclusive economic growth, protecting the environment, and promoting social inclusion. In support of implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), the AAAA contains more than 100 concrete measures like committing to respect all human rights, including the right to development and ensuring gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment. It addresses all sources of finance schemes, and covers cooperation on a range of issues including technology, science, innovation,
trade and capacity building promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and advance fully towards an equitable global economic system where no country or person is left behind, enabling decent work and productive livelihoods for all, while preserving the planet for our children and future generations.

Domestic resource mobilization is central to the agenda. In the outcome document, countries agreed to an array of measures aimed at widening the revenue base, improving tax collection, and combating tax evasion and illicit financial flows. Countries also reaffirmed their commitment to official development assistance (ODA), particularly for the least developed countries (LDCs), and pledged to increase South-South cooperation. The outcome document also underscores the importance of aligning private investment with sustainable development, along with public policies and regulatory frameworks to set the right incentives. A new mechanism that will facilitate financing for new technologies for developing countries was also agreed upon.

Since the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus the world economic activity and financing flows have increased substantially with the great progress in mobilizing financial and technical resources for development from an increased number of actors. Advances in science, technology and innovation (STI) have enhanced the potential to achieve our Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Many countries, including developing ones, have implemented policy frameworks that have contributed to increased mobilization of domestic resources and higher levels of economic growth and social progress. Developing countries’ share in world trade has increased, and while debt burdens remain, they have been reduced in many poor countries. Further, it contributed to a substantial reduction in the number of people living in extreme poverty and to notable progress towards the achievement of the MDGs.

Now, the SDGs comprise 17 goals and 169 agreed target is expected to replace the 8 goals and 21 targets of the MDGs. The MDGs had some 60 indicators to monitor progress towards the targets. To ensure sufficient financing and policy coherence to achieve the SDGs, a Financing for Development framework AAAA has also been agreed in Addis Ababa and followed up at the UN in September 2015 with an agreement on the SDGs. A climate change conference COP 21 concluded in Paris in December and hopefully will see more concrete agreement on approaches, targets and financing mechanisms to help create a more sustainable world by 2030 including a pathway to contain climatic changes by temperature rise.

The AAAA includes important policy commitments and key deliverables in critical areas for sustainable development, including infrastructure, social protection and technology. There were agreements for international cooperation for financing of specific areas where significant investments are needed, such as in infrastructure for energy, transport, water and sanitation, and other areas to help realize the proposed sustainable development goals. Countries also stressed the importance of nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks.

2. The Financing Schemes of AAAA

The AAAA rules out the North-South financing model that was the focus at Monterrey and builds on the Doha meeting which began to recognize that ODA will form only a small part of the overall
financing needs. To quantify the financing, all of external funding for development (FiD) including ODA, private financial flows, remittances and other private flows adds up to around USD 1 trillion. In contrast, Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) provides over USD 8 trillion in financing.

ODA makes up less than 15% of external financing, but when we break up by level of development the picture changes. ODA makes up almost two-thirds of the financing needs of the Low Income Countries (LICs), less than 20% for the Lower Middle Income Countries (LMICs) and less than 5% for the Upper Middle Income Countries (UMICs). By 2030 these shares may be 50% for LICs, less than 10% for LMICs and none for UMICs. Private international finance forms almost 50% of the overall external financing, but is heavily concentrated in the UMICs. South- south financing and philanthropic financing is also rising to make a contribution to the overall financial picture of sustainable development. It suggests that the title “Financing for Development” (FiD) which has a top down, traditional north-south aid model connotation should be changed to Financing of Sustainable Development (FoSD) (World Bank, 2015).

The financing plan for the SDGs follows the work of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (ICESDF). It classifies funding into four broad categories like domestic public finance, international public finance, domestic private finance and international private finance, including remittances. Domestic public finance and domestic private finance remains the largest source of development finance. Among the sources of international finance, private flows and remittances have emerged over the course of the MDGs from 2000-2015 as the largest source of finance as ODA has increased at a much slower rate. For the LDCs, ODA still remains the major source of international financing, but remittances also make a significant contribution. More globalized forms of taxation to finance Global Public Good are not addressed in the AAAA.

2.1 Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM)

Given that DRM makes up almost 90% of total development finance it is not surprising that AAAA devotes considerable focus on it. With growing trade liberalization, trade tariff revenues have declined in most developing countries; revenue from VAT has gone up. DRM is also much more volatile in LDCs and fragile states than in LICs and MICs partly because of conflict and partly because of heavier reliance on extractive industries. Raising more from DRM and reducing its volatility must be a top priority of the AAAA. Getting tax revenues up to 15% of GDP for the LDCs and up to 20% of GDP for the LMIC’s would be a reasonable target. Any monitoring system for DRM would incorporate these indicators, with the objective of reaching those revenue targets. Funding for capacity building of tax administration must be increased and is also highlighted in the AAAA.

The AAAA rightly focuses on the need to reduce illicit financial flows by 2030. It is hard to get accurate numbers on these but is estimated to be over USD 1 trillion per year. So any reduction could raise substantial resources for SDG financing. As regards financial flows related to criminal activities and corruption, better coordination among tax authorities, tracking financial information (follow the money) will be important. The G20-OECD Action Plan on ‘Base Erosion and Profit Shifting’ (BEPS) is
designed to improve the international tax system by helping reduce tax avoidance. The AAAA calls for a special focus on countries with Extractive Industries, especially as lack of transparency, corruption and tax avoidance lead to large losses to public revenues. The AAAA also includes agreements on improvements in public spending. While much of these must take place at the country by country level, some broad areas of change are suggested. The most concrete of these is the suggestion to phase out fossil fuel subsidies and to tax public “bads” such as tobacco. Total fossil fuel subsidies direct and indirect- are estimated to amount to almost USD 1.9 trillion per year. Eliminating these will release revenue for basic public services public health and water and sanitation (Whitley, 2013 and IMF, 2013).

2.2 Private Financing: Domestic and International

The AAAA recognizes the growing role of private financing. Private financing, domestic and international and including remittances now forms the major share of development financing. Stable and transparent regulatory systems, good investment climate and sound macroeconomic and financial policies which were highlighted at Monterey and on which considerable progress has been made are emphasized again in the AAAA. Financial inclusion is given prominence in the AAAA but surprisingly there is no target set in the SDGs for women’s access to credit and banking services. Economic empowerment of women does not find strong targets in the SDGs and forms perhaps one of its key weaknesses although it does appear quite strongly in the AAAA. Remittances are accorded special attention in the AAAA with numeric and monitor able targets of the average cost of remittances to below 3 % by 2030 and no corridor to have remittance costs above 5 %.

AAAA also gives due importance to high quality FDI assuming short term capital volatility has been very costly for many emerging markets (EMs). AAAA encourages policies that will encourage spillovers especially to MSMEs in developing countries. Given that FDI is highly concentrated in only a few developing countries, for various reasons the AAAA’s focus on this is obviously correct.

PPPs are encouraged in the AAAA and are growing but their experience is mixed. With fiscal constraints in most developing countries PPPs provide the logical way to tap into private finance by covering policy and implementation risks and incentivizing private capital, while keeping commercial risks. The AAAA promises to share experience, help build capacity to negotiate contracts and develop guidelines. MDB financing in these projects could help draw in more private capital and lead to better design of PPP’s while meeting social and environmental standards.

2.3 International Development Cooperation

The AAAA reaffirms the ODA goals of 0.7 % of GNI for all developed countries and 0.15-0.2 % of GNI for LDCs. These targets have not been met so far and there is nothing in the AAAA that would drive countries to meet those targets. The AAAA also asks the developed world to at least meet the target for the LDCs and this may give many countries a way out by shifting more of their assistance to LDCs and thereby meet at least one of the targets, and thereby reverse the somewhat surprising decline in ODA to LDCs in the last decade.

Currently ODA is around 0.25% of GNI so if the target of 0.7% of GNI is met it
would triple ODA as currently defined. This by itself would not close the financing gap for financing the SDGs but would go a long way towards it especially as more ODA could be used to crowd in private finance and go a long way towards helping achieve the basic services goals of the SDGs poverty, education, health, water and sanitation, and housing.

The AAAA makes a call to strengthen south-south cooperation – including by adhering to the provisions of the Nairobi High Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation. Two important issues on ODA are not fully addressed in the AAAA. First, ODA has been surprisingly volatile in fragile states and in MICs especially for LMICs (Kharas, Prizzon and Rogerson, 2015). Second, ODA declines very sharply after countries cross LDC and LIC status and the rising tax revenue does not make up for the shortfall leading to a missing middle in development finance.

A fuller direction of climate financing is still being developed after the Paris COP 21 meeting whose details are yet to be finalized. In this regard it is significant that AAAA commits to raise an additional USD 100 billion by 2020 over and above existing ODA per year from developed countries to help developing countries especially for adaptation costs of LDCs, SIDs and Africa. It must be noted that LDCs still rely on ODA to meet two thirds of their international financing needs. Therefore, traditional ODA must increase from its current level of $135 billion.

Remittances have been growing rapidly on an average around 4% per annum and are now close to USD 450 billion per year and could rise at that rate to around USD 750 billion per year. It could go even higher if the targets of reducing the transactions costs of remittances close to 8% today are reduced to under 5% and perhaps even to 3% - the SDG target.

Portfolio capital and private equity flows have also grown sharply to around USD 400 billion to developing countries. These flows are known to be volatile, make macro-economic management more complicated. South-south cooperation has grown rapidly but is still only financing around USD 30-40 billion – based on available data. Even if it increased five-fold it would at best finance about USD 150-200 billion of sustainable development finance. Illicit flows and tax avoidance are estimated to amount to around USD 1 trillion. It would make a small but significant source of financing for the SDGs. The big missing players in development finance have been the MDBs surprising as their main function is the provision of development finance.

2.4 Spending Commitments

Better governance through improved procurement, strengthened auditing, reduced corruption and waste all mentioned in the AAAA are ways to reduce the cost of delivering sustainable development. McKinsey Global Institute (McKinsey Global Institute, 2013) estimates that the global need of an additional spends of USD 1.2 trillion per year could be reduced by 40% through better infrastructure practices alone. Subsidies alone cost about USD 1.9 trillion annually world-wide, of which almost USD 300 billion is in fossil fuel subsidies. Many other spending programs in health, education, water, sanitation and social protection could see improved delivery and transparency with better outcomes. Improved governance and strengthened institutions are now included in a standalone SDG Goal 16. But they are difficult to measure across countries and even across time as they are based on perception based indicators and surveys.
(Hulme, Savoia and Sen 2014). The more practical definitions of good governance such as those of the World Bank which focus on state capacity to deliver services more effectively are not included in the Targets and should be used in the indicators if some meaningful measurement across countries is to be achieved.

3. **Action Areas: Programs and Policies in the AAAA**

The AAAA breaks new ground in the following action areas:

I. **International trade as an engine for development** - International trade is an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development. We will continue to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO), as well as meaningful trade liberalization.

II. **Global Infrastructure Forum** - Countries agreed to establish a *Global Infrastructure Forum* to identify and address infrastructure gaps, highlight opportunities for investment and cooperation. This forum attempts infrastructure funds set up by various MDB’s and facilities to help fund the USD1.0-USD1.5 trillion infrastructure financing gap and work to ensure that projects are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

III. Countries agreed to establish a *Technology Facilitation Mechanismo* to facilitate technology transfer especially for clean technology to help mitigate climate change and provide greater access to modern energy from renewable.

IV. The Agenda calls for strengthening support for the work of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in *Tax evasion and illicit financial flows* and reduce the roughly USD1 trillion of tax avoidance globally. It emphasizes the importance of inclusive cooperation and dialogue among national tax authorities.

V. Countries committed to promote affordable and stable access to credit for smaller enterprises. They also pledged to develop and operate a global strategy for *youth employment* and implement the ILO Global Jobs Pact by 2020.

VI. Coping with *climate change* will be a major challenge for many cities in the developing world already choking with poor air quality, congestion, poor quality housing. The AAAA recognizes these challenges and supports adoption of the *Sendai Framework for holistic disaster risk management* and calls on developed countries to implement their commitment to a goal of jointly mobilizing USD100 billion per year by 2020 from a wide variety of sources to address the needs of developing countries. There are 7 very sensible targets under the Sendai Framework which have largely been incorporated into the SDGs.

VII. The AAAA promises to support universal access to reliable and sustainable modern energy for all. It mentions the UN Secretary General’s Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4ALL). The SE4ALL has 3 global targets (which are now included in the SDGs (a) ensuring universal access to modern energy services (b) doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and (c) doubling the share of renewable energy in the world’s energy...
mix all by 2030. A Global Tracking Framework 2015 provides the links between energy and four key development areas, food, water, health and gender.

3.1 Debt and Debt Sustainability
Debt servicing takes resources away from achievement of the SDGs by (a) having less resources for public expenditure (b) debt overhang can deter private investment and (c) hinder new and more productive borrowing. Evidence from the past shows that debt relief has been substantial not led to any substantial increase in net ODA.

The AAAA recognizes the need to assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, debt restructuring and sound debt management, as appropriate. The AAAA calls for improvements in sovereign debt restructuring including the recent discussion at the “Paris Forum”. The AAAA endorses the IMF and World Bank debt sustainability analysis – but also asks these institutions to strengthen the analysis, which has come under some criticism for its rigidities.

3.2 Addressing Systemic Issues
The AAAA highlights all the global issues the world is grappling with especially, the issue of global economic governance, but provides no agreements or remarkable progress. It mentions the need for IMF and World Bank quota reform with no timetable. The AAAA calls for strengthening financial stability, financial safety net and validates the insufficient governance reform process going on.

It also talks of volatility of commodity prices, financial market reforms, credit rating, organized crime, international migration and policy coherence. But what is surprising is that at a time when the world recognizes that the major challenges facing the world are global the solutions and suggestions offered in the AAAA and financing for global public goods looks like the weakest.

3.3 Science, Technology, Innovation and Capacity Building
The AAAA affirms to adopt science, technology and innovation strategies as integral elements of national sustainable development strategies to help to strengthen knowledge-sharing and collaboration. It aims at scaling up investment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education, and enhances technical, vocational and tertiary education and training, ensuring equal access for women and girls and encouraging their participation therein.

The AAAA commits to capacity building for sustainable development: especially in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Africa. Technology transfer is vital if the new challenges of climate change and poverty elimination are to be achieved. The AAAA introduces the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) which was launched with the SDGs following the way to encourage the development, dissemination and diffusion and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed. TFM will be composed of an interagency UN task force, a multi stake holder forum for bringing together governments, civil society, private sector and specialized agencies and an online platform. The task team will be composed of UN agencies and 10 representatives of civil society and the private sector appointed by the Secretary-General for a period of two years. The
4. Data, Monitoring and Follow up
Mechanisms for follow-up and review will be essential to the achievement of the SDGs and their means of implementation. The AAAA and the SDGs devote considerable attention to the issue of data and monitoring. This is a good sign that given the slow start to monitor the MDGs, which eventually picked up momentum. The UN statistical commission is tasked with coming up with measureable indicators for the SDGs and has made considerable progress on reaching agreement on specific indicators that will be used to measure the 169 targets under the SDGs.

To ensure a strengthened follow-up process at the global level, AAAA encourages the Secretary-General to convene an inter-agency task force, including the major institutional stakeholders and the United Nations system, including funds and programs and specialized agencies whose mandates are related to the follow-up, building on the experience of the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force. The inter-agency task force will report annually on progress in implementing the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and advice the intergovernmental follow-up thereto on progress, implementation gaps and recommendations for corrective action. Further, UN member nations will consider the need to hold a follow-up conference by 2019.

5. Challenging Areas of AAAA and Targets Priority
MDGs constitutes of 8 goals and 21 targets and suffered from the lack of an organized evaluation system to assess what programs and policies helped achieve progress on the MDGs or why were there shortfalls in meeting targets. The MDGs were limited in their scope and missed important aspects of economic and social development and missed the synergies needed between different sectors to reach specific outcomes. In the same way SDGs constitutes of 17 goals and 169 agreed targets are expected to face lack of synergies and evaluation. The AAAA must identify the challenging areas where synergies are needed to reach the ultimate outcomes on priority basis.

- Delivering social protection and essential public services for all. To end poverty and finish the uncompleted MDG agenda a new social compact in favor of the poor and vulnerable groups, through the provision of social protection systems and measures for all, including social protection floors.
- Scaling up efforts to end hunger and malnutrition. By increasing agricultural productivity, improving social security systems, increasing market access and reducing post-harvest food loss and waste. Countries agreed to consider taxing harmful substances to deter consumption and to increase domestic resources. They agreed that taxes on tobacco reduce consumption and could represent an untapped revenue stream for many countries.
- The additional steps to address gender equality and women’s empowerment seem to speak more to “Gender Equality as Smart Economics” than to women and girls’ entitlement to human rights and show a strong tendency towards the
active participation of women by stating that women’s empowerment is vital to enhance economic growth and productivity.

- Establishing a new forum to bridge the infrastructure gap by highlighting opportunities for investment and cooperation and work to ensure that investments are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.
- Promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization.
- Generating full and productive employment and decent work for all and promoting Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME’s). Countries committed to promote affordable and stable access to credit for smaller enterprises.
- Protecting our eco-systems for all – especially with changing behavior.
- Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies: including combating corruption and curbing illicit financial flows.

6. Criticism Areas of AAAA
AAAA faces the various comments of the critics regarding financing processes and implementing these huge numbers of goals in addition to negative aspects of the programs.

6.1 Financing for Development (FfD): Means of Implementing the SDGs
FfD was increasingly expected to provide a strong working definition of the Means of Implementation for the SDG agenda. Does the outcome document deliver on this goal? Yes and no. On the one hand, developing countries managed to inscribe references to international coordination and financial and technical support in areas like fighting corruption and illicit finance, scaling up infrastructure investments, and knowledge and technology transfer. On the other hand, developed countries often pushed back firmly against the creation of new and potentially costly institutional mechanisms and partnerships for the SDGs. The result is often vague language to ‘explore’ (rather than ‘implement’) new partnerships. The document is also studded with commitments to address developing country concerns through existing institutions and coordination bodies, such as the IMF, World Bank Group.

Whether these commitments will be sufficient to bridge political divides in FfD will depend on the extent to which future reforms move beyond the current status quo to allow developing countries greater participation in the governance mechanisms of these institutions. We note with great concern the tendency of traditional donors to elude their responsibilities by putting emphasis on South–South cooperation, Domestic Resource Mobilization or the Private Sector. International Development Cooperation remains critical for development financing and fulfilling the 0.7% commitment made more than four decades ago remains pivotal. Furthermore, the AAAA does not unambiguously address the necessary addition of climate and biodiversity finance.

6.2 Spending Commitments
Ambitious numeric targets on domestic spending, tax collection and ODA included in the first (‘zero’) draft were struck down in the early phases of negotiations by a large coalition of developed and developing countries. Most targets are now expressed in non-numeric terms and are thus harder to monitor (e.g. Paragraphs on domestic tax reform). Others are formulated as voluntary commitments. For example for ODA, one of the few remaining numeric targets, the document ‘reaffirms the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the
target of 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI’ and ‘welcomes’ the unilateral decision by the European Union to do so within the time frame of the post-2015 agenda. ODA targets to Least Developed Countries further remain below the current share of approximately a third of total ODA allocated to LDCs (the document speaks of allocating 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to LDCs).

6.3 Illicit Funds and Tax Evasion
Developing countries fought long and hard to rectify illicit outflows of resources and tax evasion by calling for a new and stronger UN body for tax coordination that would allow for stronger representation of developing countries’ interests than existing mechanisms within the OECD. The deal they got an increased frequency of meetings of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters of two meetings a year falls behind this target. However, it is worth noting that also developing countries resisted new commitments to raise domestic tax to GDP ratios or make the use of public revenues more effective and equitable (for example, a commitment to phase out harmful fuel subsidies was only adopted after long and painful discussions). Looking forward, progress on tax matters will require stronger political commitments from both developed and developing countries. Again, regressive tax policies such as indirect taxes disproportionately harm people living in poverty, women, minorities, and persons with disabilities, children, and other marginalized groups.

6.4 Lack of Coordination: ODA, Climate and Humanitarian Finance
Although environmental and humanitarian concerns are addressed head-on in the Action Agenda, negotiators were often cautious not to forestall debates with more direct mandates on these issues, including the COP 21 in Paris and the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. This left gaps on important questions, such as whether the international public response to climate change and humanitarian disasters would be financed from ODA or additional resources and the appropriate level of burden sharing between developed and developing countries. As it stands, the Addis document outlines broad principles of climate, development and humanitarian finance, with more concrete agreements and commitments to follow from the climate and humanitarian tracks of Post-2015 negotiations.

7. Conclusion
The way forward for the AAAA will not be easy flawless. Progress will require more precision and prioritization as argued. But the prioritization of targets is also not easy because of the huge uncertainties introduced by climate change and socio-economic changes in the economy. Hence we need a system which progresses in slower pace but remain functioning in a long run. This paper has argued that, if the SDGs are to succeed it will not be possible only because of availability of the resources but also through better policy implication at national and international level and through more coordinated approaches among the member nations. The impact of policy implications on sustainability is also an area that needs much greater attention.

AAAA has identified ways to prioritize. While commendable in the scope and coverage the SDGs with 169 targets are not easy to monitor or evaluate. One option is to introduce greater precision in them, but on many issues such as governance, institutional strength, or even inequality and this is not so easy. Another option is to focus on the ‘Highest Priority’ to 60 signifying as
“Must achieve targets” for all countries and another 100 assigned as “Desirable targets”. The AAAA has to find way out to do so. The AAAA endorses a wide range of programs and policies to support the SDGs. In some cases there are concrete programs with specified targets such as the Aichi Biodiversity Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Management, the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) program. In some cases there is partial agreement such as in trade where the Bali Accord has more precise agreements but there remains much work to be done for a Doha Accord. The AAAA also introduces new promising initiatives such as the Global Infrastructure Forum, the Technology Transfer Mechanism, the focus on illicit financial flows and ‘Base Erosion and Profit Shifting’ (BEPS), and the Global Youth Employment Plan. But these will require further working out and sufficient financing. The AAAA recognizes the cross cutting aspect of various targets and lists several cross cutting themes. But our expectation follows the same way that these synergies work remains weak as like the MDG period had no organized evaluation system to better understand them. Obviously, Monitoring would help to fulfill the targets in right way, but evaluation would help to identify right target at right time. This is important to better understand the synergies across different goals and to be able to use resources more effectively as well as judiciously. Developing an appropriate evaluation system will not be easy as many of the targets are not evaluable. We need more precision approach towards the targets and the most precision approach towards the fewer targets. It will also be difficult because of the uncertainties introduced by climate change. Progress will be in many cases non-linear. Though, the effect of climate changes is mostly applicable for the rich nations. It is suggested that more use of impact pathways analysis with concurrent evaluation with intermediate targets and feedback mechanisms for course correction are to be implemented. It is the high time to analyze and to understand better the trade-offs between different goals such as Zero Hunger and Biodiversity loss. Participation of the private sector with the civil society always remains challenging for the economic development of a nation. Updating and improving the tool kit of evaluation, bringing the private sector, civil society and the work of welfare foundations under the scope of evaluation is also proposed in the paper. It will not be enough to focus on monitoring by doing things on time, but on a strong evaluation system by doing the right things and understanding how they interact with each other to produce better outcomes.
References