



MDGs: Moving Forward on the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals, over a relatively short period of time, have gained tremendous currency, primarily in development circles but increasingly in related trade and finance circles. Many actors are now counting on the goals, commonly referred to as the “MDGs,” to galvanize disparate and sometimes competing development agendas and are imagining how they might become a powerful political tool to hold governments and international institutions accountable.

During the Millennium Summit held in New York in September 2000, all 189 UN Member States adopted the Millennium Declaration, which contained a group of goals and targets, some of which were later refined through the *Roadmap towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly (A/56/326, September 2001)*, and have since become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These eight goals are essentially centred on

Over the last two years, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has taken a lead in building up political support for the MDGs. This support was evident during the International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD, see *NGLS Roundup 91*) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, see *NGLS Roundup 96*), in which the international financial institutions (IFIs), World Trade Organization (WTO), UN agencies and scores of governments highlighted their importance. While some civil society organizations (CSOs) were initially more circumspect with regard to the MDGs as a concept, they too have entered the debate and are beginning to explore if and how the MDGs might fit programmatically into national and international strategies.

Headed up by UN Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Mark Malloch Brown, Chair of the UN Development Group (UNDG) and overall head of the MDG campaign, the UN system is coordinating the three pillars supporting achievement of the MDGs: reporting (Millennium Reports); campaigning efforts (Millennium Campaign); and research (Millennium Project). The UN is quick to point out, however, that it is not the UN that must achieve the goals but rather societies, governments and institutions pulling together in the same direction. This *Roundup* documents the current terrain of initiatives being developed by the various actors and some of the issues that are being raised by this growing body of activity.

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MILLENNIUM REPORTS AND NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Up until now, the MDGs have largely been utilized as a tool at the global level to deepen a discourse about mutual accountability and to secure the political “buy-in” of governments and relevant development actors to an “agreed” and concise agenda. However, the bulk of the work around the MDGs is actually taking place at the country level with activities including civil society dialogues, local campaigns and the production of MDG country progress reports, known as Millennium Reports (MDGRs).

national targets for poverty, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability, but also include targets for establishing an international trade and finance policy framework that favours development. Numerical targets have been set for each goal, most of which are to be achieved by 2015. (See chart page 2)

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND TARGETS

Goal 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- Target 1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day
- Target 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2 Achieve universal primary education

- Target 3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women

- Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015

Goal 4 Reduce child mortality

- Target 5. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Goal 5 Improve maternal health

- Target 6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Goal 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- Target 7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Target 8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability

- Target 9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources
- Target 10. Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
- Target 11. By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Goal 8 Develop a global partnership for development

- Target 12. Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction—both nationally and internationally
- Target 13. Address the special needs of the least developed countries. Includes: tariff and quota free

access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC countries and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction

- Target 14. Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)

- Target 15. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

- Target 16. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth

- Target 17. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

- Target 18. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Source: Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, (A/56/326)

Country Reports

Following a suggested outline prepared by the UN Development Group (UNDG) and with the support of UN Country Teams, 17 countries to date have completed Millennium Development Goals country progress reports. They include Armenia; Albania; Bolivia; Cambodia; Cameroon; Chad; Guatemala; Kazakhstan; Madagascar; Mauritius; Mozambique; Nepal; Poland; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Tanzania; and Viet Nam. While these reports vary to some degree, they essentially follow a similar formula of analyzing the country's development context and then going through the main goals and assessing progress in light of the indicators outlined in the Road Map. For each of the goals highlighted, the reports also identify major challenges faced, what policies and programmes are being put in place to create a supportive environment, and the priorities for development assistance within the country. Unlike poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), which are being used as detailed plans for national development efforts, the MDGRs are conceived for use as a tool for awareness raising, advocacy, alliance building, and renewal of political commitments at the country level, as well as to build national capacity for monitoring and reporting on goals and targets. However, at the country level it is still not clear how the MDG process will relate to other processes, such as the World Bank Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) and the IFIs-led PRSPs. Civil society organizations (CSOs) have raised questions regarding accountability of one to the other and the overall role of CSOs in their formulation.

As countries have been encouraged to adapt the MDGs to their national context and priorities, not all countries are focusing on all eight goals, or the same ones. Some countries are choosing to turn individual targets into goals. For example, the report on Viet Nam focuses on targets around hunger and malnutrition, and access to basic household amenities as independent goals, while choosing not to examine goal 8—developing a global partnership for development. Similarly, the report on Poland does not examine goal 8, and adds a focus area on “Achieving a stable and viable democratic system, which is supported by majority of the population.” Bolivia, on the other hand, explores each of the eight main goals, as does Mauritius.

It is expected that every developing and transition economy country will produce at least one MDGR by the end of 2004. It is not yet clear what the reporting exercise will be for developed countries.

All MDGR country reports can be found online (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html), as well as the analysis of the indicators outlined in the Road Map (<http://millenniumindicators.un.org>).

SCHEDULE OF MILLENNIUM REPORTING	
MDGRs Under Preparation	Expected date of publication
Algeria	January 2003
Argentina	Late 2002
Azerbaijan	Second quarter 2003
Bahrain	March 2003
Barbados	Expected in 2003
Bhutan	Late 2002
Bulgaria	End of 2002
Central African Republic	Late 2002
China	Late 2002
Djibouti	April 2003
Egypt	End of 2002
Georgia	Second quarter 2004
Guyana	October 2002
Jamaica	Expected in 2003
Jordan	March 2003
Kuwait	Mid 2003
Kyrgyzstan	End of 2002
Lao PDR	Early 2003
Latvia	July 2003
Lebanon	December 02
Lesotho	End November 2002
Libya	First quarter 2003
Lithuania	First quarter 2003
Macedonia FYR	End of 2003
Moldova	End of 2002
Mongolia	End of October 2002
Morocco	First quarter 2003
Pakistan	Second half of 2002
Paraguay	Late 2002
Philippines	Late 2002
Romania	October 2002
Russia	November 2003
Saudi Arabia	January 2003

Somalia	First quarter 2003
South Africa	End of 2002
Sudan	End of 2003
Syria	End of 2002
Tajikistan	Early 2003
Togo	Mid 2003
Trinidad and Tobago	Expected in 2003
Tunisia	June 2003
Turkmenistan	November 2002
Tajikistan	Early 2003
Turkey	Second quarter 2004
UAE	June 2003
Ukraine	End of year 2002
Uzbekistan	Early 2003
Yemen	October 2002
Yugoslavia	Early 2003

UN LAUNCHES MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN

The UN launched its Millennium Development Goals Campaign on 1 October 2002 with UNDP Administrator Mark Malloch Brown calling for “aggressive promotion” of the MDGs in order to align the UN system, governments, parliaments, trade unions, church networks and other civil society actors behind efforts to achieve the goals. “We are going to take the best elements of successful campaigns like the land mines campaign and debt campaign,” Mr. Malloch Brown said, “and build coalitions at the country and global levels who will fight, organize, demonstrate and write to Congressmen and Members of Parliament to take whatever action is required to meet the goals.”

Mr. Malloch Brown envisaged that the annual country reporting exercise would serve as the foundation for a decentralized, nationally focused campaign by unleashing political momentum within countries. “When people everywhere can see how their country is doing compared to next door, they will demand of their government more access to education and better healthcare.” He went on to say that the annual reports build evidence for people to take political change into their own hands. In developed countries this would mean ensuring that resources are made available through official development assistance (ODA) commitments, trade access and other policy reforms in the global political economy. For developing countries, this should translate into prioritizing social expenditures on education and health care strategies.

UN Appoints Campaign Executive Coordinator

The MDGs are “the best news for the poor in decades,” said newly appointed Millennium Campaign Executive Coordinator Eveline Herfkens at the campaign launch. According to the former Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, the MDGs represent a new consensus for global action, which moves development efforts away from time-wasting disagreements between East and West, North and South, and the UN and Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs).

It is expected that part of Ms. Herfken's job will be to liaise with Northern capitals and build support for MDG-related work and to work closely with Mark Malloch Brown. She has said that she will also use her position to continue pressing for greater coherence among trade, development and finance ministries within industrialized countries, as well as to support greater cooperation amongst the UN, BWIs and WTO. In a recent panel on Globalization and the MDGs (see *Go Between* 94), Ms. Herfkens said that the MDGs might also help address what she called the "compliance deficit," or the gap between what developing countries must achieve in order to demonstrate commitment and the corresponding effort of developed countries. She said a good example of this was at WTO negotiations where developing countries are being forced to open their economies while industrialized countries still lag behind on their own trade reforms. "Perhaps we could hold up agreements at the WTO against achievement of the MDGs?" she asked.

Millennium Declaration Implementation Report

The international community is falling short, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned the General Assembly on 4 October 2002 as he presented his first report on Implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration (A/57/270). "If we carry on the way we are, most of the pledges made in the Declaration are not going to be fulfilled."

The report, which looks at progress on implementation of the declaration in its totality, examines both the measurable MDGs as well as broader objectives like human rights and democracy.

On meeting the MDGs, the report states that given current trends, prospects are decidedly mixed with marked differences between and within regions. It says that progress in East Asia and parts of South Asia has been sufficient in recent years "to give hope"—if it can continue to be made—of broad success in meeting many or all of the goals. However, progress in Latin America is slow, while much of sub-Saharan Africa and large parts of Central Asia are hardly advancing at all—or even worse, are falling back dramatically. The report warns that global figures can obscure vast and troubling regional variations and gives the example of the drop in the global rate of extreme income poverty that has declined largely as a result of significant progress in East Asia and the Pacific.

In the area of universal primary education, the report says that almost all regions have made progress, but that rates of improvement are much too slow in many regions to reach the target by 2015. This is particularly true of sub-Saharan Africa. The Secretary-General has said that the first major test on implementation will come in 2005, by when parity should be reached on boys' and girls' primary and secondary enrollment rates. At the current rate the target is unlikely to be reached, he has warned, as rates in disparity have only dropped 25% over the last decade.

The report concludes that overall progress in implementing the declaration and achieving the MDGs hinges on creating positive mutually reinforcing successes in individual areas, and draws connections between conflict prevention, the spread of infectious disease, poverty rates and creating sustainable prosperity, saying that the right mix of national and international policies is critical in this respect.

The report points to the recent International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as well as the Doha Ministerial of the World Trade Organization as indications that the international environment may now be more receptive to such development efforts. It challenges the private sector, NGOs, philanthropic foundations, academic and cultural institutions and other parts of civil society to forge a coordinated strategy with Member States, international institutions and UN agencies to help move towards greater implementation. The report can be found online (www.un.org/millennium-goals/index.html).

MILLENNIUM RESEARCH PROJECT

The third pillar of the MDGs strategy revolves around the Millennium Project, a three-year initiative to mobilize networks of scholars from developing and developed countries to help identify the necessary conditions—in terms of the right mix of policies, operational priorities, organizational means of implementation, and financing structures—for countries to achieve the MDGs.

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on MDGs and Director of the Earth Institute, Columbia University, will direct the project and oversee the participation of UN agencies, academics, representatives of government, civil society and private sector institutions.

As an advisory body to the UN, the Millennium Project will report its findings directly to the UN Secretary-General and the Administrator of UNDP. The Project itself has two key advisory groups: the UN Experts Group that oversees UN participation in the Project, consisting of senior representatives from UN agencies; and an International Advisory Panel that brings together internationally recognized experts in the relevant fields to provide independent advice to the Millennium Project.

The bulk of the research will be conducted through ten thematic task forces each looking at a specific group of targets (see chart on page 5). It is expected that the Project will complete a series of background papers outlining the planned research work of each task force by the end of 2002 and present its first body of data and recommendations via the *Human Development Report*, due in mid-2003. By the middle of the following year, the Project will offer an interim report to the Secretary-General and the UNDP Administrator, and will present final recommendations by 30 June 2005.

MILLENNIUM PROJECT TASK FORCES AND FOCUS TARGETS

Task Force 1	Poverty and Economic Development
Targets	1, 13, 14, 15, 16 (See chart on page 2)

Coordinators:

- n Kwesi Botchwey, Director of the Africa Programme at the Center for Globalization and Sustainable Development, Columbia University (USA)
- n Mari E. Pangestu, Leader of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council's Task Force on Trade and Investment Issues in Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) and WTO
- n Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute, Columbia University (USA)

Task Force 2	Hunger
Target	2

Coordinators:

- n Pedro Sanchez, Director of Tropical Agriculture, Columbia University (USA)
- n M.S. Swaminathan, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair in Ecotechnology, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (India)

Task Force 3	Primary Education and Gender Equality
Targets	3, 4

Coordinators:

- n Nancy Birdsall, President of the Center for Global Development, Washington DC (USA)
- n Amina J. Ibrahim, National Coordinator for Education for All at the Federal Ministry of Education (Nigeria)
- n Geeta Rao Gupta, President of the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), Washington DC, (USA)

Task Force 4	Maternal and Children's Health
Targets	5, 6

Coordinators:

- n Mushtaque Chowdhury, Director of the Research and Evaluation Division, BRAC, (Bangladesh)
- n Allan Rosenfield, Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University (USA)

Task Force 5	HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB, Other Major Diseases, and Access to Essential Medicines
Targets	7, 8, 17

Coordinators:

- n Jim Yong Kim, Director of the Programme in Infectious Disease and Social Change, Harvard University (USA)
- n Eva Ombaka, Coordinator of the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network (EPN) (Kenya)
- n Josh Ruxin, Director of Programme to Scale Up Health in Developing Countries, Columbia University (USA)
- n Burton Singer, Professor of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University (USA)

- n Dr. Paulo R. Teixeira, Director of the National AIDS Programme of the Ministry of Health (Brazil)

Task Force 6	Environmental Sustainability
Target	9

Coordinators

- n Yolanda Kakabadse, President of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), (Switzerland)
- n Don J. Melnick, Professor of Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology, Columbia University (USA)

Task Force 7	Water and Sanitation
Target	10

Coordinators

- n Roberto Lenton, Executive Director of the Secretariat for International Affairs and Development, International Research Institute for Climate Prediction (IRI), (USA)
- n Albert M. Wright, Chairman of the Africa Water Task Force

Task Force 8	Slum Dwellers and Urbanization
Target	11

Coordinators

- n Pietro Garau, Former Chief of the Research and Development Division, UN Center for Human Settlements
- n Elliott D. Sclar, Professor of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, Columbia University (USA)

Task Force 9	Open, Rule-Based Trading and Financial System
Target	12

Coordinators

- n Patrick Messerlin, Professor of Economics and Director of the Groupe d'Economie Mondiale (GEM) at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Paris (France)
- n Ernesto Zedillo, Director of the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization and former President of Mexico

Task Force 10	Technology Policy for Development
Target	18

Coordinators

- n Calestous Juma, Professor of the Practice of International Development, Harvard University (USA)
- n Dato' Ir Lee Yee-Cheong, President-Elect of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WEFO) (Malaysia)

MDG TOOLS, RESEARCH, AND EXPERIENCES

Given the short life to date of the MDGs as a concept, there is an impressive range of initiatives and resources that have been developed at the national and global levels by the UN system, governments and civil society. The next page provides a listing of some of the best sources of information and resources currently available.

DEV LINK

Supported by the UN Development Group, this comprehensive website documents how the MDGs are being localized within countries, and through its "resource corner," provides access to a civil society handbook for Africa and a plain language guide on the MDGs. (www.undg.org, click on Implementing the Millennium Development Goals)

MDG NET

This is a list serve which supports UN staff, country offices and civil society and provides a continuous flow of information on the MDGs. (www.undg.org, sign up through the website or send an e-mail to <sarah.renner@undp.org>)

MILLENNIUM PROJECT

This site provides all related information on the MDG research initiative. (www.unmillenniumproject.org)

OFFICIAL UN WEBSITE

Provides general information on MDG activities, including press releases and reports from the Secretary-General; webcasts of UN/MDG events; fact sheets on the MDGs and the role of the UN; country reports and data; and statistics on the achievement of the MDGs. (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html)

MILLENNIUM INDICATORS

Operated by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, this site contains country data by indicator; indicator definitions; indicator sources; country profiles; and explanations of each goal. (<http://millenniumindicators.un.org>)

OFFICIAL UNDP WEBSITE

This site contains a section on campaigning for the MDGs, all published country reports, resource documents and FAQs. (www.undp.org, click on Millennium Development Goals)

OTHER UN SYSTEM AGENCY MDG SITES INCLUDE:

High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (www.unhcr.ch/development/mdg.html)

World Health Organization (WHO) (www.who.int/mdg/en/)

WORLD BANK MDG WEBSITE

This site includes a capacity building page and a research page on costs of attaining the goals (www.worldbank.org, www.developmentgoals.org).

More websites are in development.

CIVIL SOCIETY LINKS

CHOIKE (www.choike.org)

This portal on southern civil societies is compiling a comprehensive list of articles and resources being produced by civil society and the international community on the MDGs.

CONGO

The Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative relationship with the UN (CONGO) (www.ngocongo.org).

EURODAD WEBSITE (www.eurodad.org)

The European Network on Debt and Development's site contains papers analyzing the connection between debt sustainability levels and achievement of the MDGs, including a joint submission by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam UK and EURODAD.

INTERACTION WEBSITE (www.interaction.org)

The site of InterAction, the largest alliance of US-based international development and humanitarian NGOs, provides a policy paper on the Millennium Challenge Account and documents the dialogue on MDGs.

WFUNA WEBSITE (www.wfuna.org)

The World Federation of UN Associations has recently published a report of civil society engagement on MDGs, available online. To sign up for the WFUNA MDG list serve, send an email to <mdgcampaign-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>.

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