Whose and what justice?

A content analysis of the United Nations’ Post-2015 Development Agenda
Abstract

As the timeframe of the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is running out this year, the Post-2015 Development Agenda soon arrive at its final negotiations. Criticisms of the MDGs have primarily concerned the inaccurate implementation of social justice to the most vulnerable and poor, and the limited understanding of the underlying interconnectedness of the goals. In several recent reports, it has been stated that the various aspects of social justice and inclusiveness shall permeate the new development agenda. I have therefore made it my task to conduct a content analysis of three key reports, providing the most likely basis for the new agenda. With this, my aim is to examine what different concepts of social justice is being expressed, whom the agenda foremost seems to favour in terms of ‘winners’ and ‘losers’, and what possible implications this could have for global development work. My analytical framework is constructed from three concepts of social justice: distributive, retributive and transformative justice. Ideal types of these three concepts have been constructed as the analytical instrument of the study, in order to simplify the content analysis.

In the study, it is concluded that it is likely that the new development agenda will aim for distributive justice, although the road to get there leads through major transformational shifts. The structural and societal causes (transformative injustice) of inequalities, poverty and unsustainability are targeted to finally achieve universal equality (distributive justice). The most marginalized, vulnerable and poor can thus been classified as the utmost winners of the suggested new agenda. Moreover, vague expressions of retributive justice were found regarding foremost climate justice. The possible implications of this could prove to be a more welcoming attitude towards the agenda negotiations, albeit on the cost of decreased accountability.

Keywords: Post-2015, MDGs, social justice, distributive, retributive, transformative, justice
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1. Introduction

1.1 An emerging development agenda

Justice is a guiding principle within global development, having set the agenda towards poverty eradication and sustainable development for all. As a multitude of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society groups, actors within the private sphere, as well as single states, all work for these goals, the United Nations (UN) can be argued for as the single most powerful and normative force of global development strategy (O’Brien and Williams 2010, p. 308). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted by its members in 2000 in New York, set the agenda for developmental action until 2015 and included goals such as ensuring environmental sustainability, global partnership for development and eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (UN 2000). It has been argued for as the biggest commitment of the international community and the development discourse - this far (Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 23, Hettne 2009, p. 121-122). The MDGs were designed to complement each other. For example, its unarguably most urgent goal of halving extreme poverty and hunger can only be achieved through reaching, or partly reaching, some of the other millennium goals (Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 23-27).

As the timeframe of the MDGs expire in 2015, a Post-2015 agenda has the recent years been under construction. A global dialogue has been launched by the UN to investigate the views on earlier global development work, and how the new agenda should be constructed. Civilians, academics and influential actors worldwide have thus been able to express through discussions whatever feelings and thoughts they have regarding the UN’s development work and agenda (UNDG 2013a, UNDG 2013b). In particular, the insufficient addressing of exclusion, inequalities and other basics of social justice concerning the most marginalized, impoverished and vulnerable have received comprehensive criticism (Kabeer 2010, 2014, Hendra et al. 2013, Darrow 2012, Nelson 2007). An evident result of these dialogues and criticisms is the promise for the Post-2015 development agenda to be “built on human rights, and universal values of equality, justice and security” (UNDP 2015, UNDG 2013c, p. 1).
However, justice, as will be central to this study, is a concept functioning on a high level of abstraction. It can be largely subjective in the sense that, for example, perceived justice for someone can mean perceived injustice for someone else (Sandel 2009, p. 1-28, Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007). Extensive researches on the various concepts of justice are available in various areas, from climate change and international relations to justice in its own philosophical meanings (see for example: Sandel 2009, Farrow 2009, Page 2011 and Jaggar 2014). Social justice, the core of the analytical framework of this study, provides three types of justice: distributive, retributive and transformative justice. These are in their theoretical form highly different from one another, but simultaneously only provide different solutions to similar injustices (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007).

Hence, when the UN is constructing a new framework for a sustainable development to eradicate poverty, achieve gender equality, ensure environmental sustainability, and much more, what kind of social justice is predominant? And who will it concern the most?

Expressions of distributive, retributive or transformative justice within vital reports of the Post-2015 Development Agenda would all have different and significant impacts on the UN’s, and hence the world’s, development work. Being a director and frontrunner of development for other actors, the UN’s decisions and new agenda in these matters thus enhance in significance.

1.2 Relevance

The significance of the new UN development agenda can be seen through the now expiring MDGs’ impact on the world. As shown in The Millennium Development Report 2014, several goals have been achieved, while substantial but selective progress has been made on others (UNDP 2014, p. 4-5). Summarizing the achievements of the eight MDGs of 2000, it is clear that these have had a positive influence on global development work, however with some unachieved goals and backward development (UN 2014a, p. 7-8, Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 23-25).

As voices around the world through different UN surveys have claimed more justice, it is of the highest relevance that the new agenda will follow in the line of this. Several actors have requested more elements of in particular social justice, as this was promised in the current MDGs, although did not occur in the final draft in the way many expected (Kabeer 2010, 2014, Hendra et al. 2013, Darrow 2012, and Nelson 2007). At current a most relevant aim of
this study, then, is to investigate if the UN is fulfilling their promises to the world. Thus, making the vast process of *A Million Voices: The World We Want. A Sustainable Future with Dignity for All* (2013a) to count, and the goal setting statements of *PEOPLE’S VOICES – ISSUE BRIEF to the SDG OPEN WORKING GROUP* (2013c, p. 1) to be specified and hence more comprehensible.

However, the core relevance lies in evaluating what sort of justice the world’s most substantial force of global development chooses to articulate when their and the world’s new agenda is being set. To exclusively consider whether the UN is fulfilling their promises of justice would not be relevant enough, since it would tell little of where mentioned justice is aimed at. The people demanding more justice within the new development agenda (UNDG 2013a) could in a worst case scenario be the very same people being targeted by the direct injustice of someone else’s justice. Consequently, to investigate whom the mentioned justice is aimed at, and what this could mean for the bigger picture and in the long run, becomes the underlying and most important purpose of the study. The Post-2015 Development agenda is supposed to be a game changer, but to who?

### 1.3 Objective and research questions

The objective of this study is to examine what kind of justice the United Nations expresses, and for whom it is addressed, in its Post-2015 Development Agenda, and what possible implications this could have for global development work.

*Q1: What kind of justice, in terms of distributive, retributive and transformative justice, is expressed in the chosen reports of the forthcoming Post-2015 Development Goals?*

*Q2: To whom seems this justice be aimed at? Or, who can be regarded as the biggest winners (and losers) of the post-2015 Development Goals?*

*Q3: What implications could the findings of Q1 and Q2 have for global development work?*
1.4 Methodological framework

This study aims at investigating what kind of justice is being expressed in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, soon to be published by the UN. Currently there have been a number of synthesis reports published, as well as suggestions of new development goals. These reports include manifest as well as more latent messages of justice, of which this study aims at uncovering. To do this, a content analysis will be conducted. Three reports have been sorted out as being of highest relevance to the new development agenda, and these will be subject to the analysis, and hence, the analytical units of the study.

This content, or text, analysis, will be strictly qualitative in the sense that certain expressions will be searched for which not always will be reflected in clear words. To be able to do this, a version of the analytical tool of ideal types will be utilized. Three ideal types of social justice will therefore be constructed, showing utopian versions of distributive, retributive and transformative justice. These ideal types will then assist in analysing expressions of justice within the UN reports. This will answer the first research question. The study can be classified as an abductive research, due to the methodological strategy of applying a new analytical framework on a consisting phenomenon, thus providing a new insight on an existing topic.

The answers to questions two and three will be more viable through the answer on question one. These two, more elaborative, analytical, and rather speculative questions, will be analysed through the scopes of the analytical framework, as well as with assistance from academic articles on the topic of social justice and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

1.5 Analytical framework

The theories used in this study circulate around social justice. The framework builds upon three main components; distributive, retributive and transformative justice. The framework relies most profoundly on Loretta Capeheart and Dragan Milovanovic’s *Social Justice: Theories, Issues and Movements*, where these three types of justice are evaluated at great depth. This is complemented by academic writings on social justice, and also in particular of distributive, retributive and transformative justice. Articles also provide internal debates within these three social justice genres.
Distributive justice, in short, depicts the kind of justice occurring when benefits and burdens is allocated in a society. Theorists of distributive justice care of distributing opportunities, resources and freedoms, as well as their negative opposites, within a given social setting.

Retributive justice often concerns the punishment of criminals, and can be said as administrating justice through the proper treatment of those who wrongs. An internal debate separates retributive justice and restorative justice. Retributive justice, within this debate, is described as serving justice through punishment in proportion to the committed crime, for example through a prison sentence. Restorative justice instead seeks to ‘repair justice’, through reconcilement, peace talks, forgiveness and empathy.

Transformative justice is described as a critical perspective to retributive and restorative justice, as it instead targets underlying social patterns. It is described as treating the very structures of a society, culture or group, while retributive/restorative justice instead treat the occurred symptoms of these structures. Consequently, a criminal can be seen both as the offender and the victim, as societal structures might have ‘created’ the criminal behaviour of the criminal. Thus, transformative justice addresses the roots of criminality more than the criminals themselves, to solve the underlying issues at hand.

1.6 Structure

Chapter 2 provides the methodological framework of the study. All methodologic considerations are being explained as to give the reader a full understanding of how and why this study was being conducted the way it was.

Chapter 3 explains the analytical framework, where theories concerning social justice stay in focus. This chapter can be seen as the lens of which the analysis later is seen through.

Chapter 4 merges the two previous chapters together, providing the analytical instrument (the ideal types) with the essentials of the analytical framework.

Chapter 5 provides the findings of the research.

In chapter 6, the findings is interpreted and reflected upon through the lens of the analytical framework, accompanied by articles on relevant topics.

Chapter 7, the conclusion, answers the research questions more precisely and connects the analysis to the aims of the study.
1.7 Limitations and delimitations

A limitation of this study is the amount of space given to present the expressions of justice within the analysed reports, and likewise the space to elaborate on them. Concerning the findings of the content analysis, only expressions interpreted as somehow representative to the reports have been sorted out and presented. Consequently, some expressions have gained far more recognition than others, while some are not mentioned at all. This is due to the already mentioned lack of space, but also to earlier understandings and interest in certain areas. This, for example, becomes clear when reading the more elaborated parts on climate justice.

Moreover, access to ‘clean’ expressions of transformative and distributive justice proved to be limited due to the interconnection of these within the analysed reports. Also, the lack of retributive expressions of justice limited the analytical room for manoeuver on \(Q2\), as ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ are easier to make visible if victims and offenders can be pointed out.

Another limitation was the failure of attracting an interviewee in order to provide possibly valuable knowledge on \(Q3\). Instead, articles on neighbouring topics and subjective speculations drawing on the findings of \(Q2\) and \(Q3\) have been the methodological solutions to extract information for this research question.

My own delimitations are set to only analysing the Post-2015 agenda, and no other UN reports, such as the current MDGs. This is motivated by the actuality of the topic, being an entirely new agenda covering the next 15 years of development work, and also by the amount of space given.
2. Methodological framework

2.1 Content analysis and other methodological clarifications

In order to fully being able to answer the research questions, some methodologic considerations have been made. As the first two questions concern how justice is being expressed within the reports, this study naturally becomes a type of content analysis (Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 237-242, Neuman 2014, p. 49, 371-372). Of the various existing kinds of justice, those regarding social justice will be searched for. More specifically, as will be presented in the analytical framework chapter, distributive, retributive and transformative justice (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007) will be the theoretical core when investigating what kind of justice the chosen reports contains.

Given the statements above regarding the concepts of justice from which the analytical units will be analysed, this study can be called an abductive one. According to Danermark and colleagues, a centrality to all abductive research is that:

“[…] we have an empirical event/phenomenon (the result), which we relate to a rule, which leads us to a new supposition about the event/phenomenon. But in social science research the rule is most often a frame of interpretation or a theory, and the conclusion (the case) is a new interpretation of a concrete phenomenon – an interpretation that is plausible” (Danermark et al. 2002, p. 90).

To ‘fit in’ the different components of this study into the abductive method of research quoted above, the UN reports would be the event/phenomenon which will be related to a set of rules (the analytical framework), which eventually will lead to a new understanding of the already existing event/phenomenon. Consequently this will then set the stage for the final research question, which is of more analytical and elaborative appearance.
Content analyses can be performed in a variety of ways, depending on the purpose of the study and what precisely it is that is being studied. Symbols, words, pictures, speeches, books, articles and official reports and frameworks can all be subject to content analyses of different kinds (Neuman 2014, p. 49, 371-372). Quantitative content analysis was not an option in this study, since its primary objective is to reveal patterns and structures to generalize from. In a comparison between the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the current MDGs, a quantitative method might have been more useful, as similarities and dissimilarities could be revealed that way (Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 49-88, Neuman 2014, p. 373).

However, as this study is focused on how justice is expressed, including manifest as well as latent expressions, a qualitative research can be argued for as most accurate. Just like content analysis can be utilized in multiple areas, there are also choices to be made on how to analyse the chosen event/phenomenon. By using the originally Weberian analytical instrument of ideal types within the methodology of idea and content analysis (Neuman 2014, p. 66, Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 150, Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 161-162), a set of ideal type social justices will be constructed. Ideal types have been used in a variety of scientific areas, albeit within the social sciences a main theme can be understood. These studies often seek to investigate political parties’ ideological programs, and expressions of ideas, values and ideologies of other sorts of organizations’ programs and reports (Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 150, Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 155). Different methods can be used within ideal type analyses, depending on what is being studied. Here, an organizational scheme will be utilized in order to simplify the later analysis. This organizational scheme will be constructed as to show major differences between the chosen perspectives on social justice (Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 149-175, Neuman 2014, p. 65-68, Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 158-163). Hence, utopian, or ‘pure’, perspectives will fill the scheme, summarizing the analytical framework to simplify the analysis. This scheme will then serve as a quick access guide when separating expressions of justice within the analytical units of the study. Consequently, similarities and dissimilarities can easier be exposed throughout the texts. The ideal type organizational scheme is presented in Chapter 4.

Moreover, as it is not the task of the UN member countries to design the new development agenda only to please this study, the utopian social justices later explained will probably not occur in plain language. The decision makers of the member countries, and all residual staff and involved actors, where unaware of this study’s existence when they decided upon justice related themes within their reports. Therefore, this study can be classified as a nonreactive
research, since the people, countries and organizations behind the reports are unknowing of being studied (Neuman 2014, p. 369, 372).

As it is a nonreactive research, investigating expressions of social justice, interpretations will be a necessity (Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 85, 169-171). Hence, in order to accomplish an ideal type analysis of the UN Post-2015 agenda reports, all topics, sentences and words of social justice are to be interpreted into being expressions of an overarching ideal type.

As interpretations will be necessary, this study can also be classified as being hermeneutical. The hermeneutical perspective on observations is that there is no objective truth of reality, but rather a vast spectrum of different realities depending on who the observer and interpreter is (Gilje and Grimen 1992, p. 175-178, 183-190, Denzin and Lincoln 2013, p. 94-95, Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 249-251). This is strongly connected to the earlier notion regarding abduction, that this study will use an analytical framework to see the chosen event/phenomenon from a new angle, hence providing a different interpretation of it.

Concerning the methodology to answer Q3, and to some extent also Q2, the findings of Q1 provides analysable qualitative data from which speculations and conclusions later can be drawn. The analytical framework continues to be utilized through all three research questions, first to find expressions related to justice, and second to analyse the findings and their possible implications.

2.2 Validity and reliability

By giving the concept of social justice a central role in the study, there will be a slight gamble on its validity. Certain, often very interesting, concepts, such as justice, possess a high level of abstraction. Thus, when definitions are uncertain the total validity of the study decreases, if not constructed properly (Esaiasson et al. 2007, p.64-66, Neuman 2014, p. 220). However, as this study actually is problematizing the lack of certainty regarding the utility of this core concept in someone else’s reports, the problem naturally transforms into an opportunity.

Concerning interpretation, this also increases the level of abstraction. To prevent the validity to fall, the interpretation will have its point of departure from the mentioned ideal types. Hence, the repeatability increases as other researchers will be able to see how the UN reports have been interpreted (Neuman 2014, p. 211-212, 218-220, Gilje and Grimen 2004, p. 202). Furthermore, the ideal types would lack validity as a consequence of being constructed
from too few sources of social justice (Neuman 2014, p. 220). Hence, Capeheart and Milovanovic’s *Social Justice* has been complemented by articles and other literature on the topic. The ideal types are thus meant to represent as much as possible a common view on social justice.

Reliability is foremost a concern within quantitative content analysis, as it sees to systematic and unsystematic errors, such as incorrect input of data or random mistakes when handling data (Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 70-72). If the validity increases by using multiple references about social justice, then reliability increases by using the *proper* references, which the continuous literature review during this study fulfils (Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 42). Moreover, reliability, or dependability, is managed through consistency when utilizing the ideal types, to further increase validity and reliability (Neuman 2014, p. 218, Bergström and Boréus 2012, p. 42-43).

### 2.3 Analytical units

The analytical units, or the reports analysed in this study, were all gathered from the UN’s Millennium Development Goals resource bank. The report *A Million Voices: The World We Want. A sustainable future with dignity for all* (2013a), produced by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Millennium Development Goals Task Force, “synthesizes the results of an unprecedented global consultation led by the United Nations that has involved more than 1 million people across all countries and from all backgrounds” (UNDG 2013a, p. iii). As much of the Post-2015 development work possibly will be based on this report, it has been regarded as purposeful to this study. Furthermore, the UN report: *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals* will provide the most recently suggested new agenda for sustainable development. It highlights seventeen development goals to reach before 2030 (UN General Assembly 2014a). Lastly, the report *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet. Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda* (UN General Assembly 2014b) shows the most recent thoughts on the upcoming development agenda of the UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon, and will form the basis for the final negotiations in September 2015. Here, synthesized material of various working groups, together with the Secretary-Generals own statements, comprise the underlying reasoning behind the new development agenda.
Given the not yet released *actual* Post-2015 Development Agenda, these three reports have been interpreted as together comprising the most likely appearance of the new agenda.
3. Analytical framework

The analytical framework of this study will be established through the three already mentioned concepts subject to social justice. First a review of existing literature will be presented, followed by an introductory section on social justice, followed thereafter by presentations of distributive, retributive and transformative justice. In Chapter 4, these three concepts of social justice are summarized within the ideal type organizational scheme.

3.1 Literature review

The existing literature on the Post-2015 Development Agenda is growing rapidly. Numerous evaluations of the current MDGs are available through academia and the UN itself, performed in both critical and more constructive ways. The global conversation-report, *A Million Voices: The World We Want. A Sustainable Future with Dignity for All*, conducted by the UNDG and published in 2013, is a source of claims for social justice within the new development agenda. This report is referred to throughout the majority of the subsequent reports on the agenda. Unprecedented in its extent, it represents the voices of over a million people from all countries in the world. It has its role in this study in being one of three analytical units; however, it is also a most contributing source of feedback on the current MDGs and the development agenda. The report has therefore also been a vital inspiration to conduct this study.

Within academia, Naila Kabeer has been examining social justice and the MDGs, and highlights for example the complexity of intersecting inequalities. She also emphasises the issues of stubborn inequalities and its negative effect on the outcome of the current MDGs. She argues for a balance between equality and difference, as well as more inclusive economic solutions to eradicate poverty and exclusion (Kabeer 2014, 2010, 2006). Her articles both inspired this study and complement the analysis with important insights.

Mac Darrow’s *The Millennium Development Goals: Milestones or Millstones? Human Rights Priorities for the Post-2015 Development Agenda* was written with the purpose of showing how the global commitments of the MDGs are solely insufficient. Instead, Darrow
argues for alternative utilization of the development goals and emphasises also the political mobilisation necessary to succeed with such global commitments. The article is of constructive nature and serves to sharpen the process of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This article, too, has been used within the analysis of this study.

The researches presented above interact with central elements of this study, such as social justice and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. However, content analyses of the actual reports regarding the post-development agenda have so far not been undertaken, as I can see. I have therefore made it my task to make earlier research on social justice within the current and upcoming development agendas more useful by examining what social justice exist within the reports. Also, to whom it is addressed and what implications this could have for development work. Hence, Loretta Capeheart and Dragan Milovanovic’s *Social Justice: Theories, Issues and Movements* (2007) were sorted out as most relevant in the area of social justice. Their work includes the juxtaposing and comparison of three internal divisions of social justice, namely *distributive, retributive* and *transformative* justice. These are central to the analytical framework of this study and serve as the lenses through which the analysed reports have been viewed.

### 3.2 Social Justice

Social justice is described by Capeheart and Milovanovic as being equality for an entire society and all of its members. Social justice also includes equality and understandings between different societies, and peoples of diverse regions and habitats (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 2). Social justice comes in many forms, and numerous theorists have developed their own perceptions of what should be the universal perception of social justice. For example, John Stuart Mill concluded that the greatest happiness-principle, coined by Jeremy Bentham (1776/1891), should be the foundation of social justice. All actions with the final goal of achieving the greatest happiness for as many as possible would count as desirable. What is considered *just* in Mill’s theory is therefore to respect, support and not go in the way of others’ struggle towards what they perceive as the greatest happiness for all. Hence, injustice becomes the opposite of this, namely to become obstacles of happiness (Mill 1961, p. 198, Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 18-19, Sandel 2009, p. 34-37).

When explaining social justice, John Rawls is impossible to leave out. Sandel (2009), Capeheart and Milovanovic (2007), and Brighouse (2004) all include his principles of justice
in their works. These principles exist within Rawls’ concept of justice as fairness, which is part of his work *A Theory of Justice* (1971/1999). The first principle concerns various freedoms, such as freedom of speech, assembly, private property, religion, and so on. These freedoms are explained as having to be equally accessed by all citizens within a society. The second principle describes inequalities as acceptable only when not obstructing the first principle (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 19, Brighouse 2004, p. 46-61, Sandel 2009, p. 141-142). Hence, in example, perceived inequalities such as some individuals’ natural aptitude to become doctors, thus being paid more than others, can be classified as an affordable inequality. As long as all individuals are given an equal opportunity to become doctors, and as long as it serves the greater good not giving everyone a doctor’s license, it can be classified as just. Onto this, the greater good should be categorized as favouring the least well-off (Sandel 2009, p. 142). This all derive from Rawls’ *original position*, which can be described as a thought experiment where everyone is equal in terms of gender, race, welfare, religion and so on. From this original, equal position, Rawls developed the two principles as being what most people naturally would prefer, before being born into whatever life *chance* would give them (Rawls 1971/1999, p. 10-19).

With some basics of social justice and a few of its historical thinkers and their ideas now described, we turn to Loretta Capeheart and Dragan Milovanovic’s (2007) division of the three conceptions of social justice, distributive, retributive and transformative justice. These three conceptions are evaluated at depth, and are summarized in the subsequent ideal type organizational scheme.

### 3.2.1 Distributive Justice

Brighouse summarizes distributive justice by asking the questions: “*how, and to what end, should a just society distribute the various benefits (resources, opportunities and freedoms) it produces, and the burdens (costs, risks and unfreedoms) required to maintain it?*” (Brighouse 2004, p. 2). Distributive justice is also explained as having to do with “*notions of fairness in the distribution of benefits and burdens in society*” (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 29), and also, “*how resources in a society are distributed fairly*” (Ibid., p. 45).

However, thinkers and writers of distributive justice have not always treated all individuals with today’s sense of equality. Aristotle, for example, did not embrace democracy as many do in this day and age. Instead of speaking for every citizen’s right to freedom, opportunities,
resources, and to political participation, he glorified the individuals who were “greatest in civil excellence” (Aristotle 1946, quoted in Sandel 2009, p. 194). He saw these individuals as entitled to the biggest freedoms and best opportunities in life (Sandel 2009, p. 192-195, Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 13-14). Capeheart and Milovanovic exemplify another alternative view on distributive justice, quoting Émile Durkheim’s statement that justice occur when “the services exchanged have an equivalent social value” (Durkheim 1964, p. 382-383, quoted in Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 32). Durkheim takes into account the social value of the exchanged service or goods. He bases this on “the sum of efforts necessary to produce the object”; “the intensity of the needs which it satisfies”; and ‘the extent of the satisfaction it brings” (Ibid., p. 382-383). Social value has also been acknowledged in terms of different abilities, and especially within some Communist principles, summarized through: “justice principles would revolve around acknowledging differences: differences in abilities, differences in need” (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 41). These views, in some ways representing socialism and communism, recognize the distribution of benefits and burdens in society through the means and relations of production. It recognizes dissimilarities among individuals, and generalizes these so as to achieve equality through collective solutions (Ibid., p. 36-41).

With the different views on distributive justice above as a historical introduction, focus will now change to the present discussions of the genre. One debate within distributive justice is that whether recognition or redistribution being the main concept of the field (Ibid., p. 43-44). This debate was fuelled by Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth’s co-authored Redistribution or Recognition? (2003), which is an exchange of thoughts on the topic. Honneth considers recognition as a necessity to social justice, stating that culture prevails over economics regarding the foundations of justice. He bases his arguments on the recognition of love, right and solidarity, which he sees as normative spheres. He sees recognition and redistribution as separate concepts, highlighting recognition, albeit recognizes the value of both (Ohlström et al. 2011, Fraser and Honneth 2003, Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 43-44). Fraser, on the other hand, understands distribution and recognition as equally fundamental components of distributive justice. Recognition based on foremost race, sex, ethnicity and gender provides, according to Fraser, a solid and just ground for the following distribution. To fully succeed in practice, a greater understanding of the mechanisms of capitalism is necessary, in order to merge both recognition and distribution together. Only then could distributive justice occur, Fraser states (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 43-44, Fraser and Honneth 2003).
Another thought which can be linked to distributive justice, is that of social and personality psychologist Donelson R. Forsyth, regarding equity and equality. In his *Group Dynamics* he provides a dismantling of equity and equality, representing different types of distributive justice, where equality is reached through an evening of opportunities/assets and equity is achieved by rewarding hard work with more, and less hard work with less. He calls these social standards, which in his writing is applied to justice within groups. Equity holds more elements of individualism due to its bigger rewards as a consequence of bigger input, whereas equality turns more to collectivism. However, the collectivistic element of the ‘equality norm’ can be discussed as punishments within these groups tend to affect the wrongdoing individual more than the group, as these wrongdoings on the bigger scope affects the group at large (Forsyth 2013, p. 84-85).

Furthermore, within the debate of burden sharing within climate change, the ‘beneficiary pays principle’ holds elements of distributive justice. The principle concerns the sharing of wealth, gained through activities directly connected to emissions, waste and other environmentally hurtful deeds. The most used example is the early industrialised countries that in some cases now enjoy unprecedented wealth and economic stability (Page 2011, Cosson-Eide 2014, Caney 2014).

### 3.2.2 Retributive Justice

Retributive justice is summarized by Brighouse as concerning “the appropriate treatment of those who violate the laws and norms of society” (Brighouse 2004, p. 2). This type of justice is strongly connected to crime, but is also applicable to other sorts of wrongdoings. For example, Wenzel and colleagues argue for the concepts’ importance within both international relations and post-conflict intra-national reconciliation (Wenzel et al. 2007, p. 4) Capeheart and Milovanovic explain how retributive justice has been administered through different sorts of criminal systems throughout history, and hence some divisions can be made within the retributive genre (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 45-60). An internal debate regarding the benefits and disadvantages of *retributive* and *restorative* justice has been ongoing for several years. The strictly retributive side of this perspective on justice seeks to penalize a wrongdoer with an accurate and individual punishment appropriate to the crime (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 49, Wenzel et al. 2007, p. 1-4). Wenzel and colleagues argue that retributive justice meets opposition from restorative justice, which is described as “repair of
justice” (Wenzel et al. 2007, p. 1). The perspective of restorative justice raises the urgency of re-establishing a damaged relationship, whether it is within a small group, between rivals or in international relations. Within the criminal system restorative justice can be exemplified through forced reconciliation between drunken drivers and their victims’ families. Forgiveness, or at least mutual understanding and empathy, are hence the objectives (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 55-56).

The ongoing debate concerning burden sharing within climate change contains elements of both retributive and restorative justice. The 'polluter pays principle’, and to some extent also the 'beneficiary pays principle’, are both examples of retributive justices, penalizing polluting actors with fines or forced sharing, as a result of anthropogenic environmental degradation (Page 2011, Cosson-Eide 2014, Caney 2014). A restorative justice from the climate change debate could be the possibility of a state to host climate refugees due its extensive emissions, causing actual climate change. These refugees would necessarily have to be integrated into their new society, and their suffering due to forced migration could correspond to the victims’ families in the drunken driver example. Reconciliation and understanding would be necessary for both migrants and host country, in order to cohabit. This would stress what Wenzel and colleagues call “active responsibility taking” (Wenzel et al. 2007, p. 1).

3.2.3 Transformative Justice

Transformative justice seeks to address the structural and underlying causes to the injustice at hand. It has risen as a critical perspective towards retributive justice, which it accuses of only treating the symptoms but not the problems of injustice. This critique applies, for example, when criminals are being forced into consensus with society’s laws and norms, albeit the underlying societal structures, which might be the cause of the committed crime, are commonly ignored (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 61-65). Transformative justice theorists also criticise restorative methods to support the dominating system, which in some cases can be malfunctioning or obsolete (Ibid., p. 61-65).

Transformative justice models can be seen as more holistic compared to retributive/restorative justice in the sense that it can act on all levels, from individual to international. It embraces a transformation of “persons, perspective, and structure” (Ibid., p. 65), when these are non-compatible with the preferred perspectives and structures. If distributive and retributive justice can be said as being from the society for the people, then
transformative justice additionally can be for society and its structures. It recognizes the possibility of the system as capable of being part, or even the root, of the problem (Ibid., p. 65-74). Morris writes that transformative justice can truly exist when major change occurs, often exemplified by disasters or accidents. It is only then that there is an opening for structural change. The old structures get destroyed, and new, better, fair and just ones, can be constructed (Morris 2000, p. 3). Capeheart and Milovanovic give Hurricane Katrina as an example of this. Old habits and structures of ignoring racism and the poor in New Orleans got, literally, washed out as the hurricane hit the city. During the reconstruction of the city, citizens had to cooperate and leave old mind-sets to the past, building a new fair and all-embracing attitude toward each other (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 61-62).

Cornwall and Rivas argue for modern ‘women empowerment’ and ‘gender equality’ as not dealing with the underlying structural issues which feminism exists to eradicate (Cornwall and Rivas 2015). Feminism is dealing, at large, with structural downplaying on women, and targets culture, traditions, patriarchy and institutions as the administrators of this evil (Heywood 2012, p. 227-237). These institutionalized wrongs, more prominent in certain cultures, are often viewed as soluble only through a transformative approach (Cornwall and Rivas 2015, Heywood 2012, p. 227-249). An example can be made about violence against women, viewed through the lenses of different perspectives on justice. To penalize a man with prison for violating his wife would foremost punish him and not investigate why someone like him would violate his own wife. It could be seen as a short-term solution, and here represents retributive justice. Within restorative justice, conciliatory dialogues could represent a generalized view on ‘repair of justice’. The victim and the violator would try to find empathy for one another, or come to some sort of understanding and forgiveness. This would at best eliminate further violations within this particular household. Transformative justice would instead target the underlying issues of patriarchy, female oppression and contorted views on sex that regrettably prevail in some cultures, countries, groups and households. As the violator is viewed as an offender, he is also seen as a victim of structural malfunctions within his society. Hence, both the violator and the system in which he dwells are regarded as wrongdoers and in need of fundamental change.
4. The ideal types

These three opposing perspectives on social justice will serve as the study’s utopian ideal types, through which the following analysis will be undertaken. The organizational scheme below is a narrowed down version of the presented theoretical framework, serving as a delimiting guide between the different perspectives. Hence, this is the utilized analytical tool of the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Distributive justice</th>
<th>Retributive/Restorative Justice</th>
<th>Transformative Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justice can occur when:</strong></td>
<td>Resources, opportunities and freedoms as well as costs, risks and unfreedoms are allocated equally between all within a given society</td>
<td>A wrongdoer gets penalized with a punishment equal to the committed crime, or wrongdoing</td>
<td>An understanding, empathy and/or forgiveness occur between the offender and the victim of a crime, or wrongdoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>This can for example be managed through:</strong></td>
<td>Recognizing marginalized groups, individuals and states. Joint action to assist the ones in need, such as through promoting markets of particularly vulnerable countries’ economies, easing up on delimitations and overall help the economies in need</td>
<td>A fine, or another proper punishment for actors who have contributed to a worse standard of living for others</td>
<td>The underlying structures are eradicated, which pave the way for inequalities such as poverty, gender inequalities and environmental degradation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognizing marginalized groups, individuals and states. Joint action to assist the ones in need, such as through promoting markets of particularly vulnerable countries’ economies, easing up on delimitations and overall help the economies in need</td>
<td>A fine, or another proper punishment for actors who have contributed to a worse standard of living for others</td>
<td>Reconciliation between a large GHG emitter and the victims of anthropogenic climate change, or whatever committers and victims there may be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introducing a comprehensive way of providing knowledge of a sustainable living concerning the environmental, social and economic aspects of life, in schools and other educatory facilities everywhere</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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5. Findings

This chapter will show expressions of distributive, retributive and transformative justice from the selected reports. The documents contain much more expressions of these social justices than what is being presented below, but as the space of this study is limited, all cannot be included. Hence, the expressions having been interpreted as the most significant and representative will be presented. This does not apply to the sections regarding expressions of retributive justice, as these are rare in the documents. The presented expressions of retributive justice are thus the only ones that have been found. The reports are presented in chronological order.

The expressions below come in quotations, followed by the motive of including these in the findings chapter.

5.1 Expressions of distributive justice within *A million voices: the world we want. A sustainable future with dignity for all*

In this report, summarizing the global consultation regarding the preferred contents of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, both direct quotations from the consultations and the UN’s summarized interpretations of these are included.

Among the citations, some are of clear distributive character, while others are more mixed in appearance. ‘People living with HIV and AIDS’, from Burkina Faso, say this about the opportunity to gain health service in their country: “*We want a future where we have enough medication in the clinics and the health workers are caring and everyone is treated equally regardless of whether they are male or female, living with HIV and AIDS or is living with a disability*” (UN 2013a, p. 53). There are notions of transformative justice in here, as it brings up inequalities between the genders, albeit it foremost addresses the implacable equality when it comes to public health. Hence, it can be seen as a distributive justice as it treats everyone’s equal value regardless of ability to pay for their health care, which instead should be provided to the ones in need. Moreover, a ‘young indigenous woman from Honduras’ explains that
“Regarding education, most of the teachers in schools attended by Miskitos do not belong to this ethnic group and culture. Miskitos have their own language and teachers do not know the language spoken by their students” (Ibid., p. 61). This delimits the opportunities for students to get their righteous knowledge, and at the same time it denies the teachers of their pursuit of a meaningful employment. The language barrier can be seen as an obstacle of equality, and hence a solution would increase the distributive justice regarding education and knowledge. Likewise, as will be further developed regarding the findings of the Open Work Group proposal, corruption and bribery unnaturally delimits the opportunities of the poor to receive their fair share of public service. As said during a ‘town hall discussion in Tirana, Albania’: “Though I have health insurance, I still have to give bribes to the health personnel, so I can get better and faster service” (Ibid., p. 99), corruption is a day-to-day problem which causes exclusion and increases poverty where it is allowed to prosper (Johnston 2006, p. 28).

As for the interpretations of the consultations, it has been concluded that regarding the post-2015 development agenda, there is a:

“[…] need to be clear that our main aim is to reach all people, including the most marginalised. For instance, we need to lift all people out of extreme poverty and hunger, not just half. We need to ensure that all women have a say in decisions that affect them. We need to eliminate all preventable child and maternal deaths, not just some. And access to education is not enough – we also need to capture improvements in the quality of what is taught and ensure that young women and men are well prepared for their working lives” (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 5).

As the current MDGs have been criticised for not including everyone, this seems now to have been updated within the UN and by its members. The quote above indicates the next step towards distributive justice, where equality, life and opportunities to prosper are for all, no matter of abilities or contributions. Furthermore, inequalities are central when it comes to what has to be targeted more directly in the coming Post-2015 Development Agenda, as shown in this quote:

“The call for more focus on inequalities and those left behind has been very forcefully articulated by civil society organizations. For example, the reports of the ‘Participate’ initiative and Beyond 2015 national consultations argue
that young people, indigenous communities, women and groups facing various forms of discrimination continue to be marginalized in the MDGs. They state that the focus on national and global aggregates has meant that we have missed the increasing gap between those at the bottom and those at the top. As a result, the main mobilizing impact of the MDGs has on the whole not been felt by the very poorest. Since we have not consistently measured the extent of the gap, attention has been diverted away from who is getting ahead and why” (Ibid., p. 15-17).

The quote above holds nuances of both distributive and transformative justice, albeit the distributive are in focus here. ‘Discrimination’ and ‘marginalized’ are words signalling that there are obstacles to distributive justice, which are wished to be removed. Hence it can be seen as an expression of distributive justice. However, discrimination and marginalization can in many cases be the effects of structural issues, only soluble through transformative shifts. Hence, the wish to remove the obstacles of social justice can also be an expression of transformative justice.

5.2 Expressions of retributive justice within A million voices: the world we want. A sustainable future with dignity for all

In this report, one summarizing remark regarding the environmental responsibility has been classified as retributive. “Participants in the Environmental Sustainability consultation called for legal empowerment of local communities by establishing local environmental courts where companies or individuals can be brought to trial over the negative environmental impacts of their actions” (UN 2013a, p. 28). This can likely also be interpreted as an expression of transformative justice, since environmental issues as earlier explained often are due to other structural problems; however, the desire to implement punitive institutions speaks clearly of retributive justice.
5.3 Expressions of transformative justice within *A million voices: the world we want. A sustainable future with dignity for all*

On the whole, this report *mainly* addresses transformative injustices. This will be more evaluated in the analysis chapter, but deserves a mention as to enlighten the reader of that the transformative expressions below are only a fraction of all the similar expressions of the report. There are a multitude of expressions of transformative justice and transformational shifts which cannot be included in this section due to lack of space.

A quotation from a ‘hunger, food security and nutrition consultation’ says that:

“Food insecurity is one cause of undernutrition. However, nutrition security is only achieved when access to an appropriately nutritious diet is coupled with a sanitary environment, including access to safe water and to adequate health services and care. Future goals must reflect the interconnectedness of these development issues and provide sustainable responses” (UN 2013a, p. 119).

As mentioned in the analytical framework chapter, interconnectedness of several issues often lead to structural problems and later transformative injustices. This call to observe and target these intertwined issues has therefore been interpreted as an expression of transformative justice. A piece on how inequalities work in practice is outlined as follows:

“Inequalities result from structural barriers in several domains – economic, social, environmental and political. These barriers intersect and reinforce each other. Inequalities are often closely associated with and reinforced by specific forms of discrimination, including the social, legal and cultural spheres. We see this in discrimination related to age, sex, ethnic or indigenous identity, disability etc. When these structural barriers and specific forms of discrimination intersect, they result not merely in cumulative but unique forms of discrimination and exclusion” (Ibid., p. 142).
This articulates a larger understanding of transformative justice as a concept. It can also be seen as a lesson from the current MDGs, which according to both voices from consultations as well as the UN itself has been inconsistent in its transformative work. Among several, this paragraph targets that issue: “As the Hunger, Food security and Nutrition consultation puts it, as they are currently conceived, the MDGs address the symptoms of poverty and underdevelopment, but mostly ignore the deeper causes. This can lead to an over-focus on the aid-based alleviation of the symptoms, rather than sustainable, longer-term development solutions” (Ibid., p. 36). Another manifest expression of transformative justice is:

“The consultation emphasized the need to identify and address the structural factors, such as discrimination, gender-based violence and social exclusion, which perpetuate these inequalities. In the majority of national and thematic consultations, there were clear demands for gender inequality to be tackled at root in all its dimensions, and not just by focusing on the three manifestations expressed as targets in MDG3: gender parity in education, improved access of women to quality jobs outside the agricultural sector, and increased representation of women in parliament” (Ibid., p. 11).

Regarding education and sustainable development, this is said: “[...] called for transformative changes in education inside and outside schools to raise knowledge of sustainability challenges and the urgency to tackling their root causes” (Ibid., p. 37). Also, a ‘town hall meeting’ in Zambia concluded that “Lack of education is the root cause of maternal death in Zambia. How will we find better jobs and hold the government accountable when we do not have proper education? We must invest in education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels” (Ibid., p. 38). Moreover, “Calls for transformational change centred on people” (Ibid., p. 39) gain a lot of attention due to inequalities and lack of universal quality education.

Noteworthy expressions of earlier inaccurate implementations of distributive justice come with the message of switching to transformative measures. For example, “Development is achieved through human capital and investment in education. Yet, everyone agrees that our education system is failing, as it is focusing on quantity instead of quality, and unsuited to the needs of developing countries and their labour markets...” (Ibid., p. 52), as said by an ‘opinion leaders focus group’ in Malawi. This indicates how the transformative dimension of an issue must be included when being addressed or it risks becoming ‘empty opportunities’
handed out to all, instead of qualitative opportunities which can prevent later ad hoc solutions and remaining issues.

5.4 Expressions of distributive justice within *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*

This report, or proposal, exclusively contains the formal suggestion of seventeen new development goals for the new agenda. It is structured as to show one goal in every section, including its sub objectives. Many of the goals have been classified as both distributive and transformative, which is elaborated further on in the next chapter.

Initially, some of the more manifest expressions of distributive justice will be reviewed, and thereafter some more latent, and with transformative justice intertwined, expressions will be examined.

Within the first goal, *End poverty in all forms everywhere*, several examples of sub objectives toward distributive justice can be made. “By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance” (UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 7) expresses equality of opportunities and wealth. Also, certain individuals are identified as having more urgent needs than other, and shall thus be prioritized. Another, even more obvious example of distributive justice is the goal to “Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions” (Ibid., p. 7).

As for Goal 10: *Reduce inequality within and among countries*, every part goal can be identified as an expression of distributive justice. For example, “By 2030, empower and promote social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic status”, as well as “By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average” (Ibid., p. 16), articulates a strive for unexceptionable equality.
A last example of manifest expressions of distributive justice can be gathered from Goal 13: to “Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly $100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible” (Ibid., p. 19). This speaks of joint action towards an evening of opportunities between countries, where the ones in need can receive extra assistance.

The fifth sub objective within Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls: to “Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life” (Ibid., p. 11), shows signs of both distributive and transformative justice. It targets a structural injustice in a distributive manner, meaning that there are underlying structural issues that enforces distributive actions, embodied in objectives as the one above. Next, Goal 7: to Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (Ibid., p. 13) also contains a dualistic message of justice. It stresses the relevance of ensuring sustainability, as unsustainability can be argued for as a structural injustice as the effects of it is most felt among the poor (Abrahamsson 2003, p. 116-118). Hence, promoting sustainability can be seen as targeting structural injustice. At the same time, Goal 7 addresses inequalities by its desires to ensure access to energy for all, and thus seek to distribute the energy to all regardless of the return.

Another, less manifest expression of distributive justice can be found when examining Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 22). The fifth sub objective, to “Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms”, can be interpreted as distributive if seeing to which individuals and families that suffer most from corruption and bribery. Excluding for a moment the obviously bad structural effects on a society which corruption and bribery provides, the ones suffering the most are the ones unable to participate in a system built on bribery, namely the ones who cannot afford to bribe anyone. The poor can therefore face exclusion from their own societies due to poverty. By eradicating corrupt societal systems, a more inclusive and pro-poor socio-economic life can be promoted (Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 546-547). Hence, this objective can be interpreted as expressing distributive justice.
5.5 Expressions of retributive justice within *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*

Some arguable expressions of retributive justice can be found within this report, or proposal. A significant example of can be made from Goal 16: *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*: “By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime” (UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 22). ‘To combat’ in this case, has primarily been interpreted as to attack the structural problems paving the way for organized crime, and secondarily as to give proper punishments to the criminals within it. Hence the goal contains more transformative than retributive justice. Also, to ‘reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime’, would clearly pave the way for distributive justice to prevail, since the goal simplifies the daily life of the marginalized poor, leading to greater life opportunities (Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 546-547). However, the overarching goal to ‘provide access to justice for all’ is a major retributive goal, even if the long term goal successfully can be labelled as distributive.

A similar objective can be found within Goal 15: *Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*, which likewise holds mostly transformative characteristics. “*Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species*” (UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 21), is, as noted, directed toward transformative justice as structural and unsustainable methods are undermining the social justice to occur. However, ‘urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats’ possibly holds elements of retributive justice, as intimidations of penalization might be necessary to reach the goal.

Moreover, from goal number 12, to *Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns* (Ibid., p. 18), an example from the earlier described debate within retributive justice can be made. If retributive justice per se would be utilized concerning this goal, the ones mainly responsible for the unsustainable patterns would be punished, while the ones not responsible and willing to step away from the old patterns would do this. The restorative way
instead seeks to reconcile the actors of the old (presumed) unsustainable economic system with the new sustainable economic system. The wrongdoers of the old structures will be taught to emphasize with the new ways, and the innovative actors of the new system will be taught to adapt to the old methods. Hence, just as it is transformative and distributive, the goal number 12 also holds strong elements of restorative justice.

5.6 Expressions of transformative justice within the *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*

As earlier noted, many of the expressions interpreted as distributive justice are transformative in appearance, and vice versa. Some distributive justices also need transformative shifts to be achieved. Hereunder will some more manifest, and later some latent and with distributive justice mixed expressions, be shown and shortly explained.

One noticeable expression of transformative justice can be seen through the seventh sub aim of Goal 4, namely to:

> “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development” (Ibid., p. 10).

In this quote, underlying, traditionally and culturally induced structural issues such as gender inequalities, unsustainable lifestyles and racism are targeted at its basics: within education. If it would be possible for teachers and other influential deliverers of knowledge to successfully share the wisdom of sustainability, openness and equality to coming generations, there will perhaps be no need to distribute justice in the future, and least of all to punish agents of injustice. A utopian thought, but truly transformative in its aims.

Moreover, the goals regarding gender equality and sustainable development all target transformative injustices. As earlier noted, discrimination and violence against women often derive from underlying structures within different societies, and many debaters argue for
transformational shifts as the only cure for this. Hence, to “End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere”, and to “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation” (Ibid., p. 11) can without much hesitation be labelled as expressions of transformational justice. Concerning sustainable development, the goal to “Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead” (Ibid., p. 14), serve as a representative example. Also, the entire Goal 15: to Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (Ibid., p. 21), and all its sub objectives, express transformational justice in the same way.

More mixed expressions are frequent within several of the goals. For example, this is shown in the seventh sub objective of Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, namely to “Take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, eradicate forced labour and, by 2025, end child labour in all its forms, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers” (Ibid., p. 14). This goal can be interpreted as distributive as well as transformative, as a long term objective is likely to be to give every child equal opportunities to be children and to choose their own path towards adulthood. The transformative aspect of the goal lies within the structures enabling this kind of problems, such as poverty, food scarcity, lack of education and unstable politics and leadership. If the ‘immediate and effective measures’ spoken of include the purposive eradication of these undermining obstacles, then it definitely can be classified as an expression of transformational justice. Moreover, within Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, the partial aim to “Support least developed countries, including trough financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials” (Ibid., p. 17), holds symbolic expressions of both distributive and transformative justice. Distributive in the sense that more economically and technically advanced countries share their knowledge and resources with the ones in need and less advanced. Transformative in the sense that by sharing knowledge of sustainable living, and by using local materials, underlying and ‘blind’ growth-focused economic structures can be eradicated. This way, natural resources and local economies can be sustained and managed in
a just way. A similar mix of expression can be seen through Goal 14’s seventh sub objective: “By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism” (Ibid., p. 20). This goal addresses the least developed, and to some dangers such as sea level-rise, tropical storms and tidal waves the most vulnerable, and at the same time the entire global community. It empowers the least developed by increasing the benefits of their particular businesses, which can be seen as distributive, and it targets the structural issues of unsustainable living and societal exclusion by sustainable enforcement and economic inclusiveness, which can be seen as a transformative justice.

5.7 Expressions of distributive justice within The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet

Distributive justice comes in both manifest and latent expressions within the report. In point number 33, regarding the initiative discussions, it is claimed that “Special attention was required for the most vulnerable, in particular African countries, the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 8). This goes in line with several distributive thinkers of the theoretical framework, namely to allocate resources and opportunities according to differences: “differences in abilities, differences in needs” (Capeheart and Milovanovic 2007, p. 41), and also Nancy Fraser’s reasoning regarding recognition as fundamental to the following resource distribution, based on race, sex, ethnicity and gender (Fraser and Honneth 2003). Likewise, point number 51 articulates the same message: “We must pay special attention to the people, groups and countries most in need”, and “We need to include the poor, children, adolescents, youth and the aged, as well as the unemployed, rural populations, slum dwellers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees and displaced persons, vulnerable groups and minorities” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 11-12).

An interesting remark in point number 53, regarding the tackling of anthropogenic climate change, is that it should be “on the basis of equity for the present and future generations and in accordance with common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities”
This appears distributive in accordance with the “difference in abilities, difference in needs” quote from p. 14, but is highly abstract when it comes to ‘differentiated responsibilities’. This can be seen as both distributive and retributive, depending on where the responsibility lies. If it lies within taking (forced) responsibility for earlier wrongdoings, such as greenhouse gas emissions, then it can be labelled retributive justice. If it lies within taking responsibility only due to ability, then it becomes matter of distributive justice, as outlined in the analytical framework regarding the ‘polluter pays’- and ‘beneficiary pays’-principles.

As already noted, a long term goal of the new development agenda is to achieve equality in opportunities, wealth, education, freedom and happiness. This is expressed at various occasions within the report. To give a few examples from economics, point number 72 holds two characteristic lines: “Economic growth should lead to shared prosperity”, and “Ensuring that all people, including women, persons with disabilities, youth, the aged and migrants have decent employment, social protection and access to financial services, will be a hallmark of our economic success” (Ibid., p. 18). Regarding health, the Secretary-General writes as point number 70:

“The agenda must address universal health-care coverage, access and affordability; end preventable maternal, newborn and child deaths and malnutrition; ensure the availability of essential medicines; realize women’s sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; ensure immunization coverage; eradicate malaria and realize the vision of a future free of AIDS and tuberculosis; reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases, including mental illness, and of nervous system injuries and road accidents; and promote healthy behaviours, including those related to water, sanitation and hygiene” (Ibid., p. 17).

This point is of distributive appearance as it attacks global inequalities. At the same time it is possible to argue for its transformative nature, as many of the issues targeted in point number 70 are deeply rooted in the global socio-economic and political system, being at the same time both the result of and part of the structural problems at hand. Also, the stated “overarching objective of the sustainable development agenda” (Ibid., p. 17), to eradicate poverty by 2030, is of similar character. The goal at the end is distributive, equal justice, while its appearance clearly also is transformative in several ways, as earlier explained.
5.8 Expressions of retributive justice within *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet*

Point number 65, to “Integrate sustainability into all activities, mindful of economic, environmental and social impacts” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 15), can be interpreted as a form of restorative justice. This draws on the exact arguments used on Goal 12 within the *Open Working Group proposal*, also labelled as retributive.

Two other expressions within the report can be observed as noteworthy from a retributive perspective. In point number 65, the Secretary-General calls for the urgency to “Address the drivers of climate change and its consequences” (Ibid., p. 16), which in itself is not a direct expression of retributive justice. However, in combination with point number 75’s partial goal to “achieve climate justice” (Ibid., p. 18), the interpretation becomes another. Climate justice is to start with a concept containing a high level of abstraction. The present debate on climate justice, as described in the theoretical framework chapter regarding ‘The polluter pays’- and ‘beneficiary pays’ principles, stresses the necessity in including punitive justice within climate justice. It remains unclear whether climate justice is the final goal, hence distributive/transformative justice, or if it is a mean to achieve the same, hence a possibility of being retributive justice.

5.9 Expressions of transformative justice within *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet*

Starting with point number 23, the Secretary-General summarizes many of the raised voices around the world with:

“People across the world are looking to the United Nations to rise to the challenge with a truly transformative agenda that is both universal and adaptable to the conditions of each country, and that places people and the planet at the centre. Their voices have underscored the need for democracy, the rule of law, civic space and more effective governance and capable
Institutions, for new and innovative partnerships, including with responsible business and effective local authorities, and for a data revolution, rigorous accountability mechanisms and renewed global partnerships. People throughout the world have also stressed that the credibility of the new agenda rests on the means that are available to implement it” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 6).

In point number 28, the Secretary-General writes of the current MDGs as being successful regarding the eradication of poverty, however a selective one. The point is rounded off by the sentence: “The Millennium Development Goals have greatly contributed to this progress, and have taught us how Governments, business and civil society can work together to achieve transformational breakthroughs” (Ibid., p. 7). On both these points, 23 and 28, one speaks of transformational change as something to achieve and strive for. Even though the word justice does not occur in the quotes, the proclaimed objectives of justice, equality and inclusiveness (Ibid., p. 1) makes transformational change a change towards this, and hence it is relevant to think of it as transformative justice. To further enlighten this, extreme poverty can in many aspects be seen as an injustice caused by various economic, social and political mechanisms deeply buried into the underlying structures of the ‘world system’. In order to change these structures, transformational change is necessary (Abrahamsson 2003), of which transformative justice becomes a positive consequence. A third point where the direct use of the word ‘transformative’ occurs is in point 37. Again, voices from the precursory debate are being summarized, and this time more openly talks of structural issues: “The leaders of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda called for five “transformative shifts”: (i) leave no one behind; (ii) put sustainable development at the core; (iii) transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth; (iv) build peace and effective, open and accountable public institutions; and (v) forge a new global partnership” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 9).

The Secretary-General at several occasions brings up transformational injustices as key objectives of the new development agenda. Gender inequality and women’s empowerment and rights are central in this aspect, and gain a lot of attention in the report. In point 68, it is said that “It should by now be recognized that no society can reach its full potential if whole segments of that society, especially young people, are excluded from participating in it” (Ibid., p. 17), following a commentary on women’s empowerment. Likewise, in point 51 the Secretary-General withholds that “This is the century of women: we will not realize our full
potential if half of humanity continues to be held back” (Ibid., p. 11). It is as much an expression of distributive justice as of transformative justice, as this particular objective is gender equality, albeit it has become a structural issue. Hence, to enable distributive and equal justice, transformative shifts are necessary. But, as the UN is addressing transformational injustices and structural un-distributive structural issues, they can both be seen as central to the organization and its aims.
6. Analysis

To remain consistent throughout this study, the ideal types presented in Chapter 3 and 4 will also be used through the following analysis. The concepts of social justice are still the lenses through which the research questions will be answered and elaborated upon.

6.1 Overall impression of the examined reports

As mentioned at several occasions within the Findings chapter, one tends to get the impression that the aim of the new development agenda is to achieve distributive justice, while the means to get there are mostly transformative, or transformational. A lot of structural, traditional and culturally induced issues, such as gender inequalities, unsustainable living, poverty and economic exclusion, are being addressed as complex and intertwined problems. Often, manifest notions of ‘transformational shifts’ occur concerning these issues. However, the long term goal of eradicating these structural problems bends towards equality and the inclusion of all, in the intended sustainable livelihood of tomorrow. Hence, the interconnectedness of transformative and distributive justice can be argued for as significant to all three reports; distributive justice as the final goal, and transformative justice, or shift/change, as the method to achieve it.

6.2 What kind of social justice was expressed?

6.2.1 Lack of retributive justice

To start with, retributive justice hardly occurred throughout the examined reports, which will be evaluated later on. A short notice regarding punishments of local environmental wrongdoers was found within A million voices: the world we want, calling for local environmental courts to achieve justice. This is undoubtedly an expression of retributive justice. However, what can be deemed as the final goal of introducing local environmental courts? What is the underlying desire? If the sole purpose of the punishment is to merely
maintain social order, and to *administer* justice, then retributive justice can be argued for as the main social justice expressed. Conversely, if the long term goal of establishing local environmental courts is to achieve either transformative or distributive justice, then it is more of a mean than a goal. Nonetheless it is an expression of direct retributive justice, albeit perhaps also an indirect expression of distributive/transformational justice due to its possible final aims.

Moreover, the opposite form of expression could be noticed on more occasions. Notions to “*achieve climate justice*” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 18), and to “*Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*” (Ibid., p. 14) both concerns issues of transformative magnitude, where attitudes and behaviour have to transform on all levels in society. There is, on the other hand, a big chance that retributive justice will be a part of the transformational shifts needed to achieve these two goals. As described by several authors on climate justice, part of the process is comprised by *compensating* the victims of climate change (Page 2011, Cosson-Eide 2014, Caney 2014). The compensating is merely described as a monetary matter between victim and offender, and hence it can be labelled retributive in terms of social justice. Specific cases showing this kind of interaction can be exemplified through oil spills, compensated for by the oil companies to the ones affected (economically) by it (Liszka 2010, p. 22-23). This is representative for climate justice today, and hence the Secretary-General’s notion of achieving climate justice withholds elements of retributive justice, regardless of its final aims.

Moreover, restorative justice was latently expressed regarding the *integration* of sustainability into all fields of development. This can be interpreted as an adaptation of the ‘pure’ forms of both sustainability and the sectors where the sustainability is to be integrated. Serrano argues that: “*Building adaptive capacity, or meeting MDG targets, is way different from growing the economy and doing development as usual. It’s about delivering social and environmental justice – a necessary condition for securing our path to sustainability*” (Serrano 2008, p. 9), but withholds also that “*the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and the polluters-pay principle, are routinely and stubbornly ignored by the rich and powerful*” (Serrano 2008, p. 7). The notes regarding retributive climate justice within the post-2015 development agenda seems therefore to be a more aspirational part goal of achieving real transformational change, to finally pave the way for distributive justice.
6.2.2 Distributive justice as the final aim

In the introduction of the *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*, an all embracing agenda is set up, promoting the eradication of various inequalities, poverty, unsustainability and exclusive economic growth, as well as the need to see these different areas from a holistic perspective and affirming their interconnectedness (UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 3-5). It is largely based on different abilities and different needs, where the ones with more resources, opportunities and knowledge share this with the ones having less. This goes hand in hand with the description of distributive justice, regardless of whether it originates from *recognition* or from *redistribution*, as discussed by Honneth and Fraser (2003). Throughout the reports, there are references back to the current MDGs and its inadequate implementation of an inclusive development agenda (i.e. UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 8-9, UN 2013a, p. 1-2, 17-19). This has also been highlighted by scholars during the time of the MDGs (i.e. Darrow 2014, Raghuram 2008, Kabeer 2010, Gurd 2012). As described in the introduction, the Post-2015 Development Agenda is meant to be “*built on human rights, and universal values of equality, justice and security*” (UNDP 2015, UNDG 2013c, p. 1), which has been clearly stated in all three reports. It is clear that the criticisms of the MDGs has been submitted and now permeate the new one – at least in aspirational terms, explaining the final (albeit not too farfetched) aim of it. The underlying value regarding social justice, as expressed throughout the reports, can therefore mostly be identified as distributive.

6.2.3 Transformative change to reach equality

What complicated this content analysis was the assembly of expressions of both transformative and distributive justice within the same development goals. As explained, the final aim often circulates around equality, sustainability, inclusiveness and other expressions of foremost distributive justice. However, the means to get there are repeatedly transformative in nature. One goal interpreted as representative to show this complexity is the following:

“Transformative change calls for putting people – their rights, aspirations and opportunities – at the centre of development: for example, for new ways to enable education and learning; for new ways in which we manage and value natural resources; and it calls into question economic growth that is
voiceless and jobless and attaches no cost to the depletion of natural resources” (UN 2013a, p. 39).

Here, for example, the structural and anthropogenic societal problematics of the economic market system is being addressed. The critique is aimed at the known unsustainable use of natural resources within the manufacturing of new products, in order to sustain economic growth and consumerism (i.e. Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 466-472). Also, it wants to ‘call into question’ the increased efficiency within the manufacturing sector. This can be exemplified through employees in factories being replaced by ‘machines and robots’ doing their work in a more cost efficient manner. This second critique has a distributive aura to it, as it seeks to achieve employment for all rather than further streamlining the existing economy. In the Open Work Group proposal, Goal 8: to Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (UN General Assembly 2014a, p. 14), catches all aims of the aspiring goal quoted above. The examples of goals and sub objectives containing transformational shifts and distributive final aims are many, and can be argued for as significant in all three reports.

6.3 Who seems the expressed justice to be aimed at? Or, who can be regarded as the biggest winners of the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

6.3.1 The previously excluded are the new targets of development

Undoubtedly, the new development agenda aims at eradicating poverty and inequalities. Hence, the short answer to the question is: the ones in poverty, the ones facing inequalities of various kinds, the ones normally excluded from global development, and the ones suffering the effects of environmental degradation. Building on this, and also incorporating the current MDGs and its criticisms, the utmost winners of the new agenda are to be the ones suffering from structural, societal and underlying, or transformative, injustices. As have been evaluated earlier, the current MDGs have been accused of inconsiderately excluding people of minorities, inequalities and other vulnerabilities (Hendra et al. 2013, UN 2015, Darrow 2014, Raghuram 2008, Kabeer 2010, 2014, Gurd 2012), as well as disregarding the
interconnectedness of the development goals (Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 25). Two examples of criticisms concerning exclusion come from Gender and Development Professor Naila Kabeer, arguing that:

“[…] while the MDGs themselves have not been particularly attuned to the challenges of social exclusion, the massive efforts to document progress on the different goals across different countries have not only highlighted the uneven progress across countries and in relation to the different MDGs but also the presence of certain groups that have been systematically left behind on almost all measures of progress. In other words, the multiple deficits of poverty are clustered around these groups” (Kabeer 2014, p. 94).

Also, she states that: “The problems of poverty and social exclusion are not purely national in their causes or in their consequences. They are also the product of structural inequalities at the global level. This was not acknowledged by the MDGs” (Kabeer 2014, p. 110). Now, as the new agenda emerges, the greatest transformation seems to have been undertaken within this area. The Secretary-General writes of this, regarding “What we have learned from the discussion of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 8-11), and connects it with the development goals of tomorrow. This is encircled in the already discussed aim, where: “We need to include the poor, children, adolescents, youth and the aged, as well as the unemployed, rural populations, slum dwellers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees and displaced persons, vulnerable groups and minorities” (Ibid., p. 11-12). Moreover, the claim that “This is the century of the women: we will not realize our full potential if half of humanity continues to be held back” (Ibid., p. 11) even more establishes the greater focus on the marginalized. Summarizing these changes in blunt words, the losers of the current MDGs are set to be the winners of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

It is also relevant to speak of the former winners as the new losers. If the aims of including all previously excluded people actualize through the coming agenda, there is a risk that the winners of the current agenda meet a similar exclusion. Being poor, but living just above the marks of extreme poverty might be the new way to face exclusion. This might create a paradox, where everyone should be included, but at the same time the ones with the most needs and least abilities should be the ones most included. The notions of ‘difference in needs and abilities’ can justify this way of prioritising. However, the previously aided people might
feel abandoned and of low priority, if abandoned right above the marks of extreme poverty. It might become a question of poverty being compared to others’ poverty, as examined by Nielsen (2009). Additionally, the mentioned paradox could prove resistant to debated concepts such as relative deprivation (Nilsson 1999), which’s simplified meaning is that everyone can feel happy or unhappy, depending on their own perceptions of themselves. The point here is that the ones earlier rescued from poverty might perceive themselves as abandoned by development, and hence becoming the losers of the agenda, as focus move away from them and towards other individuals statistically in greater need of assistance.

6.3.2 The winners of vague accountability and goal setting

As have been highlighted throughout the study, retributive justice has not been manifestly articulated within the reports, with the exception of the call for ‘local environmental courts’ in A million voices: the world we want. This call however is not answered within the suggested development goals in the other two reports, except for the Secretary-General’s ambition to “achieve climate justice” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 18). As have been discussed, what the underlying meaning of achieving climate justice implicates is not clear. There is a possibility of this being an expression of distributive justice, in terms of letting no one become marginalized, excluded or in other terms unequally treated due to environmental degradation. Moreover, following the arguments of Benjamin Sachs, distributive justice within climate change also involves the unconditional redistribution of wealth and opportunities. Hence, the richest countries, which in most cases also are the biggest emitters in the world (WRI 2014), should be the ones foremost financing the transition toward sustainability, as well as cutting down most on their emissions (Sachs 2014).

Then, there is also the possibility of this being a rare expression of retributive justice - at least partially. In that case it could refer to ‘local environmental courts’, and/or more frequent punishments for emitters of toxic waste and greenhouse gases (the ‘polluter pays principle’). This could then be linked with Gurd’s suggestion to promote easier access to justice, and a more equitable impact of the rule of law within the Post-2015 Development Agenda (Gurd 2012, p. 36-37). It could also intend to administer ‘reciprocity-based justice’, where the beneficiaries of earlier emissions and wastes ‘pay back’ their current wealth to the ones on which environmental expense the wealth was produced (Page 2011, p. 420-424).
included in the so called ‘beneficiary pays principle’, mentioned in the analytical framework chapter.

Non-existent or unclear objectives of accountability can potentially create an accountability-vacuum, on both local and international levels. So, when the Secretary-General writes concerning emissions that it should be reduced “[…] on the basis of equity for the present and future generations and in accordance with common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” (UN General Assembly 2014b, p. 12), it merely ‘repairs justice’. The high level of abstraction within ‘differentiated responsibilities’ might provide a loophole to wrongdoers, and not just within the climate sector. No punishments for violations of sustainability, and in the long run human rights, could send a soft signal to major polluters and other actors contributing to backward development. And, as have been noted before, “the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and the polluters-pay principle, are routinely and stubbornly ignored by the rich and powerful” (Serrano 2008, p. 7).

Regarding vague accountability, the committers of wrongdoings such as polluting the atmosphere can from one angle be seen as winners and the victims of their pollutions as the losers. It has been evident through the history how greenhouse gas emissions have been used to fuel big economies, while the negative effects of these emissions foremost have shown in less developed countries. However, if ‘achieve climate justice’ include compensation to the victims of anthropogenic climate change, then the victims could be seen as the winners. If the punishments actually have the desired effects of promoting sustainability, then the entire world community can be viewed as winners, albeit the utmost winners would be the ones living on the ‘frontline’ of climate change.

6.4 What implications could this have for global development work?

Drawing on the descriptions of transformative and distributive justice, in relation to the findings within the three examined reports, transformational shifts are on verge to appear in the world’s socio-economic, political, educational and environmental spheres. The realization of the limitations of the current MDGs, through global discussions, criticisms from academia and internal evaluations, can be seen within the suggested Post-2015 Development Agenda. Now, a more inclusive and transformational approach to development is expressed. The great
focus on transformational shifts, manifestly stated within all three reports, alongside final aims of distributive justice, more latently expressed, might have big implications for global development work. As John Hendra and colleagues explain concerning gender equality, the new development agenda can serve as a guiding platform for boys and men to play their role towards gender equality, and hence distributive justice of opportunities, wealth and rights (Hendra et al. 2013). Kabeer writes that: “Addressing the causes of social exclusion means breaking the process by which disadvantage is reproduced over time and across generations” (Kabeer 2006, p. 14), and even though it is still aspirational and speculative, progress seems more likely than ever, drawing on the intuitions of academia, organizations and earlier praxis. If interpreted correctly, the impacts of the new development agenda can be fundamental, literally, in its high aspirations of changing malfunctioning social patterns and unintended structural issues. Abrahamsson have elaborated on structural change and the patterns leading to this. A contradiction such as the current consumption patterns, built on the assumption of infinite resources and actual environmental degradations (O’Brien and Williams 2010, p. 345-373, Todaro and Smith 2011, p. 465-479), is one of these structural problems seen within the analysed reports. Coinciding interests of various groups on local, national and international level, as well as between elite and non-elite groups to eradicate poverty and ensure a sustainable future is another (Abrahamsson 2003, p. 96-102).

However, it remains to be concluded what implications the somewhat indistinct expressions of retributive justice might have to global development. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), delivered a speech on the rule of law, stating that: “In places where poor and marginalized citizens know their rights and can have wrongs redressed, there are less discrimination, fewer human rights abuses, and more effective service delivery” (UNDP 2012). If this is put into the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, there might be a major obstacle at hand for development. Accountability on local, national and international level risk to be overlooked if not expressed more clearly within the new agenda. This problem is also highlighted by Mac Barrow, stating that:

“[…] to the extent that the causes of poverty are exogenous, richer countries will have fewer and fewer excuses to avoid binding and appropriately calibrated commitments for more effective global cooperation under human rights treaties and post-2015 global partnership arrangements. Whether the MDGs’ successors are a milestone towards global justice, or a millstone
around the necks of the poorest, will depend upon the degree to which governments of richer and poorer countries alike can be held accountable for their human rights obligations” (Darrow 2012, p. 73).

Another implication the vague retributive expressions might have is a less defensive attitude towards the agenda. By not directly addressing specific wrongdoings of actors, or specific crimes and deeds, but merely the process to eradicate these, a possibility of a more inclusive negotiation climate might occur. As have been shown before in the history of international commitments, objections and withdrawals do happen (O’Brien and Williams 2010, p. 128, 370-372). The strategy behind a ‘non-aggressive’ development agenda might then be a pre-understanding of trying to include everyone without difficulties. The effects of this can only be expressed through speculations, but the positive effect of getting everyone to draw in the same direction would certainly be among them. A negative effect, as articulated above, could perhaps lie in the lack of accountability it might imply in areas such as climate justice.

Moreover, one possible implication can be connected to the risk of ‘excluding’ previously included people of development, referred to as possible losers of the new agenda. The more inclusive and need-based proposed new agenda, aimed foremost towards the poorest and most vulnerable, might meet criticism due to a possible lack of progress. Since the proposed agenda now turn to the structurally excluded and impoverished, approaching the problems will increase in complexity (Kabeer 2014, p. 94). Slower progress can hence be argued for as a likely outcome, which could easily attract result-oriented critics.
7. Conclusion and reflections

The objective of this study was mainly to examine what kind of justice is expressed within the Post-2015 Development Agenda, soon to be published by the UN, and to whom it seems to be foremost aimed at in terms of development. As these two aims provided the study with analysable material, the third and more speculative aim of investigating what implications this could have for global development work became easier to accomplish. Additionally, some unintended findings regarding the relationship between the current and the coming development agenda provided enlightenments regarding Q2, which will be presented here below.

7.1 Answering the research questions

Q1: What kind of justice, in terms of distributive, retributive and transformative justice, is expressed in the current reports of the forthcoming post-2015 Development Goals?

Throughout the three reports expressions of transformative and distributive justice was frequently encountered. Retributive justice did not occur in the same extent, however, the absence of it has been interpreted and analysed as well. Transformative and distributive justice are in the analytical framework chapter presented as separate and somewhat utopian ideals of justice, summarized in the ideal type organizational scheme on p. 19. However, this study’s result instead highlights the interconnectedness of the two, as they in many cases are inseparably intertwined. Significant within the post-2015 development agenda was aspirational expressions of distributive justice, where goals of equality, sustainable living, eradication of poverty and discrimination gain most attention. The path to get there, though, is paved through transformational change. It is clearly stated within all three reports that, in comparison to the current MDGs, focus are allocated towards malfunctioning structures of society, and to explicitly target underlying societal issues generating inequalities of various kinds. Hence, this has been interpreted in a way that recognizes the aims as distributive, but
the *means* as transformative. However, many expressions throughout the reports have also been viewed as more strictly transformative or distributive.

**Q2: To whom seems this justice be aimed at? Or, who can be regarded as the biggest winners (and losers) of the Post-2015 Development Goals?**

To speak of winners and losers within the development agenda might seem harsh, but here it is meant to present the focal and un-focal points of the agenda from an interesting and pedagogical angle. Throughout the analysis, one group has been interpreted as the utmost ‘winner’ of the new development agenda. As the agenda was foremost labelled as distributive in its final aims and transformative in its means to achieve it, the winners consequently becomes the marginalized, the poor, the unequally treated and the ones with less opportunities than others. This is a result of the aims of equality, where the sought after final goal is dignity for all. However, criticisms of the current MDGs point at how this was unfortunately not transferred into praxis from the original pre-agenda documents. These criticisms have been embraced and a more thorough, transformational and all-inclusive agenda is now proposed to replace the current one. The *primary* winners of the new agenda, then, might be the ‘losers’ of the old agenda, namely the most severely marginalized, the absolutely poorest and the most unequally treated. The ones unintentionally marginalized by the current agenda.

One group identified in the analysis as a possible ‘loser’ of the new agenda is the previously included people, now lifted out of poverty or exclusion. These people could face a struggle to maintain their newfound wealth as the focus now turn towards people even more excluded. However, this is speculative and does not have to occur in reality.

**Q3: What implications could the findings of Q1 and Q2 have for global development work?**

Primarily, the reports of the development agenda indicate that transformational shifts of malfunctioning societal structures are the preferred methodology to eradicate all inequalities, poverty and unsustainable habits. The implications of this would undoubtedly be fundamental, if flawlessly transferred into practice. Excluding economic systems, unsustainable living and unthoughtful consumerism, and badly influential tradition and culture might all face massive changes. The utopian consequences of this would be the final aims of distributive justice on a global scale.
Moreover, the somewhat indistinct expressions of retributive justice might result in various implications of forthcoming development work. By not meeting wishes of increased answerability on activities resulting in reversed development, discrimination and human rights abuse can continue to exist. It might also have the positive implication of making the negotiation process of the agreement on the agenda more successful. The positive effect of simplifying the agreement process would almost certainly come with the negative implication of decreased accountability in certain areas, as aspects of more punitive nature are left out of the agenda.

7.2 Summary

To evaluate shortly whether the promise of the new development agenda to be “built on human rights, and universal values of equality, justice and security” (UNDG 2013c, p.1) is fulfilled - in theory, it seems that way. The comprehensive emphasis on transformational change towards distributive justice makes the pre-agenda reports seemingly truthful to earlier claims of justice and equality. The vagueness of concepts such as ‘climate justice’ and what it actually means to achieve it has been interpreted as a possible source of decreased accountability. Increased pressure on, for example, large emitting industrial countries, could come with the effect of disunity concerning aims and measures, and thus the vagueness has also been interpreted as having a possibly positive effect in uniting all actors on the Post-2015 Development Agreement.

All in all this study point at improvements when it comes to reaching the most vulnerable in the world. Hopefully the final negotiations result in a document that keeps most of the important suggestions discussed above, along with less vague formulations regarding accountability and unsustainability.

7.3 Critical reflections and further research

As have previously been evaluated, the complexity of separating expressions of transformative from distributive justice throughout the reports proved even harder than imagined. The difference between the often transformative/transformational means to reach equality, and hence distributive justice, and the solely transformative expressions, was
delicate and difficult. Chances are therefore that errors do occur in this study, due to its interpretative nature. Hence, in further research with fewer limitations, all expressions of social justice should be presented, and not only the ones interpreted as representative. This would increase the total validity of the research.

Another reflection is that expressions of retributive and transformative justice often occur in certain contexts. Retributive justice was mainly expressed regarding climate change and hence gained a lot of attention, while transformative justice for example often concerned women’s empowerment. The size of this study made it difficult to interact with all topics from all perspectives and concepts of justice. Therefore, future research could gain advantages from dividing the agenda into smaller pieces in order to examine them more in detail.

An interesting extension of this study would be a comparative content analysis using the same analytical material as here, and the actual Post-2015 Development Agenda, when published. That way, possible gaps between the initial aspirations and the final product can be revealed and evaluated. Additionally, the Post-2015 Development Agenda could successfully be compared to the MDGs, to examine how the development discourse has changed the last 15 years.

However, the most important research, albeit also the most complex, will be to examine how the Post-2015 Development Agenda is transformed into praxis. When previously suggested further research is of more academic value, the ensured implementation of the agenda into practice remains fatally important to millions of individuals.
8. References


