

# **POLICY DILEMMAS AND PROSPECTS TOWARDS MEETING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) IN AFRICA**

*E.O. Ijeoma*

*School of Public Management and Administration  
University of Pretoria*

## **ABSTRACT**

**T**he study provides a background for the review of policies and actions adopted by African states and governments towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It begins with conceptualising the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a philosophy, a framework and a development implementation plan with the global consensus outlook for achieving them. The article profoundly deviates from the current debate on whether African countries would meet the MDGs; rather it seeks to develop a conceptual framework which may be useful to linking these expected goals to policies and actions of development. The article attempts to assess the MDGs and targets with a view to pointing out some policy outcomes as they affect Africa. However, some methodological steps are recommended towards achieving better policy outcomes at country levels in efforts to meet the MDGs in Africa.

## **INTRODUCTION**

**I**n September 2000 at the 55<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations (popularly known as the Millennium Summit), the Millennium Declaration was adopted to strengthen peace, development and human rights, and to improve the UN's ability to act on behalf of human priorities. At the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, as follow up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, in September 2001, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted. Thus, world leaders adopted the eight goals, to be attained by 2015 (UNDP, 2001:9) including: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and building a global partnership for development.

While Africa and other developing countries were still grappling with many socio-political challenges of their new democracies, such as unemployment, hunger, poverty, general insecurity of life and property, the United Nations Assembly in September 2000 made the above eight-point declaration. Arising from the Declaration, the eight goals automatically bind countries to do more and join forces in countering the identified global problems. The eight goals were further reaffirmed in Monterrey and Johannesburg, and rich countries were called on to relieve debt, increase aid and give poor countries access to their markets and technology. The Millennium Development Goals are a test of political will to build stronger partnerships. African countries have the responsibility to undertake policy reforms and strengthen governance to liberate the creative energies of its people with the aim of alleviating poverty substantively come 2015.

## BASIS FOR ANALYSIS

The MDG's targets which were based on historical trends around the world were set on the premise that progress observed at the global level over the previous 25 years would continue for the 25 year- period between 1990-2015. Thus the MDGs are essentially an extrapolation of global trends of the 1970s and projected forward till 2015 (Vandermoortele, 2007:1). As the Millennium Declaration is not intended to impose sanctions on any country that does not attain the targets in 2015, at the same time it is not intended to introduce one-size fit all approach to dealing with several economic and social problems plaguing the world and its inhabitants, especially humankind and the environment.

It is important to note that for the purpose of this article, the global and regional perspectives on each goal were considered as *outcomes of the research* (Ntah, 2008 29-43) with a view to putting the current state of affairs into perspective especially on some comparative analysis as it affects countries and regions within the global terrain.

## MDGS TARGETS VS POLICY OUTCOMES

At the end of the last decade, world leaders distilled the key goals and targets in the Millennium Declaration in September 2000. These goals set an ambitious target for reducing poverty and improving lives all over the world. For each goal one or more targets have been set, most for 2015, using 1990 as a benchmark (<http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/development/goals.html>). The following goals and targets including the general narratives of performance on each goal and target at the global level have been identified (UN 2006; 15-30)( Vandermoortele, 2007:3).

### Goal One: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 1: Halve between 1994 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day and those who suffer from hunger.

Indicators:

- Proportion of population below \$(PPP) per day

- Poverty gap ratio (incidence x depth of poverty)
- Share of poorest quintile in national consumption

Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer hunger

Indicators:

- Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age
- Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

Outcomes

While the proportion of very poor people in all developing countries fell from 27,9 per cent in 1990 to 21,3 per cent in 2001, the percentage in Sub-Saharan Africa has risen from 44,6 per cent to 46,4 per cent. Thus, the number of poor Africans climbed from 227 million to 313 million during the same period. The number of people who are suffering from hunger is considerably high in Sub-Saharan Africa. About 32 per cent of children fewer than five years of age were underweight. This proportion changed very little in 2004 with about minus 2 per cent. The current trend could not lead Sub-Saharan Africa to the 16 per cent required in 2015.

More than a billion people still live on less than US\$1 a day; sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and parts of Europe and Central Asia are falling short of the poverty target.

## Goal Two: 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.

Indicators:

- Net enrolment ratio in primary education
- Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5
- Literate rate of 15-24 years old.

## Outcomes

Although progress has been made in increasing school enrolment with a net enrolment ratio in primary education of 64, 2 per cent in 2004 against 50 per cent in 1990, the target of 100 per cent in 2015 is still uncertain.

Generally, as many as 113 million children world wide do not attend school, but the targets are within reach. According to the 2005, UNDP country report, India, for example, should have about 95% of its children in school in 2005, but could not achieve that and so it has been for many countries.

## Goal Three: 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.

Indicators:

- Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Ratio of literate females to males of 15-24 years-olds
- Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector
- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

## Outcomes

In sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage of girls in primary education, in relation to boys, increased from 83% to 86% between 1990/91 and 2001/02; the goal is to reach 100% in primary schools, preferably by 2005, and in secondary and higher education by 2015. The share of women in non-agricultural labour rose from 32% to 36% between 1990 and 2003, while the proportion of women members of national legislatures doubled from 7% in 1990 to 14% in 2005.

In many countries, two-thirds of illiterates are women, and the rate of employment among women is two-thirds that of men. The proportion of seats in parliaments held by women is increasing, reaching about one third in Argentina, Mozambique and South Africa.

## Goal Four: Reduce child mortality

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

Indicators:

- Under-five mortality rate
- Infant mortality rate
- Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles

## Outcomes

The UNDP also reported that in the 1980s about 15 million young children died before their fifth birthday, mainly from preventable diseases. That number reduced to about 11 million since the millennium goals and targets were introduced in the development arena. Sub-Saharan Africa's under-five mortality rate is still the highest of the world with about 185 deaths per 1000 live births in 2004 against 168 in 1990. The region recorded thus only minimal reduction, which could not ensure the meeting of the expected target in 2015 (62 deaths per 1000 live births)

## Goal Five: Improve maternal health

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

Indicators:

- Maternal mortality ratio

- Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

## Outcomes

Because of poor data, the mortality rate in 1990 in most regions is not accurately known. However, in 2000, the rate in sub-Saharan Africa (expressed as the number of women dying during childbirth out of every 100 000 live births) was 920, more than twice the 450 average for all developing countries. There seems to be a reasonable improvement the world over on the number of women dying in childbirth. However, in developing countries, the risk of dying in childbirth is one in 48, but virtually all countries of the world now have safe motherhood programmes.

## Goal Six: Combat HIV and AIDS, Malaria and other diseases

Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

Indicators:

- HIV prevalence among 15-24 years old pregnant women
- Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate
- Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS

Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major disease.

Indicators:

- Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria
- Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures
- Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis
- Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)

## Outcomes

In 2001, about forty five million people were living with HIV/AIDS. Generally, there has been a reverse in the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other diseases. The current report reveals that countries like Brazil, Senegal, Thailand and Uganda have shown that the spread of these diseases can be stemmed. Similarly, South Africa has shown some improvement in dealing with those diseases. The introduction and implementation of the South African comprehensive HIV/AIDS strategy and the African Council of Health Ministers' Forum against malaria. A bilateral strategy between South Africa and Mozambique on dealing with malaria is also yielding a reasonable result.

The HIV prevalence rate of the region remains the highest in the world although it has stabilized in recent years. Seven out of every 100 adults are living with HIV. AIDS is

the leading cause of premature death in sub-Saharan Africa. Malaria is also a widespread problem, with 90% of the 1 million malaria deaths each year occurring in sub-Saharan Africa. Tuberculosis is another major health concern in Sub-Saharan Africa with the highest level of the world in 2007 (281 cases per 100 000 population, excluding HIV-infected) against 148 cases in 1990.

## **Goal Seven: Ensure environmental sustainability**

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse loss of environmental resources.

Indicators:

- Proportion of land area covered by forest
- Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area
- Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per \$1 GDP (PPP)
- Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) and consumption of ozone –depleting CFCs (ODP tons)
- Proportion of population using solid fuel

Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

Indicators:

- Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural.

Target 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

- Proportion of urban population with access to improved sanitation
- Proportion of households with access to secure tenure (owned or rented)

## **Outcomes**

In some Sub-Saharan Africa countries, in particular in west sub-region, poverty and environment degradation move together and this situation undermines the sustainable livelihoods of the poor. However, Sub-Saharan Africa's figures shown a little improvement regarding the proportion of land area covered by forest with a performance of 26,5 per cent in 2005 against 29,2% in 1990. This trend reveals wide disparities among sub-regions of Sub-Saharan Africa.

There are also disparities between the rural and urban areas regarding sustainable access to an improved water source and access to improved sanitation. In both cases, urban areas are better served than rural areas. Although little progress has been recorded, the challenge of meeting the expected targets in 2015 remains. More than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water and more than two billion lack sanitation. During the 1990s, nearly one billion people gained access to safe drinking water and

the same number to sanitation. This number had increased to nearly two billion in 2005. South Africa has also made some good strides in achieving the goals.

## **Goal Eight: Develop a global partnership for development**

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system including 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; enhance programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction

Indicators: Official Development Assistance (ODA)

- Net ODA, total and to LDCs, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income
- Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocatable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary healthcare, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
- Proportion of bilateral ODA of OCED/DAC donors that are united.

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).

Indicators:

- ODA received in landlocked countries as proportion of their GNIs
- ODA received in Small Island developing states as proportion of their GNIs

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.

Indicators: Market Access

- Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and LDCs, admitted free of duties
- Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textile and clothing from developing countries
- Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as percentage of their GDP
- Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity.
- Debt sustainability
- Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)
- Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative, US\$
- Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services

Target 16: In co-operation with developing countries, developed and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth

Indicator:

- Unemployment rate of 15-24 year old, each sex and total

Target 17: In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries

Indicator:

- Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis.

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

Indicators:

- Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population
- Personal computers in use per 100 population and Internet user per 100 population.

## Outcomes

This would include establishing an open, rule-based and non-discriminatory trading and financial system, addressing the special needs of least developed countries, dealing comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems and making the benefits of new technologies more accessible.

Goal eight seems comprehensive and more detailed in content and in application compared to the other goals. However, the UNDP, in collaboration with national governments, is co-ordinating reporting by countries on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. For each goal there is one or more specific targets, along with specific social, economic and environmental indicators used to track progress towards the goals.

## DILEMMAS OF MEETING THE MDGS

**M**ajor difficulties being faced by the Sub-Saharan Africa countries towards achieving the MDGs provoke many challenges, but these challenges can be categorised under the generic and the specifics. These dilemmas hinder efforts towards achieving the envisaged progress on meeting the MDGs in Africa.

### Generic dilemmas

The dilemmas under this category include; governing, conflicts, structural impediments and funding. In fact, Sub-Saharan Africa countries are known as countries which suffer from public governing problems: low decentralisation, corruption, weak public administration, low accountability and transparency, unfair elections, poor delivery



of public services, lack of real freedom of press and mass media. Fully aware of the negative impact of these governing shortcomings on socio-economic development of their countries and on their endeavours of achieving MDGs, governments of Sub-Saharan Africa initiated national programmes aimed at improving public and corporate governance in Africa countries.

Dilemmas such as governance problems, ethnic or religious disputes, Sub-Saharan Africa experienced some violent conflicts, which curtailed efforts by countries in meeting the MDGs. In fact, violent conflicts appear as major obstacles in achieving the MDGs. Beyond high number of deaths generated by violent conflicts, collapsing economies and infrastructure can take a further human toll. During 1990-2001, there were 57 major armed conflicts in 45 locations. Sub-Saharan Africa has been hit the hardest (UNDP 2003:16).

A combination of factors could be considered as structural impediments, which hinder Sub-Saharan Africa's progress towards MDGs (UNDP 2003:16). Basically, many Sub-Saharan Africa countries are landlocked or have a large portion of their populations living far from coast. In addition, most are small. Being far from world markets and having a small economy makes it much harder to diversify from primary commodities to less volatile exports with more value added. Some Sub-Saharan Africa countries are also vulnerable to natural disasters (droughts, floods, pests, etc.).

The MDGs need assessment exercises carried out throughout Sub-Saharan Africa since the publication of UN Millennium Project Report in January 2005 confirm that the achievement of the MDGs need huge resources, which are beyond capacities of Governments. Thus, the lack of sufficient funding of the MDGs appear to be negative for low-income countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and a major constraint in their challenge to meet the MDGs.

## **Specific Dilemmas**

Challenges vary per the MDGs and targets. Without being exhaustive, the section will highlight major challenges Sub-Saharan Africa is coping with concerning each goal (Ntah 2008:30-43).

### **Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

Key challenges in halving the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day are: (i) limited access to credit, (ii) inadequate infrastructure, (iii) unskilled labour force, (iv) vertical and horizontal inequalities, (v) weak link between poverty strategy/programmes and annual budget, and (vi) poor policy planning.

Key challenges in halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger are: (i) high household food insecurity, (ii) inadequate dietary intake, and (iii) low productivity.

## **Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education**

Major challenges towards universal primary enrolment include: (i) low retention rates, in particular in remote areas, (ii) inadequate facilities, and (iii) child labour.

## **Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empowering women**

Key challenges facing in promoting gender equality and empowering women are: (i) socio-cultural factors, (ii) discriminations against women, (iii) early pregnancy and early marriage, (iv) rising incidence of HIV/AIDs, and (v) employment opportunities for educated young women.

## **Goal 4: Reduce child mortality**

Major challenges in reducing child mortality include: (i) high incidence of malaria, diarrhoea, malnutrition, acute respiratory infections, and anaemia, (ii) risky fertility behaviour, (iii) incidence of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDs, (iv) disparities in access to skilled health staff, and (v) low educational attainment among mothers.

## **Goal 5: Improved maternal health**

Key challenges in improving maternal health inter alia: (i) deficit in antenatal care, (ii) unsupervised deliveries, (iii) inadequate postnatal care, and (iv) spatial inequalities in access to more effective and inclusive health care delivery.

## **Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases**

Major challenges in combating HIV/AIDs are: (i) ineffective educational campaign aimed at behavioural change, (ii) stigmatisation attached to HIV/AIDs, (iii) lack of guidelines on home-based care, (iv) slow acceptance of voluntary counselling and Testing (VCT); (v) the cost associated with antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), and (vi) lack of a multi-sector approach to fighting the disease.

The fight against malaria faces the following major challenges: (i) increasing resistance to first line anti-malaria drugs, (ii) late reporting of cases of fever at health facilities, (iii) limited use of mosquito nets, (iv) weak capacity for early detection of malaria epidemics, (v) high cost of malaria treatment, and (vi) inefficient management of community environmental sanitation.

## **Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability**

The promotion of access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation are mainly constrained by inter alia: (i) ineffective policy, (ii) inequality, (iii) high cost of water and sanitation equipments. The key challenges in ensuring environmental sustainability are:

**Table 1**

Country	Interim Targets	Final Targets
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ODA/GNI target of 0,56% by 2010</li> <li>• Double ODA between 2004 and 2010</li> <li>• 50% of the increase will go to Sub-Saharan Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,7% by 2015</li> </ul>
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,51% ODA/GNI in 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,7% in 2015</li> </ul>
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,51% ODA/GNI in 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,7% in 2015</li> </ul>
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,5% ODA/GNI in 2007 of which two-third will go to Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,7% in 2012</li> </ul>
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double bilateral spending in Africa between 2003/4 and 2007/8</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0,7% in 2015</li> </ul>
United States of America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double aid to Sub-Saharan Africa between 2004 and 2010</li> </ul>	
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase aggregate ODA volume by \$10 billion over five years</li> <li>• Double ODA to Africa over three years</li> </ul>	
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double international assistance from 2001 to 2010</li> <li>• Double assistance to Africa from 2003/4 to 2008/9</li> </ul>	
Russia Federation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancel \$11,3 billion worth of debts owed by African countries</li> <li>• Write off the entire stock of HIPC's debt on non-ODA loans</li> </ul>

Source: 2006 Financing Development in Africa: Trends, Issues and Challenges

(i) excessive deforestation, (ii) soil erosion, (iii) bush encroachment, (iv) reduced soil moisture-retention, (v) loss of biodiversity, and (vi) increasing pollution.

## **Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development**

In international co-operation, Sub-Saharan Africa encounters the following serious problems: (i) decline in the flow of Official Development Assistance (ODA), (ii) weak trade performance, (iii) rise in debt burden, (iii) low foreign direct investments, (iv) weak competitiveness of locally produced goods, (v) declining terms of trade, (vi) adverse balance of payments problems, and (vii) high concentration of exports in primary commodities.

The dilemmas explained above may not be fully exhaustive, but they constitute major setbacks to the Sub-Saharan African countries in achieving the MDGs. However, efforts by the United Nations and its agencies and other international development partners produce some substantial progress towards achieving the MDGs around the world. African countries could keep hope alive for the future if they continue to initiate and implement profound projects and programmes that could direct efforts towards achieving the MDGs targets even beyond the 2015 dateline.

## **PROSPECTS OF MEETING THE MDGS**

**A**lthough there are a number of serious constraints which hinder efforts of Sub-Saharan Africa in achieving MDGs, the prospect of meeting these goals in 2015 remains. The Millennium Project Report (III.1) entitled *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* stresses the need for practical measures and the possibility of meeting the goals in all countries by 2015. There are regional initiatives that need to be developed; they are amongst others:

- Millennium Project Report, including quick wins;
- sound policies, including accelerating economic growth and promoting good governance;
- resources mobilisation, including scaling-up aid; and
- the NEPAD initiative

## **Gleneagles Declaration 2005**

In July 2005, the G8 summit agreed to increase the momentum derived from previous summits and declarations by the world leaders. It was aimed at increasing aid flows and reducing the burden of external debt on developing countries aimed at enhancing their prospects of meeting the MDGs.

## **The G8 Commitment to Africa**

The above table implies that the G8 recognizes the need for substantial increase in ODA to consolidate and build on progress in Africa and stimulate the growth to reduce

dependency. The declaration at Gleneagles also indicates that commitments by the G8 and other donor countries will increase ODA to developing countries by \$50 billion a year by 2010 and half of this increase will be assigned to Africa.

The G8 agreed to a proposal to cancel 1005 of outstanding debts by eligible HIPC to the IMF, international Development Association (IDA) and African Development Fund, and to provide additional resources to ensure that financial capacity of the international financial institutions were not reduced. The G8 reaffirmed effectiveness of aid delivery and management but also called the developing countries to be more accountable to their citizens and development partners.

## Sources of Foreign Capital flow in Sub-Saharan Africa 1998-2005 (US\$ billions)

**Table 2**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Net private flows	13,7	1,7	9,9	12,1	6,3	15,8	20,7	28,5
Net equity flows	15,5	18	10,7	14	9,1	14,3	18	24,7
FDI inflows	6,9	9,0	6,5	15,0	9,5	13,6	11,3	17,6
Portfolio equity inflows	8,7	9,0	4,2	-1,0	-0,4	0,7	6,7	7,2
Net debt flows	-1,8 -1,3	-1,3 -0,7	-0,7 0,4	-2 0,1	-2,8 -1,0	1,5 2,5	2,8 1,7	3,8 2,3
Medium/Long/ Short Term	-0,5	-0,6	-1,1	-2,1	-1,8	-1,0	1,1	1,5
Net Official Flows	10,6	10,3	10,7	10,7	16,6	23,3	25,1	25,2
Bilateral aid	10,1	9,9	10	10	14	22	24,2	28,4
Net debt flows	0,5	0,4	0,7	0,6	2,6	1,2	0,8	-3,2

*Source: Global development finance, 2006*

## Foreign direct Investment (FDI)

### **Net Inward Foreign Direct Investment across Regions (US\$ Billions)**

In the above table, Africa is presently attracting less FDI than most developing countries in spite of the introduction of the NEPAD initiative and its international political and corporate recognition. However, in 2005, there was a significant record of FDIs into the

**Table 3**

Group	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
All developing countries	168,7	172,4	183,3	168,8	176,9	160,3	161,6	211,5	237,5
East Asia and Pacific	62,1	57,8	50,8	44,3	48,5	52,2	59,8	64,6	65,3
Europe and Central Asia	24,6	27,4	29,8	30,2	32,7	34,9	35,9	62,4	75,6
Latin America and the Caribbean	66,7	74,1	88,3	79,3	71,1	48,2	41,1	60,8	61,4
Middle East and North Africa	2,1	2,7	2,4	4,1	3,4	3,7	5,6	5,3	9,1
South Asia	4,9	3,5	3,1	4,4	6,1	6,7	5,6	7,2	8,4
Sub-Saharan Africa	8,3	6,9	9	6,5	15	9,5	13,6	11,3	17,6
Angola	0,4	1,1	2,5	0,9	2,1	1,7	3,5	1,4	1,5
South Africa	3,8	0,6	1,5	1	7,3	0,7	0,8	0,6	6,3

*Source: Global Development Finance, 2006*

Sub-Saharan African countries. Net inward FDI flows to the sub-region reached an all-time high of \$17, 6 billion (UNCTAD 2006:15). The UNCTAD also confirmed that this increase in FDI flows at that time was as a result of high commodity pricing and rising corporate profits. But in 2005, a large percentage of FDI inflows to the sub-region went to a few countries (UNCTAD 2006:28):

- **South Africa:** \$6,3 billion
- **Nigeria:** \$ 5,4 billion
- **Sudan:** \$ 4,8 billion
- **Egypt:** \$ 4,5
- **Morocco:** \$4 billion

The large FDI inflow into South Africa was due largely to the acquisition of bank (ABSA) by Barclays Bank of the United Kingdom for \$5 billion was a milestone for the country in

that year. The FDI inflows into Sub-Saharan Africa in 2005 were mainly in the oil and gas sector which combines some technical assistance and capital inflow. Nigeria, Angola and Sudan were the main beneficiaries in this sector. Sub-Saharan African countries have also made inroads into banking and other corporate services, though most banks are owned by foreign companies. However, African countries continue to face difficulties in attracting enough technical assistance and FDI into manufacturing for lack of diversification of production structures, low human capital base and poor infrastructure.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need for preliminary assessment of African policies and actions on poverty alleviation for achieving the MDGs and related development goals. For the monitoring of progress and policies, the following approaches may be appropriate; *firstly*, identifying a set of key policy indicators that can be measured consistently for African countries and that will contribute to an understanding of progress and areas for priority action. *Secondly*, basing the assessment on detailed reviews of the country's overall policy framework and implementation. The second approach seems to be better in providing whether the chosen policies are adequate for achieving the development goals, as it is based on an analysis that takes full account of circumstances in Africa countries. The second approach is also more resource-intensive and the feasible frequency of reporting is less than the one based on monitoring of sets of indicators (World Bank 2003:16).

## Steps for Implementing the MDGs Projects and Programmes

Some practical steps are recommended for Africa towards making poverty a history within a reasonable period. These steps include the following:

### Step One

Targets must be tailored to make them context-sensitive-essential for generating a sense of national ownership. They are meant to encourage accelerated progress. Their applicability, however, can only be tested and judged against what is realistically achievable under the country specific circumstances. No stigma must be associated with setting national targets that are less ambitious than the global MDGs. History shows that successful target setting critically depends on striking a judicious balance between ambition and realism.

### Step Two

Non-over-ambition and intermediate targets may be essential for sustaining political commitment and ensuring accountability. The MDGs must be linked to the political agenda of today's government. Long-term goals, by themselves, are unlikely to help shape current policy reforms and action plan because the deadlines are too far in the future.

## Step Three

Actionable propositions and reforms must be formulated to make adequate progress towards agreed long-term benchmarks. They may range from immunising children to iodising salt, training teachers and building schools, treating Aids patients and distributing bed nets, enforcing laws against gender discrimination, abolishing user fees for primary education and basic health care, and strengthening progressive taxation and re-allocating spending in favour of the poor.

## Step Four

The national budget costing must be informed by the actions and reforms of government including aid allocations. National budgets must adequately reflect the tailored and intermediate targets set under steps 1&2- a link that is often missing practice. However, it would be ill advised to estimate costs of the MDG targets over an extended period. The MDGs costing will only yield results that have a reasonable degree of accuracy when done within a two to three year period.

## CONCLUSION

**T**he article notes that the recommended steps that have national and local focus for policy reforms aimed at achieving the MDGs targets has the potential of producing some positive development outcomes that could assist African countries in dealing with challenges of meeting the MDGs. The article establishes that there are more significant set-backs than advances towards achieving the MDGs in Africa. The goals are achievable with much more global political support, strong partnerships and co-ordinated efforts.

The article also proves that MDGs embody the multidimensionality of development. They include from income and non-income dimensions, which are also interlinked.

In turn the recommended policy steps that need to be implied by these goals are multi-sectoral in nature. Economic growth is central to reduction of poverty and related development goals, therefore, the attainment of MDGs in Africa will require policies to promote stronger economic growth than seen presently.

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