

WE *the* PEOPLES

A Call to Action for the UN
Millennium Declaration

Civil **SOCIETY** Engagement
with the *Millennium*
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2004



World Federation of United Nations Associations



The North-South Institute

PROJECT TEAM:

John W. Foster, Principal Researcher, The North South Institute (co-author)

Pera Wells, Deputy Secretary-General, World Federation of United Nations Associations (co-author)

CONTRIBUTORS:

Alejandra Cabezas, The North-South Institute, intern

Goffe Jensma, WFUNA, intern

Mejlina Modanu, The North-South Institute, research coordinator

Priti Murbah, The North-South Institute, intern

Negin Sohrabi, WFUNA, intern

EDITORIAL SUPPORT:

Lois Ross, Director of Communications & Publications, The North-South Institute

DESIGN:

Green Communication Design, Montreal, Canada

TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

Carolina Hernandez, WFUNA

Dina Shadid, The North-South Institute

Kent Spott, The North-South Institute

PUBLISHER:

The North-South Institute (NSI)

www.nsi-ins.ca



The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)

www.wfuna.org



“We the peoples...” is a joint project of The North-South Institute and the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

We recognize with appreciation the time and thought which each group responding to our survey has contributed to this report.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of: the Canadian International Development Agency; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden; the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace; and Rights & Democracy.

We are particularly grateful to the UN Department of Public Information, the NGO office of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, the Bratislava office of UNDP, CIVICUS and the many other civil society networks who assisted us in circulating the invitation to participate in our 2004 survey.

We value continued collaboration with the UN Millennium Campaign.

CONTENTS

Kofi Annan: civil society and the MDGs	2
We the peoples 2004: about this report	3
Executive summary	4
The Millennium Development Goals	6
The challenge of the Millennium Development Goals: taking measure of the MDGs	8
We the peoples...2004: what is civil society saying?	10
Perceptions of the UN and engagement with the MDGs	10
Civil society promoting awareness of the MDGs	13
Participation and engagement with the MDGs	15
What turns people on about the MDGs	17
Prospects for a “Global Partnership”	21
Civil society perspectives on the MDGs	23
International organizations: perceptions of their influence	25
Insecurity, war and the diversion of resources	27
Can the MDGs be achieved? Changing course, but how?	29
Considering the steps forward	32
Resources	40

Kofi Annan: civil society and the MDGs

“It is people mobilized as you are, more than any government initiative or scientific breakthrough, who can overcome the obstacles to a better world. ...the civil society movement continues to grow and make its mark.

...You have been making valuable contributions, by linking your existing campaigns to the first seven goals... But prospects for achieving those goals depend crucially on how we do on the eighth — forging a global partnership for development... Not every developing country has made sufficient progress, but as a whole the developing world is doing its part. The same cannot yet be said of the wealthiest and most powerful countries, especially when it comes to levelling the international trading system and creating a development-friendly global economic environment.

So we urgently need you to do what you do best... [P]olitical will shifts only if there is national and local mobilization by the public, and only when leaders are held accountable... [W]hat would really make a difference is if, at the local level, the goals achieve a critical mass of support and even become “vote-getters”. You can and must help make that happen. If we do not, millions of people will die, prematurely and unnecessarily. That...should be a call to action.”

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan speaks to the Civil Society Forum in São Paulo, Brazil, June 13, 2004



about *this* REPORT

This report is the product of collaboration between The North-South Institute (NSI) and the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), with the participation of hundreds of civil society organizations around the world. We base the report on an extensive survey directed to civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as MDG roundtables at the United Nations sponsored by WFUNA, contributions to website dialogues on the MDGs and printed materials from a variety of CSOs and official sources.

We use the term “civil society organization” (CSO) to cover a broad and diverse constituency. They may be as specific in focus as the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids or as general as Global Link. They may be rooted in faith like the Hadassah or the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers. They may be a geographically specific development group like the Palestinian Development Gateway or raise a globe-encompassing flag like One World International. They may represent specific constituencies like the Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples or bring together diverse civil society groups like CIVICUS.

The *We the peoples... 2004* survey was e-mailed to several thousand civil society organizations. The principal, but not the only, sources of the sample were organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or with the Department of Public Information (DPI) of the United Nations. A large number of networks assisted us with distribution of news of the survey and the link to it.

This year’s survey was distributed in four languages: Arabic, English, French and Spanish. We would like to continue to expand this multilingual enterprise, and will continue to seek funding to permit us to do so.

Participants in the *We the peoples... 2004* survey include more than 270 organizations, from over 82 countries. They are predominantly (two-thirds) from the “global South” with the other third from countries belonging to the affluent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). They are predominantly English, with 3% replying in Arabic, about 9% in Spanish and 12% in French. More than 40% are from countries belonging to the Commonwealth and more than 26% from members of la Francophonie.

Regionally, 13% came from Europe, 17% from North America, 29% from Africa, 21% from Asia, 9% from Latin America, 6.5% from the Middle East, 3.5% from the Caribbean and 2.5% from Australia and Oceania.

Participating organizations are predominantly limited in budget and staff. More than one-quarter have no staff (28.1%) and just under half have less than 20 staff (49%). More than one-third have up to 20 volunteers (37.2%) and another quarter have up to 100 volunteers (26.7%). One-third have less than 100 members, but a quarter have more than 1000. Many of the organizations work with very limited means: some 40% have annual incomes of less than US\$50,000.

We the peoples...2004 is the third annual report on civil society engagement with the Millennium Declaration and its development goals (the Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs).

EXECUTIVE



summary

Our survey reports on responses from over 270 diverse civil society organizations with modest means which are predominantly from the “global South.”

Over prior years/surveys an increase in knowledge and engagement has occurred, but there is a great deal further to go. Our survey tends to engage groups that are already, to some extent, engaged with and knowledgeable of the UN and other international institutions.

The UN is moving toward enhancing its engagement with civil society at a country level. This is particularly important for the MDGs, in such matters as participation in country reports, monitoring, policy advocacy and direct implementation. Our respondents show that the posture, profile and engagement of UN agencies with civil society at the country level varies greatly in different parts of the world – we call upon them all to study the findings of this report and make any necessary changes to their ways of interacting with civil society.

Key international business, academic and institutional bodies have joined many civil society voices in testifying that the MDGs will not be met, unless the current financial and political commitment is scaled up dramatically.

Highlights from our survey findings:

1. Critical engagement with the MDGs has become the approach of many CSOs, adapting, extending, updating and localizing the goals as appropriate to their situation.
2. Greater focus on advocacy and information campaigns is urgently needed.
3. The distribution of income and gains from development, between genders, among family units and social groups, with an eye to equity, is an increasing concern.
4. Higher priority needs to be given to the impact of HIV/AIDS on poverty, education, hunger and human life itself.
5. The question of human rights must be integrated into future plans and targets.
6. Youth needs to be actively involved in the MDG process.
7. Links between gender and the goals need to be further intensified.
8. Progress reporting on the MDGs should demonstrate the extent to which several MDG targets are integrated into development projects.

9. The rapid and significant scaling up of resources is overdue. There has been some limited enhancement since the Monterrey Financing for Development Conference, but nowhere near what is required to meet the goals by 2015.
10. There is a strongly held view among respondents that developed countries must demonstrate greater commitment to the MDGs and the creation of a true global partnership for development.
11. There is urgent concern over the diversion of attention and resources from development and economic and social justice to the military, the so-called “war on terrorism” and war itself.
12. There is widespread agreement that transparency, good governance and the needs of the elderly, disabled, Indigenous people and refugees must be addressed in the goals.
13. Engagement in monitoring and evaluation at the national, sectoral and international level is emerging with growing sophistication.
14. There is a remarkable expansion of research and coalition building around policy alternatives. Participants actively engage in global, national and local networks.
15. There is a similar development of alternatives for enhancing global governance and democracy.

The year leading up to the fifth anniversary of the Millennium Declaration must be a year of refocusing direction and re-energizing political commitment. The opportunities are emerging: will CSOs organize to take full advantage?

Increased global awareness, dialogue and a true partnership between the North and South will strengthen global engagement and set us firmly on the road to 2015.

The Millennium Development GOALS

The global challenge

GOALS AND TARGETS

The Millennium Development Goals are an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and improving lives, agreed on by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. (www.un.org/millennium/summit.htm) For each goal one or more targets have been set, most for 2015, using 1990 as a benchmark:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

www.undp.org/mdg/goal1.pdf

Target for 2015: Halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger.

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 eradication target.

2. Achieve universal primary education

www.undp.org/mdg/goal2.pdf

Target for 2015: Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school.

As many as 113 million children do not attend school, but the target is within reach. India, for example, should have 95 per cent of its children in school by 2005.

3. Promote gender equality and empower women

www.undp.org/mdg/goal3.pdf

Targets for 2005 and 2015: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

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

4. Reduce child mortality

www.undp.org/mdg/goal4.pdf

Target for 2015: Reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under five.

Every year nearly 11 million young children die before their fifth birthday, mainly from preventable illnesses, but that number is down from 15 million in 1980.

5. Improve maternal health

www.undp.org/mdg/goal5.pdf

Target for 2015: Reduce by three-quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth.

In the developing world, the risk of dying in childbirth is one in 48, but virtually all countries now have safe motherhood programs.

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

www.undp.org/mdg/goal6.pdf

Target for 2015: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Forty million people are living with HIV, including five million newly infected in 2003. Countries like Brazil, Senegal, Thailand and Uganda have shown that the spread of HIV can be stemmed.

7. Ensure environmental sustainability

www.undp.org/mdg/goal7.pdf

Targets:

- ❖ *Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.*
- ❖ *By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water.*
- ❖ *By 2020, achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.*

More than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water and more than two billion lack sanitation. During the 1990s, however, nearly one billion people gained access to safe water and the same number to sanitation.

8. Develop a global partnership for development

www.undp.org/mdg/goal8.pdf

Targets:

- ❖ *Develop further an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction — nationally and internationally.*
- ❖ *Address the least developed countries' special needs, and the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states.*
- ❖ *Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems.*
- ❖ *Develop decent and productive work for youth.*
- ❖ *In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.*
- ❖ *In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies — especially information and communications technologies.*

Many developing countries spend more on debt service than on social services. New aid commitments made in the first half of 2002 could mean an additional \$12 billion per year by 2006.

The challenge of the Millennium Development GOALS: taking measure of the MDGs

The fifth anniversary of the Millennium Declaration occurs in September 2005. Progress in fulfilling its vision will be evaluated by world leaders at the UN General Assembly. The leaders of the richest and most powerful countries will meet in Gleneagles, Scotland at the G-7/8 in July 2005. Civil society organizations are on alert. Many are campaigning actively.

The Millennium Development Goals, a key portion of the Declaration, have set a standard for development cooperation and partnership worldwide. Many people in civil society argue that they are far too limited, too modest and too partial. Others salute the specific targets and dates, the potential for accountability of donors and rich nations in general, as well as enhancement of the lives of millions of people in developing countries. The debate continues, but so does action.

Four years after the Declaration, it is clear that progress is partial. Some sectors, regions and countries may be on track, but others are not, and some are even falling back. Despite this, as Jeffrey Sachs of the Millennium Project stated at the UN on July 21, 2004: "There is enough time to guarantee achieving the goals, but we need a significant change of direction. Eleven years is enough time, but barely enough time."

The coming year is crucial. It is a time for review, debate, flexibility, precision and self-critical modesty about assumptions and broad strategies. It is a wonderful time for civil society engagement in many dimensions, from evaluation of current projects and programs to monitoring, analysis and reorientation of current policies.

Admitting failure

Perhaps the first step to achieving the promise of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs in the next 10 years is to admit that the first five years since 2000 have not gone as hoped.

Business leadership has joined many non-governmental organizations in a common assessment. The *Global Governance Initiative Annual Report 2004*, put out by the World Economic Forum (WEF), states: "...too often the governments are scarcely trying. And the "non-state" actors on the international scene — businesses and civil society groups — are neither able nor willing to compensate for the inadequacies of government efforts. Across the board the world is failing to put forward even half the effort needed to meet the world's basic goals. The time has come to demand better." Putting seven groups of experts to work, the WEF evaluated progress and concluded that in 2003 governments, business, civil society and international organizations *did about half of what they should have done if they were serious about meeting the MDGs by 2015*. Efforts in the areas of health and poverty were slightly better than in education, environment and other key areas, but in every case they rated less than 5 on a scale from 0 (lousy) to 10 (good). As they concluded, the longer the delay in getting up to speed, the harder it will be to get on track to meet the goals.

International financial institutions took the measure of progress in the *Global Monitoring Report 2004*, published in April 2004. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund report declared:

“On current trends, most MDGs will not be met by most countries. The income poverty goal is likely to be achieved at the global level, but Africa will fall well short. For the human development goals, the risks are much more pervasive across the regions.”

The implication is clear. There is an urgent need to scale up and speed up action, on the part of all parties. The agenda has three essential elements:

- ❖ Accelerating reforms to achieve stronger economic growth — Africa will need to double its growth rate.
- ❖ Empowering and investing in poor people — scaling up and improving the delivery of human development and related key services.
- ❖ Speeding up the implementation of the Monterrey [Financing for Development] partnership, matching stronger reform efforts by developing countries with stronger support from developed countries and international agencies.

Re-committing for success

Global targets, Vandemoortele reminds us, “have made a difference in the past,” whether in combating polio or smallpox or increasing access to safe water. They can be useful in transforming vision into reality. To do so, he suggests, one must keep seven “do’s” in mind:

- ❖ Make the targets specific; they can’t rely on vague assumptions, faulty indicators or inaccurate data.
- ❖ Make them well known: “They must reach the kitchen table; they must be mentioned in the daily paper and discussed in the bedroom as well as the boardroom.”
- ❖ Tailor them to national context and local priorities; balance ambition and realism.
- ❖ Formulate intermediate goal-posts: be specific about what can be done in the lifetime of the current government.
- ❖ Do constant monitoring; break down figures to see what is happening in terms of gender, age, location and socio-economic groups.
- ❖ Provide leadership and engage partnership.
- ❖ Nothing speaks louder than financial commitments; results don’t come for free. Watch not only the global amounts but ask how much money budgeted for basic services actually reaches the delivery point, the local primary school or rural health centre.

Civil society is responding to these challenges. As the world community prepares to review progress and re-set its sights for 2015, will the welcome be there for the insights and experience of civil society? The success of the Millennium Development Goals could depend on the answer.

Looking at the meager state of progress, the UNDP’s Poverty Group Leader, Jan Vandemoortele, urges a self-critical review of assumptions: “By and large, global MDG targets were set on the premise that the global trends observed in the 1970s and 1980s would continue till 2015.” But one factor, the HIV pandemic, while acknowledged, was not internalized. The HIV/AIDS goal is listed, but the targets for health, education and hunger were set as if the epidemic didn’t exist. We need to re-calculate and re-prioritize, but not turn back.

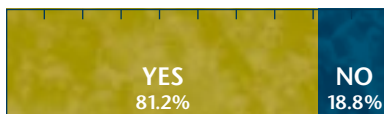
We *the peoples*...2004: what is civil society saying?

Respondents to our survey convey some very strong messages. If engaging civil society organizations is essential to achievement of the MDGs and the vision of the Millennium Declaration, these messages need to be considered and integrated into the strategy for the next decade.

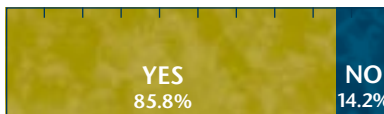
While this report concentrates on the development goals, related Millennium Declaration emphases on peace, human rights and enhancement of national and global governance emerge as integral and closely related to achieving results in poverty, gender emancipation, health and environment.

Perceptions *of the UN and* *engagement with the MDGs*

Do you know about the UN Millennium Declaration and the MDGs?



Is your organization involved in activities aimed at promoting or achieving the MDGs, specifically?



Are you aware of the Financing for Development process?



Awareness of the goals

Civil society groups from over 80 countries responded to the survey. Over three-quarters of the respondents are familiar with the MDGs and the UN Millennium Declaration. The majority of those who responded are actively involved in the global effort to promote or achieve the MDGs, with over two-thirds working on specific goals.

There is less awareness of the Financing for Development process — more than two-thirds of respondents had not heard of it.

It was interesting to discover that among respondents who were not aware of the MDGs, some were working on micro-credit projects for youth, poverty reduction and gender empowerment. A snap survey of civil society in Southern Africa carried out in 2003 for the Norwegian RORG Network pointed to a similar finding with respect to awareness of the MDGs.

Such findings point to the lack of specific information about the MDGs and the need for more intensive awareness campaigns that illustrate the relevance and applicability of globally-agreed goals to local development efforts.

Interaction with the UN and associated agencies

Given the UNDP's role as the lead agency in coordinating work on the MDGs, it is not surprising that nearly half of respondents (46%) cited the UNDP as their main link to the UN. Other major contacts are with UNICEF (39%), ECOSOC (33%) and DPI (28%).

One-third of the respondents maintain regular contact with the United Nations Association in their countries, while one-third had no contact at all.

A mixed picture emerged of how the UNDP is reaching out to civil society. Most CSOs know about the UNDP's country-progress reports on the MDGs. However, close to 80% of the respondents said that their organizations were not consulted in the UNDP country-reporting process.

Was the consultation an open, inclusive and participatory process? The responses are almost evenly distributed: 51% said yes (mainly those from the Caribbean and Africa) and 49% said no (mainly those from Latin America and the Middle East).

Those NGOs that were not included in the UNDP country-reporting process claimed not to know for certain why they were not consulted and said they wished they had been:

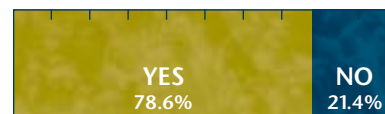
- ❖ A Peruvian NGO said: "We don't know why we were not invited, ask them."
- ❖ An African respondent said that the information was available "just for politicians and diplomats."
- ❖ A Pakistani NGO pointed out: "UNDP prefers NGOs in Islamabad [the capital of Pakistan]."
- ❖ An Indian NGO said: "We have seen no feedback on who was consulted for what reason. We believe consultations are not based on democratic principles, or regional specificities. The UN generally depends on North-based big consultancy firms which are closer in ideas to corporate thought, whereas we are more grassroots oriented."
- ❖ An Indonesian CSO said: "There is no publicly announced information of the process."

A Mexican organization wrote: *"We don't know why. We would have liked to be consulted. We strongly believe that we could have contributed greatly and adequately... Their representatives had known of our existence and our work as an organization, we must be on their lists but they have not contacted us. We wish they would."*

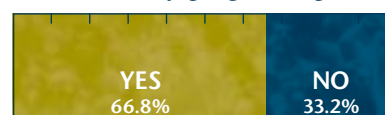
A few of the CSO participants had been active in providing information and strategic planning for the promotion of the MDGs but were still not invited to participate or were consulted briefly in the final phases, or after a finished report had been presented:

- ❖ An NGO in Niger working on environment issues stated: "We do not know why we were not consulted, even more so considering that we have benefited on several occasions from UNDP funding, well before we received ECOSOC roster consultative status, although after, they knew us well. It was probably an omission on their part, or they forgot."

Do you have contact with representatives of any UN organizations, bodies or programs?



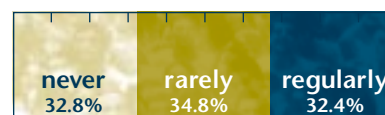
Are you familiar with the UNDP MDG country-progress reports?



Have you or your organization been consulted in the UNDP country-reporting process?



Do you work or have contact with the UNA in your country?



Some groups pointed to the lack of communication from the local UNDP office and even the lack of recognized UNDP personnel with whom they could link. Their comments are clear on the problem of poor communication:

- ❖ A Bangladeshi organization responded, “We did not receive any communication from the Local UNDP Office.”
- ❖ A Kenyan organization pointed out that the UNDP “are selective and work with few NGOs.”
- ❖ One organization from Bahrain said: “Frankly, nobody contacted us and this holds true for all other Bahraini NGOs.”
- ❖ A Ugandan NGO stated: “We are only involved in UN days and events, due to poor communication between UNDP and the civil society in Uganda.”
- ❖ UNA-DR Congo stated: “In our country, the dialogue between UNDP, the Government and civil society has been very difficult but we are pushing things forward and making pressure so that the civil society NGOs are fully involved into the process.”

“Our agendas are set by local communities that are being subjected to a developmental paradigm that looks at growth rather than at distributive justice and distorts the relationship of people to their resource base.” Respondent from India

Are you in touch with the UN in your efforts at information outreach?



How would your organization assess the UN’s Global Millennium Campaign to promote the MDGs?



Assessing the UN’s Global Millennium Campaign

Two-thirds of the organizations surveyed were in touch with the UN (mainly UNDP and DPI) in their efforts at information outreach; however, only 13% were in touch with the UN Global Millennium Campaign. Respondents generally found that the UN Global Millennium Campaign promotes the MDGs in a good (40%) and fair manner (33%) although around 13% of participants thought the Campaign did a poor job.

A few of the organizations were not aware of possibilities for information sharing or noted that they had no documents to guide them on promoting public awareness.

Civil society *awareness of the* PROMOTING MDGs

Civil society organizations all over the world are promoting the MDGs. Their advocacy initiatives include MDG briefings, talks and hand-outs for schools, community groups and businesses. Many are advocating for global sustainability and creating national and regional networks to exchange ideas across a wide spectrum of issues related to the achievement of the MDGs, including promoting human rights, transparency and conflict prevention.

Respondents were asked to illustrate one of their specific MDG advocacy programs. The results provide an inspiring picture of a diverse and imaginative range of activities:

Local and regional MDGs awareness programs:

- ❖ A Ghanaian organization is carrying out regional workshops to educate local leaders and MPs about the MDGs.
- ❖ An Australian foundation is hosting an international conference in 2004 exploring the actions that young professionals can take in the area of sustainable livelihoods and the role of science and technology in achieving the MDGs.

Advocacy for policy change:

- ❖ An African youth network is advocating at the local level for changes in legislation that would incorporate and better address the MDGs.
- ❖ A children's organization in Cameroon is advocating for a complete overhaul of the education system to make it more relevant and reduce youth unemployment.
- ❖ A Nepali environmental organization organized a lying-down protest on the streets to prevent heavy-polluter vehicles from passing and secured the removal of such vehicles from the city.
- ❖ A Kenyan network seeks to enhance the responsiveness of government policies and the institutional framework to environmental issues.
- ❖ A Ghanaian organization is advocating gender equity laws and leadership training for women.

Education programs:

- ❖ An organization in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) runs an HIV/AIDS education program with youth and women's organizations.
- ❖ An NGO in the US has a task force on education and elimination of child abuse.
- ❖ A Cameroonian foundation is engaged in the education and preparation of women prisoners for their re-entry into society.
- ❖ A development organization in Pakistan is promoting education at the provincial level and providing HIV/AIDS prevention information.

Capacity-building programs:

- ❖ A Nigerian research centre promotes capacity building for increased water and energy supply to rural communities.

The majority of CSO respondents listed advocacy and promotion as a key element of their work.

- ❖ A faith-based international organization is providing social services and micro-enterprise support to empower women and families in the Middle East.
- ❖ A US foundation is providing material and monetary support for rural women engaged in agricultural production in Cuba.
- ❖ A Nigerian environmental group is working on a joint project with a Canadian organization to develop Nigeria's capacity to respond to climate change.

Campaigns that integrate different issues:

- ❖ An Indian organization working on sustainable tourism is advocating for a focus on the links between tourism and sexual trafficking, and the rights of Indigenous groups and women.
- ❖ An organization in the US working on education has an advocacy program that looks at the effect of HIV/AIDS on human rights and the MDGs and actively involves youth.

Campaigns that promote transparency and accountability:

- ❖ An international organization launched a global letter-writing campaign to national leaders, urging them to implement the MDGs.
- ❖ An Iranian environmental organization actively promotes access to environmental information at the national level.
- ❖ A voluntary organization in Israel is working on promoting ethical standards for businesses and capacity development for better project monitoring.

Working with the media

A recent survey carried out by the UNDP showed that media coverage of the influence of MDGs on national policies has not been very regular. Over half the civil society groups agreed that the media coverage of the MDGs in their own countries is limited, and a quarter stated that it was non-existent. Only 5% thought that the media did an excellent job in providing information on the goals.

Participants recognized that close contact with the media was a very useful method of promoting awareness of the MDGs, although less than half of them had engaged the media in their information efforts. The difference varied between regions: over 80% of Australian CSOs had engaged the media but 80% of Latin American groups had not.

The situation is improving. Various means are used for information dissemination, including TV programs, radio stations, and even theatre. Several respondents reported on their contacts with the media:

- ❖ A Kenyan organization is operating a radio broadcast program that can be used for public awareness of the MDGs.
- ❖ A Nigerian association operates a radio program called Gender Forum which creates awareness of topical gender issues.
- ❖ A students' group in Ukraine disseminates posters and actively advertises the MDGs.

How would you assess the media coverage of the MDGs in your country?



Has your organization engaged the media about the MDGs?

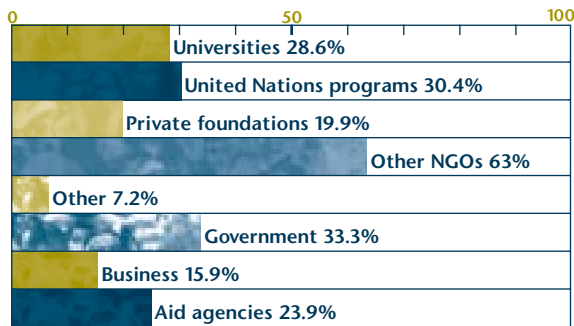


Participation *and* engagement *with the* MDGs

Assessing the extent to which civil society forms new partnerships and participates in networks provides a useful indicator for observing CSO engagement with the MDGs. The survey results are very positive in this respect. More than half the participants were members of global and national networks and a significant number (45%) were active in local networks. Almost 80% of participants pointed out that their work with the MDGs created new partnerships, the majority of which were with governments, other NGOs and UN programs. About 16% of the respondents formed partnerships with the private sector.

Has your work on the MDGs created new partnerships or coalitions with other organizations?

If yes, check all that apply.



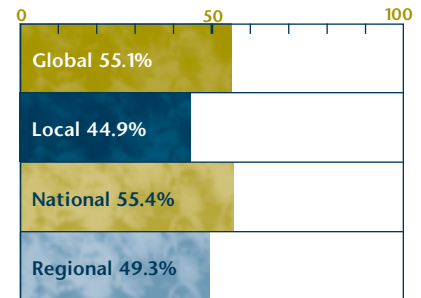
Governments

Responses to a multiple choice question showed that:

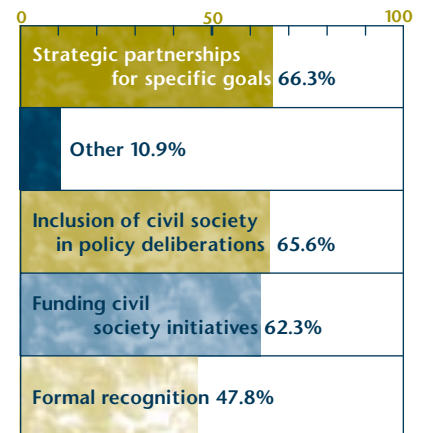
- ❖ North American, African and Caribbean respondents think the best way their governments can help civil society is through their inclusion in policy deliberations.
- ❖ Middle Eastern and Latin American respondents think that funding civil society initiatives and strategic partnerships for specific goals is the best support governments can give them in achieving the MDGs.
- ❖ Asian respondents gave top priority to the need for funding.
- ❖ European respondents are divided between the need for funding and the need for inclusion in policy deliberations.
- ❖ For Australian and Pacific Islander respondents the priority is evenly divided between strategic partnerships and inclusion in policy deliberations.

Close collaboration between governments and civil society will allow for better allocation of resources to initiatives that take into account the specific challenges of local communities and provide greater monitoring and accountability of the process.

If you are an NGO at the local level, are you connected into networks with other NGOs?
(Check all that apply)



How could your government better support civil society's role in implementing the MDGs?



Only 30% of the civil society groups that responded found that their overall work on the MDGs had led them to engage with parliamentarians. North American and African organizations had the lowest level of MDG-related contact with parliamentarians (20% in both cases), while Australian/Oceanic and Caribbean organizations had the highest levels (57% and 40%).

National parliaments

Civil society groups recognize this lack of contact and several respondents pointed to the urgent need to lobby parliaments and create greater connections between civil society groups and MPs.

Various initiatives have been taken to engage the interest and support of parliaments:

- ❖ The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) adopted a resolution in 2002 urging its members to strengthen their role in the Financing for Development process and in promulgating legislation that aims at achieving the MDGs.
- ❖ A *Handbook for Parliamentarians on Policies to Reduce Poverty* was produced in 2001, based on a seminar and a consultation process among parliamentarians, parliamentary experts and World Bank staff.
- ❖ In 2003, the African Parliamentary Poverty Reduction Network was created. It brings together parliamentary committees involved in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) process and poverty reduction efforts in their countries. The goals of this network include building the capacity of parliamentarians to enable them to better engage with community-based organizations in monitoring efforts at poverty reduction and training for youth participation in parliamentary work.

How could the private sector support civil society's role in implementing the MDGs?



The private sector

There is a growing focus on the ways that the private sector can support civil society in implementing the MDGs. What are the best ways of doing this?

CSO respondents considered that the private sector should primarily form strategic partnerships with civil society groups to support the implementation of the MDGs (69.6%). In addition, there is a need to ensure the private sector's respect for ILO labor standards and for human rights (60.5%). Access to the resources of the private sector was deemed less important (47.8%); however, a few respondents noted that the private sector should increase funding for civil society and build stronger networks.

There have been several global initiatives to involve the private sector more closely in the MDG process:

- ❖ The 2000 UN Secretary-General's initiative called the Global Compact seeks to promote good corporate practices in human rights, labour and the environment by bringing together the private sector and CSOs. The recent Global Compact Leaders' Summit in 2004 adopted a statement that businesses should work against all forms of corruption and defend human rights in conflict areas.
- ❖ The British proposal in 2003 for an international financing facility would employ capital markets to tap private money for projects that aim at achieving the MDGs.

At the same time, many CSOs have strong reservations about the influence of business on the UN and the weakness of commitments to legally binding human rights, social and labour standards. In July 2004 more than 20 organizations launched a Joint Civil Society Statement on the Global Compact and Corporate Responsibility charging that the Compact “provides little more than a public relations cover for global corporate malefactors,” and compromises the UN and the standards it should defend. They urge governments and the UN to move beyond the Compact to legally binding instruments of corporate accountability.

A number of social and labour organizations have also expressed deep reservations about the extent to which World Bank, IMF and WTO policies favour privatization of public services, often at a cost of accessibility. The 2003 Social Watch report embodies a series of detailed case studies of experiences with privatization of water, energy and other services.

What **TURNS** *people on* about *the* **MDGs**?

Gender

There is an increasing importance placed on the achievement of the third MDG, promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Forty-seven percent of groups surveyed work on the promotion of this goal.

Women’s health-care and education:

- ❖ A US NGO is working on developing an on-line set of courses and Internet classrooms in obstetrics and gynecology between the US and the developing countries to build educational resources that aim to tackle high maternal mortality and morbidity in developing countries.

Women’s political rights:

- ❖ A Bangladeshi organization has worked to ensure that 45 of the 345 seats in parliament are reserved for women.
- ❖ A Sri Lankan organization worked for the appointment of a gender committee in the Sri Lankan peace process.
- ❖ In DR Congo, an NGO is working on translating the peace accords into the national language so that women are able to engage in dialogue at a peace conference with heads of states in November 2004.

Women’s economic empowerment:

- ❖ Cuban, Cameroonian and Sri Lankan NGOs have developed micro-credit programs to support women’s employment initiatives and fund income-generating activities for rural women.
- ❖ CSOs in Jordan, Ghana and Nigeria are working on women’s empowerment through training programs, organized public policy forums and IT training for women.

A majority (62%) of survey participants work toward specific MDGs, while 39% are engaged in working on the MDGs as a whole. While virtually all of the MDGs affect poverty reduction, our respondents place a central focus on gender.

There is a focus on decreasing poverty by reversing the loss of environmental resources, ensuring environmental sustainability, and improving access to basic resources such as water.

- ❖ The Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) has developed resource materials and studies on women's empowerment through the MDGs in general and specifically with regard to control over assets and resources.

Environment

The MDGs focused on environment and sustainable livelihoods received much attention from CSO respondents as 39% of participants reported working on environment issues.

Sustainable agriculture and natural resource management:

- ❖ Sri Lankan, Middle Eastern and African NGOs are working on "recycling wastewater for irrigation and ensuring sustainable agriculture and natural resource management."
- ❖ A regional African farmer's network in Eastern and Southern Africa works at local, national and regional levels to eradicate "poverty in rural areas [by ensuring] small scale farmers participate in policy formulation and implementation[,]... as well as resource... allocation and sustainable agriculture."

Rights and access to water:

- ❖ Dutch, Kenyan and Nigerian NGOs are undertaking projects to ensure communities have the rights and access to water: they regard access to water as a human right and promote water resource management reform.
- ❖ An organization in Sudan has implemented solid waste management programs to ensure safe drinking water supplies that will prevent health problems in the local populations. The project is working to ensure environmental sanitation and will strive to create awareness of the impact of HIV/AIDS.

Loss of environmental resources:

- ❖ Finally, loss of environmental resources is a focus for several organizations in Iran, the UK, Nepal and Niger.
- ❖ A group in Niger reported success in its work on desertification through the "plantation of 1,050,000 acacia plants, which will help fight poverty over the medium to long term."

Youth

When asked to provide examples of the kind of development projects they do, a large number of NGOs noted working on or with youth issues.

Education:

Most organizations surveyed worked toward youth education, be it formal schooling or awareness about MDGs and issues such as sexual and reproductive health:

- ❖ An international youth organization based in North America has worked with children to design the Young General Assembly Global Plan of Action to enable youth participation in the achievement of the MDGs.

- ❖ A Bangladeshi organization carries out campaigns at the national level with other NGO networks “to achieve universal primary education.”
- ❖ An NGO in Burkina Faso is working with children, teaching youth professional skills while providing educational facilities through a street library program.
- ❖ A British organization operating in Nepal is working on ensuring that all children, especially those whose mothers are widowed, have access to education.

Some organizations (such as in Bangladesh) expressed concern that the “war on terror” is preventing young people from accessing educational opportunities abroad due to the difficulty that Southerners now face in traveling to the North. “Severe security measures stop the young people’s opportunity abroad in developed countries.” This has decreased the possible gains in social capital Southern countries may enjoy when overseas-educated youth return to their countries of origin.

Youth participation is sought in MDG achievement by various organizations:

- ❖ A Jordanian NGO indicates it is working at the national and local level on a “youth program that includes creating MDG Youth Platform that works on developing national indicators and producing a document highlighting youth perspectives regarding the progress achieved...”

Health, HIV/AIDS and youth

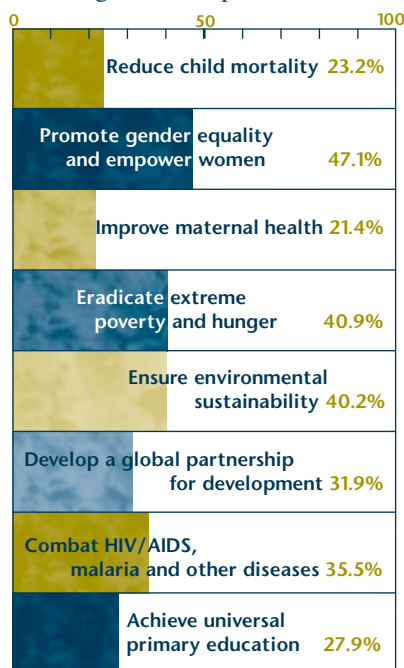
HIV/AIDS is a prime focus for many NGOs responding to the survey. Several have attempted to involve students in HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, and have started campaigns that work toward eliminating discrimination against children, youth and families affected by HIV/AIDS:

- ❖ An NGO in the US has connected human rights issues and HIV/AIDS by involving youth in a “Students Take Action against HIV-AIDS” project. Yet another US-based NGO is working in Ghana to spread HIV/AIDS awareness to local communities.
- ❖ A Ukrainian NGO has developed a successful campaign to fight HIV/AIDS by holding local educational campaigns in partnership with other NGOs in the US.

Thirty-five percent of those surveyed indicated that health issues are an important part of their work.

Canadian CSOs, inspired by the leadership of the South African Treatment Action Group, formed a Global Treatment Action Group (GTAG), which has gained the endorsement of dozens of major CSOs for a Global Health Platform. After campaigning for Canadian government support for the provision of affordable anti-retroviral drugs for HIV/AIDS treatment in Africa and elsewhere, they engaged in detailed advocacy when legislation to facilitate this was introduced.

Check the specific goals your organization promotes:



Over 70% of the CSOs who participated found that their work on the MDGs had led them to interact with other NGOs, women's groups and students. They recognize that the eight goals are interdependent and are all aimed at decreasing extreme poverty: if progress is to be made, integrated work on all the goals is necessary.

Given the increasing levels of HIV/AIDS across the globe, several organizations focusing on youth have engaged in youth programs dealing with sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Pakistani and Canadian NGOs reported that they are working to improve communication and behaviours regarding HIV/AIDS.

These organizations, while trying to engage young people in the MDG review process, aim to include SRHR as important targets in the MDG framework.

Other health issues of concern to participants included maternal health, child mortality, preventative health care, and medical education:

- ❖ A Guatemalan organization is working on promoting child nutrition and health through supporting breast-feeding.
- ❖ A Belgian organization working in African countries has implemented medical and educational projects in these countries.

Other organizations are working on health goals such as decreasing anemia and child mortality caused by cancer in Iranian, Iraqi and Afghani children.

Integration

- ❖ A group for local development in Benin has tried to promote MDGs concerning gender and environment (agriculture) by using new "information technologies to provide service to rural areas, particularly gathering reliable agricultural information." The organization promotes local products such as shea butter that can "provide subsistence income to women in...various departments."

Respondents are involving youth organizations to a greater extent in developing projects that address issues in their communities and in building closer cooperation between youth organizations and governments. Many organizations carried out awareness campaigns that educate youth about the MDGs and take into account their input in developing strategies for addressing specific issues:

- ❖ Youth, education, health and art are integrated by a UNA in Togo which stages plays on "the issue of discrimination and stigmatization of persons living with HIV."
- ❖ WFUNA has engaged youth in the MDG debate through the creation of a regional model UN conference in China for university students from the Asia/Pacific region. With the theme Global Challenge 2015, the conference fostered discussion and dialogue among youth on achieving the MDGs in the Asia/Pacific region.

Prospects *for a “Global Partnership”*

If your government is in a developed country, has it addressed the specific challenges of Goal 8? (check all that apply)

RESPONSE	COUNT	PERCENT
Addressed the special needs of least developed countries, notably: tariff and quota-free access for their exports; Debt relief; Cancellation of official bilateral debt; Increased official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction.	47	17.00%
Developed an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction, nationally and internationally.	45	16.30%
Addressed the special needs of landlocked and small island states.	20	7.20%
Dealt comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems.	25	9.10%
Developed decent and productive work for youth in developing countries.	29	10.50%
Provided access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries.	29	10.50%
Made available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies.	44	15.90%

The MDGs envisage a global partnership for development. Developing countries are expected to improve their systems of governance at the national level. Developed countries are expected to work toward the creation of an open and non-discriminatory trading and financial system, and a commitment to good global governance. This global partnership would involve the provision of new technologies to find solutions to various health and environmental problems that prevent millions of people from moving out of the cycle of poverty. Transfer of information and communication technologies, and access to patent and intellectual property rights enabling access to affordable drugs, would be made more readily available to developing countries.

“No country in the North or South has eradicated extreme poverty and social exclusion. Each country must take action in partnership with its poor populations. This will contribute towards establishing a more just partnership between rich and poor countries.”

Respondent from France

If your government is in a developing country, has it made the MDGs a budgetary and policy priority?



In assessing the engagement of governments, nearly two-thirds of the respondents stated that their government (if in a developing country) had made the MDGs a budgetary and policy priority. However, some participants expressed doubts over the commitment of their government, saying “there is no sincere program” or governments “do not really care.”

In response to the question as to whether their government (if in a developed country) has made progress on Goal 8, the majority of respondents said their governments had addressed the special needs of least developed countries, including debt relief and improved trade access for developing country products, as well as made available the benefits of new technologies. Some respondents disagreed with this view:

- ❖ An Australian organization said, “The Australian government, to date, has basically chosen to ignore the MDGs and taken no specific action to assist their achievement....”

Some developed countries have put forward reports detailing their performance on meeting Goal 8 targets — all should be encouraged to do so, as this would help in achieving a global partnership for development.

The general feeling is that the governments in both rich and poor countries are not doing enough, but rich countries have more ability to actually make the MDGs a reality.

Holding governments to account for their commitments

Nearly a hundred respondents provided suggestions for how governments can be held accountable for their commitments to the MDGs. The majority agreed that civil society should actively monitor and evaluate government performance in implementing development projects. The question of accountability is closely tied by most respondents to government transparency, especially over budgetary allocations for projects and when selecting development partners.

Creating awareness and promoting strong advocacy through publications, seminars and media campaigns were consistently brought up as effective measures to ensure government accountability.

Some of the specific suggestions put forward by CSO respondents include the following ideas:

- ❖ Submit alternative reports on MDGs to the UN and the international community.
- ❖ Produce time-specific score cards of progress on the MDGs.
- ❖ Establish a body with representatives from UN organs, different civil society sectors and NGOs that will periodically meet with the national government to monitor the development of the MDGs.
- ❖ Share information through the establishment of CSO networks, including the listing of best practices.
- ❖ Monitor the quality of education.
- ❖ Join efforts to achieve specific goals and ensure pro-poor policies.
- ❖ Lobby parliaments and the donor agencies to make further aid conditional on performance on the MDGs.
- ❖ Ensure that donor funds reach the target groups.

- ❖ Complete monthly audits and reports of budgetary allocations to development programs.
- ❖ Penalize governments who do not follow through on their commitments.

To ensure accountability of aid donations, the Centre for Global Development (CGD), in cooperation with Foreign Policy magazine, started a project called the “Ranking the Rich (RTR) Index” in 2003. This index aims to measure the contributions of 21 developed countries to achieving the MDGs. It examines developed countries’ policies in several categories, namely aid, trade, environment, investment, migration and peacekeeping (the 2004 Index added a technology component and expanded peacekeeping into security).

Civil society PERSPECTIVES *on the* MDGs

Some of the Northern CSOs perceive the MDGs as offering a promise to the poor of a better world, but without a real possibility of change:

- ❖ A Dutch organization said: “A reason why we started this endeavor was to get the people involved. It seems that the people in the undeveloped countries have a different way of dealing with matters than what we in the developed countries thought might be their priority.”
- ❖ A US organization representative stated: “I think civil society and NGOs are powerless against powerful developed countries. Perhaps continued education about MDGs on a global level would help.”

Southern respondents feel a growing sense of “us” and “them.” There is a feeling of a greater gap, a stronger separation between peoples and that the Northerners are increasingly isolating the Southerners instead of integrating them into the decision-making process:

Robert Picciotto
of the Global Policy Project,
in his paper
*“The Missing Dimension of
Development Evaluation:
Impact of rich countries’
policies on the poor,” said:
“...Development results
cannot be attributed solely to
the policy performance of
individual developing
countries. The global policy
environment matters too....
Partnership implies shared
objectives and this is why the
Millennium Development
Goals represent an historic
achievement. But
partnership assumes distinct
accountability and reciprocal
obligations. And this is
where the current
development consensus has
been flawed. It has focused
on policy weaknesses in poor
countries while neglecting
the impact of rich countries’
policies on developing
countries.”*

- ❖ A Latin American respondent claimed that the MDGs are “a tool for rich countries to feel less guilty and say to the world, ‘See, we are trying.’”
- ❖ A Jordanian organization said: “The policies should not be decided by a few rich developed countries and used at will to get developing countries to submit to dictates. The developing countries should participate in finding better solutions and countries should be dealt with as equals, applying the same standards of human rights for all.”
- ❖ “How can we [a developing country] do it when the United States can’t?” said one organization.
- ❖ An African organization said: “If developed countries truly wished to fulfill the MDGs, they would do so.”

From some Southern CSOs there are feelings of resignation mixed with optimism:

- ❖ A Brazilian NGO wrote: “For what I have read so far, I don’t think any of the goals will be totally achieved by 2015. However, having the awareness from our governments will make a difference towards future generations who will carry on and transform the MDGs into daily practice.”

CSOs from the South and North express impatience and want action:

- ❖ An international NGO office in the Middle East responded: “Get real about commitments, beyond rhetoric. Be more specific (targets and strategies). Get grassroots participating in policy development and implementation... Political critique at all levels. Adjust strategies continuously.”
- ❖ A US organization said: “Look at the root causes of poverty, ill health, lack of education, water scarcity, etc. Attack the root causes, don’t promise what you won’t fulfill.”

Some Northern NGOs felt that to actually achieve at least some of the MDGs, more radical changes will be needed in the current world system:

- ❖ A US NGO said: “It is only going to be with ‘regime change’ in the US that we will be able to speak of any kind of serious changes at all.”
- ❖ Another US NGO said: “Only when the whole world works together to relieve national debts, open access to fair trade and help nations to develop their own resources, systems of agriculture and industry will there be any progress towards successfully accomplishing the MDGs.”

South-South cooperation is becoming increasingly important. Civil society is mobilizing through networks and partnerships to give a greater voice to people living in developing countries. One such attempt is the World Social Forum. This forum, so far held in Porto Alegre (Brazil) and Mumbai (India), allows organizations critical of the neoliberal economic models imposed on developing countries to meet in one place to network, share experiences, engage in dialogue and formulate policy proposals to foster equitable development.

International ORGANIZATIONS: perceptions of their influence

A third of respondents from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and nearly half of European and North American respondents rated the United Nations as good, while the most positive ratings were from the Caribbean, where 50% gave an excellent rating. The most negative ratings for the UN were from Latin America, where over half gave it a fair rating.

The accountability of regional development banks was generally rated good or fair, and came second to that of the UN. The World Bank was next. Nearly half the respondents from the Middle East and Latin America and more than a third of African, Asian, Caribbean, European and North American respondents rated it “poor.” The International Monetary Fund had the second worst ratings with the majority of respondents from North America, Latin America, Europe and the Middle East rating it “poor”; respondents in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean were slightly more positive. The World Trade Organization was rated the least accountable institution, with nearly two-thirds of respondents rating it “poor” and only 2% rating it “excellent.” Latin American and Australian respondents were the most critical.

The survey respondents gave numerous suggestions on how to improve the accountability of these institutions. The most frequent suggestions were: more reliability, transparency, more public participation in deciding on programs/projects, more specific plans vs. universal solutions, changes to the current international system as well as more independence from the donors’ governments. For example:

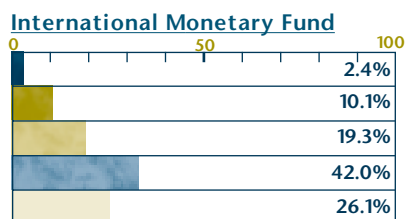
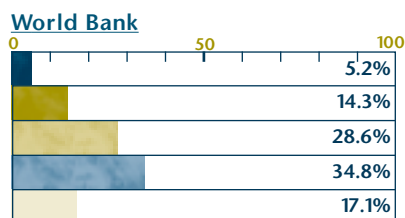
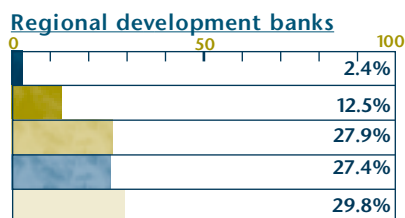
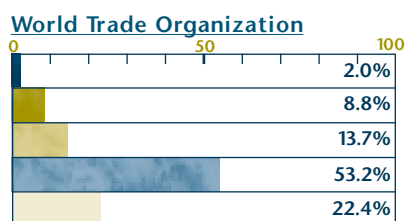
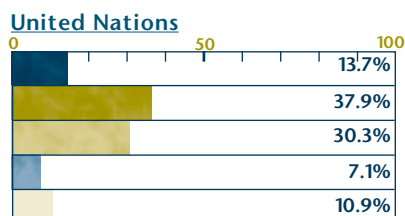
- ❖ An African NGO wrote: “They must have African people develop a 10 to 15 years development plan to relieve the woes of the continent and not always sitting at tea tables with government officials who know their days are numbered and will eat everything today. The little they do is promotional projects aimed to keep [government officials] in power. Please help Africa! Let’s have development plans that are not dependent on political parties. We need national [development] policies.”
- ❖ A Brazilian respondent has the following suggestion for the World Bank: “Share information with the right people. The World Bank is still giving money to the same old group that goes to jail one day and is free the next day. The World Bank should change who is giving the money and who is receiving the money.”
- ❖ A different Brazilian NGO said: “They should investigate soundly the local institutions and persons that are chosen to represent them. Many times we see the wrong projects in the hands of the wrong agency. My suggestion is that they alternate actors ...”
- ❖ “These institutions should not provide support to military governments,” said a Pakistani NGO.

The MDGs will only be achieved if positive roles are played by major multilateral economic and political institutions. But each of these, particularly the international financial and trade bodies, face a critical public. Some of the difficulty may be perception, but much may have to do with policy and governance.

Our respondents rated the international organizations’ accountabilities very low. The United Nations accountability was rated the best compared to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the regional development banks. In the overall rating, the World Trade Organization was rated as the least accountable institution by all regions except the Caribbean.

How do you rate the accountability of the World Bank, Regional Development Banks, IMF and the World Trade Organization?

Excellent	Poor
Good	Don't Know
Fair	



- ❖ A Kenyan respondent wrote: “Be transparent when dealing with communities and include comprehensive stakeholder consultation and direct involvement at all levels of programmes and decision making. Respect for Indigenous knowledge and wisdom of the communities in management of natural resources is critical and should be upheld, especially in areas of natural resources management and conservation.”
- ❖ An Italian respondent suggested the following positive elements: “Giving signals of greater austerity and transparency. Greater level of participation of civil society. Showing greater independence from the US State Department. Finding better strategies to guarantee work with the general public or base people.”
- ❖ Another US organization said: “Radical reform is needed. The neoliberal globalization agenda should be ended. A fair and just internationalism should take its place.”
- ❖ “I believe they know the answer to this question. And it only depends on the Executive Directors/Presidents of those international institutions to take the ‘leash’ to make the changes necessary to improve the loans and repayment conditions of debts to developing countries,” said a Peruvian NGO.
- ❖ A Fijian respondent wrote that it is necessary to have “[r]adical reform of WB, IMF and WTO addressing proper governance and transparency issues and accountability to developing countries. They must not be subject to the demands of the US and G-8 countries of the world.”
- ❖ An organization from Africa suggested that “all these financial and non-financial institutions should be under the direct supervision of the General Assembly which encompasses all countries of the world.”
- ❖ “Increase the leverage of developing countries in the decision-making bodies and allow the participation of NGOs,” wrote a Nigerian NGO.
- ❖ A Fijian respondent wrote: “MDGs are good targets but they do not address the ROOT CAUSES of many of the issues (e.g., poverty). The neoliberal agenda (or the so-called Washington Consensus) must be seriously looked at as causing many of the problems they are supposed to be correcting. Also the WTO trade structures are often oppressive to the needs of developing countries. Moreover, the growing culture of greed and justification (political, economic and religious) of the prosperity of some at the expense of others must be seriously addressed.”

Insecurity, WAR and the diversion of resources

Since September 11, 2001, the global political agenda and discourse has been dominated by security concerns, especially those of the North regarding the “war on terrorism,” the war in Afghanistan, and more recently by the war on Iraq and its aftermath. This has had a significant impact on development and the achievement of the MDGs as highlighted in several reports such as the 2003 BOND report, *Global Security and Development*, the *Reality of Aid 2004* report and the Christian Aid report, *The Politics of Poverty: Aid in the New Cold War*.

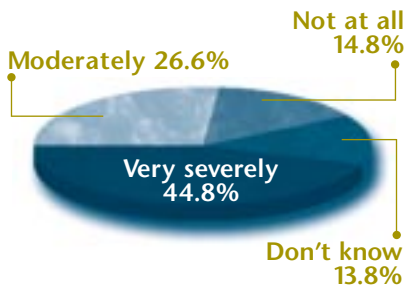
A US NGO commented that *“funds are diverted from the MDGs. Attention is diverted from the MDGs. The war on terrorism unfortunately means there will be no war on poverty.”*

It is increasingly evident that donor governments are channeling an increasing proportion of their aid to governments that support the “war on terrorism.” This politicization of aid competes with the underlying principle of the MDGs, namely that poverty reduction should be the driving force of ODA. Recent OECD papers and seminars have begun to redefine policies and guidelines for ODA, expanding the kind of activities that are eligible for aid to include “aid to prevent violent conflict, including terrorism” (2003 BOND report). Much of this security aid comes directly from development aid budgets. Respondents had many comments on this issue:

- ❖ One Australian NGO commented: “It is diverting aid from direct poverty reduction/MDGs to projects (like counter-terrorism) and recipients (like Iraq) related to the war on terror. Also has massively redirected government attention from an already low interest in development issues per se. It is harder to advocate for a serious commitment to development when public discourse is being dominated by a climate of fear and even anti-internationalism.”
- ❖ Another participant from South Africa suggested that the “security situation is acting as a distraction. Military spending is increasing vs. spending for the goals.”
- ❖ A Brazilian NGO responded: “Military expenditure and expensive airport machines is money that does not go to human development, therefore does not contribute to the MDGs.”
- ❖ A Middle Eastern organization stated: “The biggest chunk of the budget is allocated to the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior at the expense of development, health care and educational projects. Meanwhile, civil liberties and human rights have been curtailed.”

Many NGOs are concerned that the MDGs do not make the links between peace and development more explicit. They are concerned that increased militarization, defence spending and the ease and willingness with which force is used will overshadow, and indeed prevent, any advances towards addressing global inequalities. When asked to what degree the current security situation and the “war on terror” affect the achievement of the MDGs in their countries, 45% of respondents said this war has a “very severe” impact, 27% said it has a “moderate” impact, while 15% argued that it has no impact at all. Around 14% answered that they did not know the impact.

How does the security situation, including the war on terrorism and military expenditure, impact on the achievement of the MDGs in your country? (check one)



The 2004 Amnesty International report echoed similar concerns: “International human rights standards continued to be flouted in the name of the “war on terror”, resulting in thousands of women and men suffering unlawful detention, unfair trial and torture... more than a billion people’s lives were ruined by extreme poverty and social injustice while governments continued to spend freely on arms” (<http://web.amnesty.org/report2004/index-eng>).

- ❖ Respondents from the UK are aware of this discrepancy in aid allocation: “The UK government is willing to spend obscene amounts on security and terrorism issues as well as invest heavily in Iraq and Afghanistan, but other countries and issues are left behind without adequate funding.”
- ❖ A faith-based organization from the US commented: “I think we need a peaceful world. The amount of funding we are spending on the security and military, we should spend that funding for the poor and unfortunate people of the world. We should spend funding on the dialogue of different caliber at religious leaders’ level and civil society level. We have to have better and better understanding between people and nations.”
- ❖ An organization from the Philippines said: “The unsafe environment, especially at the local level, in areas of extreme poverty and armed conflict, deters the delivery of services by volunteers and concerned groups.”
- ❖ “We are spending the precious resources which could solve all the world’s economic problems easily on an obscene military budget,” stated a respondent from the US. “The US’s ‘war on terrorism’ impacts the rest of the world, especially developing nations and the Middle East... I am sorry but my nation is the one big barrier to a whole and developed world!”

The current global security agenda and its effect on human rights are of deep concern to many NGOs:

- ❖ One respondent from Australia commented that: “everything is being directed into destroying human rights and denying human rights are valuable, so that legislation is directed against the Millennium Goals and the policies of the federal government similarly.”
- ❖ An organization from the US commented that: “The present approach has become obsessive instead of determined; too focused on military solutions; and increasingly deviates from adherence to present international laws.”

Increased amounts of military aid granted to developing countries have resulted in relaxed export controls, allowing the export of military equipment such as small arms and battle tanks. This increased arms export will prevent long-term development goals such as conflict prevention and protection of human rights. NGOs surveyed from Belgium and India, among others, are concerned about the ease of movement of arms. Comments included the following remarks:

- ❖ “Lack [of] control on international arms trade. All moral principles forgotten and replaced by the “11th” commandment ‘you shall mind your bottom line.’”

- ❖ “We would like the arms race to be ended. We want [a] zone of peace and non-proliferation of nuclear arms. We want friendship with our neighbours. We want the US to keep off Asia.”

A further prominent concern expressed by survey participants was the responsibility to protect citizens in conflict. CSOs pointed out that the MDGs do not take into account the “responsibility to protect citizens at a time of war and the negative impact of war on achieving human security.” The reports by Reality of Aid, Christian Aid, and BOND have highlighted this urgent need. Over the last several years, attention on this important issue has been shed by the World Federalist Movement and the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) 2001 report *Responsibility to Protect*. This report underlines the fact that not only is state security important but human security is increasingly important. If individuals are not protected from threats to life, economic and social well-being, and human rights and dignity are not respected, any kind of development cannot occur.

The Reality of Aid 2004 report expresses an equal level of concern about human rights, suggesting that anti-terrorist legislation designed and implemented by many governments challenges the human rights guaranteed to all by several UN treaties and declarations such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, among others.

Can *the MDGs* be achieved? Changing course, *but HOW?*

More than three-quarters of the CSO participants are actively involved in activities aimed at promoting or achieving the MDGs. Two-thirds work on specific goals, particularly on gender equality, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and environmental sustainability.

Nearly 62% of the participants thought it unlikely that the MDGs will be achieved in their country by the target dates. Only 8% thought this a very likely possibility.

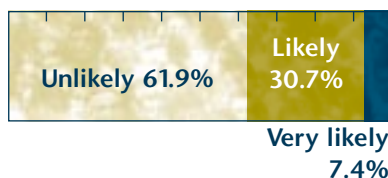
Participants added that the most likely MDGs to be met are those focused on education, gender equality and empowerment, health care and combating HIV/AIDS. Over half agreed that the lack of political will is the major barrier to their governments honouring MDG commitments, followed by corruption and macro-economic constraints. In addition, a third highlighted the lack of resources and the debt problem as serious obstacles as well as conflict and the lack of popular and CSO involvement.

A slight majority of the overall respondents think the MDGs go far enough. Around 72% of the respondents from Africa and 50% of those from Asia agreed with this view, while respondents from Australia and the Caribbean were the most critical, arguing that the MDGs did not go far enough (80%) and (60%).

Do the MDGs go far enough?



How likely is it that the MDGs will be achieved in your country by the target dates?



“Let the people and communities have direct access to resources and let them manage their own resources and not through some bureaucratic structures of central government control.”

Comment by a Kenyan research organization

Many of the participants pointed out that the MDGs can be improved with greater advocacy and stronger partnerships and consultations between NGOs and governments. Local actors are central to achieving most of the MDGs and the poorest should not simply be seen as “targets” for development assistance but as active partners. An inclusive and participatory decision-making process at the national and international levels will greatly increase the prospects of not only achieving the MDGs but also ensuring that they reflect the real needs of each country. National ownership of the development process and country-specific development plans is an important issue for the respondents. The selection of development partners needs to be addressed to ensure appropriate project design and funding.

❖ A Moroccan organization wrote: “Adapt them [the MDGs] to the realities of the country and make them appropriate for the people and the organizations that represent them.”

Several organizations pointed to the need to focus more in-depth on education:

❖ According to one women’s organization from the US: “[MDGs] do not stress enough on higher education and building teaching hospitals and universities in the developing countries... there should also be planning and incentives to develop higher education for girls and older women to get job skills needed in the real world.”

❖ A students’ organization from China argued that it is fundamentally a problem of lack of resources: “Education is very important in the poor places, especially for children, most poor families cannot support the basic study of their children.”

Resources

Several of the respondents argued that the problem with the MDGs is not inherent but a problem of funding. At Monterrey, donor countries collectively pledged an additional \$16 billion for the MDGs, but this amount is far short of what is required to achieve the goals. According to the *Reality of Aid* 2004 report, in 2002 only 0.23% GNI was given in aid by developed countries. The World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, has pointed out that the MDG target dates will not be met if rich countries fail to increase the amount of aid. CIDSE (International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity) and Caritas have argued that the IMF and World Bank “should also revise their own rigid macro-economic targets which undermine livelihoods, deepen the cycle of poverty and destabilize democratically elected governments.”

Moreover, CIDSE and Caritas point out that IMF and World Bank policies are forcing governments to squeeze sectors crucial for achieving the MDGs, leading to decreased spending on education and health.

At present, only income poverty and water targets are on track globally, largely due to progress in China and India, however the general prospect is not good.

The survey respondents recognize the urgent need to hold developed countries to account for the lack of resources and progress on the MDGs:

- ❖ A network in Nigeria argued that “the developed countries must cancel the foreign debt of Nigeria if the country will ever have the resources to meet the MDGs.”
- ❖ A South African respondent argued that “clear targets should be specified for Goal 8 (i.e., how the rich countries can honour the commitments to help developing countries in achieving the goals).”

Interaction with other constituencies

Youth needs to be actively involved in the development and poverty reduction process as “young people are those who are most affected by these conditions.” As one Indian respondent wrote: “None of the MDGs have enough scope for involving youth participation actively... if youth activity in achieving the eight MDGs is specified we can use this powerful sector for the benefit of the world and not allow resource waste or resources used for abetting terrorism, crime, etc.”

When asked how the MDGs addressed the needs of refugees, displaced people, people with disabilities, victims of trafficking, migrant workers, Indigenous peoples and the elderly, the respondents generally rated all as “poor” or “fair.” Their overall comments indicated a general agreement that these groups have been hitherto left out of the MDGs:

- ❖ A respondent from a Brazilian institute pointed out that the MDGs do not address elderly people: “Where are the older persons in the MDGs? The ageing population is a global issue, however only developing countries will bear the burden of poverty in old age, the others have been talking about it for at least five years.” They pointed out that in Latin America, “privatization of social security and pensions are killing the safety nets.”
- ❖ An organization working with disabled people based in Canada pointed out that, “if poverty is to be addressed, there must be specific strategies for disabled people, who make up 600 million worldwide and are the poorest of the poor.”

The most positive ratings were for Indigenous peoples, with most respondents considering the MDGs to address their needs in a fair manner.

Human rights

While the majority of respondents found the MDGs to be useful tools for work in development assistance, human rights, peace and security, and democratic processes, many pointed out that the MDGs need to be more explicit on the question of human rights. One US organization pointed out: “There should be more explicit support for human rights and the plight of refugees.”

Enhancing efforts

The respondents had numerous suggestions for improving the MDGs:

- ❖ Adapt the MDGs to the specific realities of each country and ensure full participation of their populations.
- ❖ Set out clear targets for Goal 8, and for the contributions of developed countries.
- ❖ Include specific targets on agriculture as the mainstay of many developing countries.
- ❖ Address the problem of conflict.
- ❖ Penalize developed countries that do not meet their promised financial contributions.
- ❖ Educate bankers, politicians and the judiciary.
- ❖ Implement a particular levy on profits that would go toward ensuring global sustainability in trade, education, environment and resources.
- ❖ Patent rights of the pharmaceutical industry need to be reconsidered.
- ❖ The MDGs should include goals for providing universal access to reproductive health services by 2015.
- ❖ Sexual and reproductive health and rights need to be given a greater focus.
- ❖ Family violence and the sexual abuse of children need to be dealt with to a greater extent.
- ❖ The issue of human rights needs to be tackled in-depth and the MDGs should be linked to democratic development and good governance.

Considering *the steps* FORWARD

Civil society organizations have opportunities to contribute to the changes required to meet the vision of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. Many organizations have set their own objectives. The opportunities to network, to build coalitions, to share advice and exert pressure are extensive.

Putting things in perspective

There is a danger in making the MDGs too big a challenge. The social, cultural, political and economic advances necessary for their implementation are complex, yet the resources estimated to be necessary for the task are in some respects quite modest!

At the Monterrey Financing for Development Conference, many worked with the World Bank's estimate of approximately US\$50 billion per year to achieve the goals, while others followed a more ambitious NGO estimate of twice that amount. Jeffrey Sachs of the Millennium Project estimates that US\$75 billion is required — a good deal of cash!

This represents just 0.3% of total global wealth. Further, Sachs notes, it is a small portion of the \$900 billion the world spends on military matters each year, half of which is spent by the US alone. Current estimates of the cost of the Iraq war to US taxpayers rank at US\$123.5 billion and rising.

The scale of MDG achievement is not outlandish. The MDGs are doable. The resources exist. It is a matter of political and democratic decision-making.

Political will

When challenged with the feasibility of achieving the MDGs, officials will return to the refrain of “political will.” This represents, for civil society organizations, not only a traditional nostrum, but also a real challenge.

In some countries, political leaders have injected global economic and social issues into public debate. The Swedish government has made development and achievement of the MDGs central to foreign policy and encouraged public campaigning. The UK Chancellor has gained a reputation for positive responses to challenges like that of the Jubilee campaign. US President Bush has highlighted a commitment to the global struggle against HIV/AIDS although he faces trenchant criticism over the conditions that accompany the promise. Presidents Chirac of France and Lula of Brazil have launched a fresh initiative on innovative means of development financing that is gaining adherents among other leaders.

There are cases where civil society initiatives have put the challenge “on the map.” The initiative of the Social Watch in pre-electoral El Salvador led to a focus on the MDGs on the part of both governing and opposition political leaders. It also led to public debate and to commitment. The efforts of the UN’s Millennium Campaign and Italian social organizations have brought the MDGs into public discourse in a country that has a long way to go in meeting commitments to finance development.

Campaigning

Our *We the Peoples*... surveys and reports over three years testify to the time it takes to develop a global campaign. The four years since the Millennium Declaration have not been long enough to make sure that fundamental information is available to key networks (in languages they can understand), to catch meaningful attention of decision-makers in organizations, businesses and governments, to build effective coalitions, to convince the media that something is happening... let alone to change the priorities expressed in the budgets of governments rich or not-so-rich and the minds of taxpayers.

The UN recognized early on that a broad Millennium Campaign that would invite, encourage, elicit, cajole or even shame diverse sectors into responding to the challenge was necessary. The Campaign has been building regional and international alliances of groups willing to build support and

“One of the Millennium Development Goals directly concerns rich countries, i.e. Goal 8 on enhancing global partnerships for development. Among other things, this means that the global volume of international development cooperation allocations must increase, that market access for poor countries must improve, and that a sustainable debt situation must be achieved for the poorest countries. (LDCs)”

Shared Responsibility:
Sweden’s Policy for Global
Development. Stockholm, 2003.

enter the debate about development, global justice and the MDGs. With the slogan “No excuses,” it is encouraging a global movement. A globally accessible website for all those willing to engage will be launched at the UN in September 2004.

A diverse series of approaches to campaigns has emerged:

- ❖ Philippines CSOs allied with Social Watch have broadened and deepened the campaign for implementation by asking how and in what ways the goals can be implemented at each level (from the community on up) and sector of their society. Engaging activists and experts, they have put a measure on the accountability of governments and institutions at each level.
- ❖ The CIDSE (International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity) and Caritas Catholic networks have provided easy-to-access guidance for groups and individuals wanting to campaign. Whether through monitoring, putting pressure on donor governments and international institutions or joining broad campaigns, they are seeking to mobilize their membership, donors and allies for implementation of the goals and policy changes that will help.
- ❖ In El Salvador, both opposition and government parties were challenged by an alliance of more than 20 CSOs regarding their commitment to the MDGs, and the media and public opinion were brought into play in the midst of a pre-election period. A campaign song — Sin Excusas (No Excuses) — was developed in collaboration with musicians in Uruguay, and radio and TV spots were sponsored to press the core messages of specific goals.
- ❖ An alliance of leading development, labour, human rights, faith-based and campaign CSOs, together with the global campaigns for education and against child labour have joined in a Call to Action, working in collaboration with the UN Millennium Campaign to enlist support for the goals and necessary policy change, particularly in rich countries.

Monitoring

As indicated earlier in this report, monitoring of progress, not only at international and national levels, but specific to gender, social group, region, etc., is essential to enhance the effectiveness of assistance and the fine-tuning of policy. Official efforts, through the UNDP, the World Bank and a variety of government agencies and think tanks, are making progress.

Civil society is monitoring projects on an international, sectoral and national scale:

- ❖ The Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) calls for engendering targets and indicators, broadening and deepening the gender sensitivity of the MDGs, expanding the indicators and monitoring government progress.

- ❖ Alliance 2015 has developed an approach to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of specific goals by the European Union. Their first report on HIV/AIDS offers an incisive and detailed examination of the legal commitments, financial investments, policy and programmatic implementation of the EU in this regard. Evaluations of other goals will follow.
- ❖ Social Watch, with national coalition platforms in more than 50 countries, is developing an approach to monitoring, evaluation and policy reform that looks back to the vision of the Copenhagen Social Summit and the Beijing Women's Conference (1995) and forward to recommend what must be done before 2015.

These efforts and many more are an essential foundation for civil society contributions to the debate over policies for the future and the institutions of governance necessary to implement them.

Policy reform

There is a good deal of frustration brewing amid the responses to the *We the Peoples... 2004* survey. Participants say, "Don't promise what you then refuse to fulfill!"

The Global Stakeholder Panel survey of NGO leadership reported in their March 2004 report on globalization, governance and sustainability that virtually half the participants say major work is required to make current development models effective in reducing poverty, and more than one-third call for new models entirely. The priority for a majority is reducing the rich/poor gap — equity — rather than overall growth. Some 90% support environmental protection as central to sustainable growth. Large majorities in all regions argue that either major changes are needed to the market/free enterprise system or that the world needs something entirely new. This represents a considerable consensus for a significant change of direction.

We the Peoples...2005

Our current survey and report are a springboard to a major report in 2005. We cannot do justice, in this brief report, to the major sectoral and global policy challenges that are bound up with the MDGs. *We the Peoples...2005* will take a deeper look at the state of progress in each goal area, including the key Goal 8 and the role of affluent nations, and the opinions and proposals of CSOs for the coming years. We hope to contribute to the dialogue and debate about change and the mobilization of opinion and resources behind proposals to achieve it. We invite participation, and most importantly, we invite your considered proposals for reform and enhancement of policies, structures and the road to achievement of the MDGs and beyond.

“Getting policies right is of crucial importance. If economic and social structures are inequitable and if policies (either for preserving the status quo or for reform) are inappropriate, then the mere expansion of funds and programmes in a country would not be enough, and may indeed increase the problems. This applies to structures and policies at both national and international levels.”

Martin Khor, Bridging the Global Economic Divide: Proposals for Millennium Development Goal 8 on Global Partnership for Development. Third World Network, 2003.

The external economic environment

While much of the attention regarding the MDGs is focused on the actual situation within developing countries and regions and sectors of those countries, their ability to “perform” is ever more dependent on external structures, trends and conditionalities. Those that trade have to line up their policies with those of the WTO. Those that borrow will find themselves limited by the conditions set by the World Bank or the IMF.

Martin Khor points to current issues:

- ❖ The fall in the prices of export commodities
- ❖ Financial instability from unregulated flows of external funds
- ❖ Damage to farm and industry from inappropriate import liberalization
- ❖ Cutbacks in social sector expenditure due to past structural adjustment
- ❖ The continuing debt crisis in many countries

These issues direct attention to the policy decisions taken by the representatives of affluent countries who dominate international economic organizations, and their appropriateness to developing countries, to the MDGs, and particularly to the accountability of the affluent to Goal 8.

What kind of “development”?

The pattern of growth is more important for poverty reduction than its pace. The distribution of growth in general, and between men and women at the household and community level is key.

“Equity continues to be the big absentee in most anti-poverty strategies,” Jan Vandemoortele, leader of the UNDP’s poverty group confirms. Civil society witnesses to the Copenhagen Social Summit are well aware that the MDGs’ poverty focus, laudable and overdue as it is, remains very modest at best.

Perhaps the emphasis is shifting. The World Bank’s Vice-President for sustainable development, Ian Johnson, recently stated that income distribution has to change radically: “the present break up of 20 percent of the world taking 80 percent of world income is not sustainable.” Nevertheless, if we expect shifts world-wide, equity will have to become a priority in the richest and most powerful nations. In some, income polarization is deepening, not being reduced. US TV journalist Bill Moyers told a university audience recently that “in 1960, the gap in terms of wealth [in the US] between the top 20% and the bottom 20% was 30 fold. Four decades later it is more than 75 fold.” For things to change globally, won’t they have to start changing at “home”?

The UNDP’s Human Development Report for 2004 indicates that some rich countries — Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands, for example — do better at fighting poverty at home than Canada, which ranks 12th among nations, and the US and Britain, which are worse. Powerful, rich nations set the pace for many others. A significant value and cultural shift is required.

Policy counts

Vandemoortele warns against assuming too much when hearing about “pro-poor” policies. “It is seldom correct, for instance, to assume that what works for men will work equally for women. The same applies for macro-economic policies; many of the alleged pro-poor policies frequently end up by-passing the poor, sometimes hurting them.”

CSOs have been challenging dominant policy frameworks for years, and utilizing opportunities like the UN’s Financing for Development Conference and follow-up process to engage business and governmental representatives in debate and consideration of change.

The 2005 General Assembly summit session is at least a symbolic moment when the achievement of the vision of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs will be measured. It provides an occasion where policies and resources can be evaluated and, perhaps, new and more meaningful levels of commitment achieved.

Governance reform

We the peoples... survey participants have a number of critiques of international institutions, including the UN. In this they parallel the NGO leaders surveyed by the Global Stakeholder Panel in their March 2004 report. They report that two-thirds of those surveyed “indicate that a reformed and strengthened United Nations (UN) or, alternatively, an evolving world government that is directly accountable to citizens describes their ideal vision of global governance by the year 2020.” The Stakeholder survey testifies to a high level of commitment of civil society leadership to multilateralism. It clearly documents the demand for reform.

The Cardoso Panel of Eminent Persons on UN–Civil Society Relations both responds to the demand for change and proposes a number of participatory approaches to achieve it, with particular reference to CSOs and parliamentarians.

From the ground up: Cardoso, country-challenge and the MDGs

The Cardoso Panel puts particular emphasis on enhancing the country-level relationship of the UN with civil society. Global goals are useful and salient, it notes, but “to be meaningful they must be informed by realities on the ground, as viewed by the communities most affected and those working with them, and to be effectively implemented — to benefit from pooling of resources and division of labour — they require operational strategies that are owned by all stakeholders.” CSOs in our survey would agree wholeheartedly.

The MDGs are precisely the kind of global initiative that requires the sort of reality-connection the Panel prescribes, at the ground level. The Panel argues that “networking” in country after country is fundamental to

“Priority should be placed on engagement at the country level. This could enhance the contributions of civil society organizations and others to country strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other United Nations goals, and level the playing field between civil society organizations from North and South... This is vital for the world’s poor and for the credibility of the United Nations.”

From We the Peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance, Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations

generating success. Many CSOs are already demonstrating its importance, but they wouldn’t stop there. The responses we received from CSOs testify that the experiences of many CSOs fall far short of the Cardoso Panel vision for the role and responsibility of UN bodies at the national level. To achieve even the first modest recommendations will, it seems, require a radical shift of attitudes and organizational approaches on the part of UN agencies and personnel.

Renewing multilateralism

The United Nations, the panel argues, must become outward looking and facilitate multiple constituencies — civil society amongst them — at a global level. It must connect the local and the global. It must address democratic deficits.

Evidence from our participants indicates that reform of multilateral structures, with an eye to transparency, and participation of and partnership with CSOs, can strengthen the chances of meeting the MDGs and meeting them in a way that is most appropriate to those whose benefit they seek to achieve. The Cardoso Panel report offers a number of positive initiatives, but will the governments of the member states put the positive political energy and resources behind them? Will civil society organizations put their clout and ingenuity into making it happen?

Building global governance?

The Cardoso report is not the only creative response to the challenges of global governance. A second UN panel on security and reform will report late in 2004. Some governments have become engaged. The Tanzanian and Finnish governments are conducting the “Helsinki Process” on globalization and democracy, seeking answers to the “deficits” of democracy, coherence and compliance with commitments; a global economic agenda that will provide development finance and debt relief for the MDGs; and a human security agenda that includes health, reduced violence against women, reduced amounts of small arms, enhanced children’s rights, and prevention of human trafficking. It will advance proposals at a conference in Helsinki on September 7-9, 2005.

Civil society efforts to tackle proposals for more democratic and effective international governance are moving forward. The World Federation of United Nations Associations, in partnership with the United Nations Association of the US, has initiated a specific process focused on how reform of the ECOSOC can help achieve the MDGs, particularly Goal 8. The UBUNTU Forum of Civil Society networks has initiated a Campaign for the Reform of International Institutions. To encourage debate, UBUNTU has developed a series of scenarios for reform, to be reviewed and built on at a Conference on Reform of the UN and other International Institutions, in Barcelona, on September 23-24, 2004.

A potential model for civil society–United Nations collaboration in governance and policy review was introduced in July 2004 by the announcement of a series of multi-stakeholder consultations on systemic issues relating to Financing for Development, by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Washington-based New Rules for Global Finance Coalition. Through expert meetings and public forums, the initiative will address issues such as the effective representation of developing countries in the design and implementation of financial system reforms, and the evaluation of alternative policies designed to protect developing countries' financial sectors and promote poverty alleviation.

The Montreal International Forum (FIM) will convene a major civil society Conference, in Montreal, Canada, May 29-June 1, 2005, entitled G05-Global Democracy: Civil Society Visions and Strategies. An international civil society planning committee is developing an agenda including such themes as democratic governance of the global economy, and ways of supporting cultural diversity.

The World Social Forum and regional forums in many parts of the world offer a multitude of opportunities and diverse approaches to reform and transformation of global as well as national systems. The World Social Forum will convene again in Brazil in January 2005. The Forum encourages open debate about the themes and priorities for this gathering through their website.

And now...

Critical engagement and forward movement typify CSO approaches to the MDGs. As CIVICUS' Kumi Naidoo states:

By using the political legitimacy that the MDGs provide, civil society organizations are in a strong position to co-opt and drive forward the agenda...

Given a structure which has provided a largely undefined role for civil society in achieving the MDGs, I believe civil society... should regard the MDGs as a means rather than as an end in itself. Rather than just being critical of the goals, we should also celebrate the mobilization opportunities the MDGs present. This is the way, I believe, that we can fully harness the power of a unified global civil society in achieving a more just world.

The global conversation about democratizing governance is growing and becoming more diverse and urgent. One measure of its relevance will be the extent to which it strengthens efforts to achieve the MDGs and to address the fundamental inequities they highlight.

Resources

United Nations

The UN MDG Campaign

A centre for animating campaigns in diverse sectors for the MDGs (www.millenniumcampaign.org)

MDG Net — a list-serve that provides a continuous flow of information on the MDGs (sign up through the website: www.undg.org)

Millennium Country Profiles — country-wise profiles of MDG implementation progress (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi.asp>)

MDGs Country Reports — country, regional and donor reports, as well as useful resources, news bulletins and statements on global progress toward achieving the MDGs (www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports.html)

Official UN Millennium Goals Site at www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html

Millennium Project — the Project does research on the best strategies for achieving the MDGs (www.unmillenniumproject.org)

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (www.un-ngls.org/index.html)

The UNDP Blue Book: A Hands-on Approach to Advocating for the Millennium Development Goals — Useful advice in designing advocacy and awareness programs (http://ruc.logincee.org/library_full.asp?LD_ID=6396&TargetLangCode=EN)

Civil society

Alliance 2015 — a coalition of European CSOs advocating for the realization of the MDGs, seeking to critically assess failure and refocus for a more vigorous effort toward the MDGs (www.alliance2015.org)

ANND — a network of 30 development organizations and nine national networks from 12 Arab countries (www.annd.org)

AFRODAD (African Forum and Network on Debt and Development) — a policy-oriented research and advocacy organization that presents excellent information on debt, poverty reduction strategies and the MDGs in Africa (www.afrodad.org/)

Canadian Parliamentary Centre- an independent, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to strengthen legislatures in Canada and around the world (www.parlcent.ca). The Handbook for Parliamentarians on Policies to Reduce Poverty can be downloaded from their site at www.parlcent.ca/publications/index_e.php

Center for Global Development — an independent research institution that engages in policy-oriented research on development issues and poverty reduction (www.cgdev.org). The Center produces the “Ranking the Rich” Index, which measures the impact of developed country policies on developing countries (www.cgdev.org/rankingtherich/home.html)

CIDSE (International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity) — an alliance of 15 Catholic development organizations that work on the MDGs as well as global governance and financing for development (www.cidse.org)

CIVICUS — an international alliance of citizens engaging in action in areas of participatory democracy to aim for a healthy global society (<http://www.civicus.org/>). CIVICUS has toolkits for CSOs that help improve CSO capacity in handling the media, promotion and advocacy, and project monitoring and evaluation (www.civicus.org/new/civicus_toolkit_project.asp?c=036FB9)

CHOIKE — a portal on Southern CSOs that provides a directory of Southern NGOs, and is an excellent source for in-depth reports and information resources regarding the MDGs (www.choike.org)

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

Development Gateway — provides research information on global development issues, including the MDGs, and links to NGOs, capacity building information and advocacy information (<http://home.developmentgateway.org/>)

EURODAD (European Network on Debt and Development) — does research on national and international financing policies that aim at achieving the MDGs (www.eurodad.org)

FIM (Montreal International Forum) — an international NGO think tank that aims at increasing the role of civil society in multilateral institutions and global governance issues (www.fimcivilsociety.org)

InterAction — the largest alliance of development and human rights NGOs based in the US (www.interaction.org)

New Rules for Global Finance Coalition — a Washington-based alliance of internationally engaged CSOs (www.new-rules.org)

Social Watch — an international NGO network monitoring poverty eradication and the implementation of the MDGs, Social Watch produces national reports on the progress on the MDGs and is an excellent resource centre for MDG resources, including research papers and interactive indicators (www.socialwatch.org)

The Global Stakeholder Panel — a research initiative on globalization, sustainable development and governance (see The 2020 Global Stakeholder Panel, What NGO Leaders Want for the Year 2020, March 2004, www.2020fund.org/gsp-results.htm)

The Helsinki Process — aims to find solutions to global governance through dialogue between various stakeholders (<http://www.helsinki.org>)

The North South Institute — a nonprofit, independent organization engaging in research for a fairer world (www.nsi-ins.ca)

Third World Network — a key critical centre of research and action on global economic and social issues (www.twn.org)

UBUNTU World Forum of Networks — the goal is to encourage dialogue between national and international institutions working on peace promotion, endogenous development and human rights (www.ubuntu.upc.es/)

WEDO (Women's Environment and Development Organization) — an international advocacy network that aims at greater involvement of women in policymaking processes. The website has useful toolkits and resources on gender and the MDGs (www.wedo.org)

World Economic Forum — an independent international organization that provides a collaborative framework for world leaders and businesses to address global issues (www.weforum.org/)

World Social Forum (WSF) — a forum for civil society groups opposed to the neoliberal economic order to meet, engage in debate and propose policies that encourage a just and equitable world order (www.forumsocialmundial.org.br)

WFUNA (World Federation of United Nations Associations) — a network of peoples in support of the United Nations (www.wfuna.org) (The 2002 and 2003 “We the peoples...” reports can be read on this site.)

Other key documents

International Facilitating Group: Gemma Adaba, et al. “A Political Agenda for the Reform of Global Governance. A Background Policy Paper.” September 2003. www.un.org/esa/ffd/1003-IFG-on-govern.pdf

Joint Civil Society Statement on the Global Compact and Corporate Accountability, July 2004. Global Policy Forum. www.globalpolicy.org

Martin Khor, *Bridging the Global Economic Divide: Proposals for Millennium Development Goal 8 on Global Partnership for Development*. Penang, Third World Network, 2003.

We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance. Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations. June 11, 2004. A/58/817. For more information, see www.un.org/reform/panel.htm



A peoples' movement in support of the United Nations,

The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) was founded in 1946 and comprises member UNAs in over 100 member states of the United Nations. Its mission is to inform, sustain and energize a global network of United Nations Associations to support the principles and programs of the United Nations and to help shape its agenda.

World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA-FMANU)

New York Office

1 United Nations Plaza
Room DC1-1177
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel.: (212) 963-5610
Fax.: (212) 963-0447
E-mail: wfunany@wfuna.org

Geneva Office

c/o Palais des Nations
Room E4-2A
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 917 3239
Fax.: +41 22 917 0185
Email: wfuna@unog.ch

www.wfuna.org



Research for a fairer world,

The North-South Institute (NSI) is dedicated to eradicating global poverty and enhancing social justice through research which promotes international cooperation, democratic governance, and conflict prevention. It is Canada's first independent, non-governmental and non-partisan research institute focused on international development, founded in 1976.

The North-South Institute (NSI-INS)

55 Murray Street
Suite 200
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1N 5M3

Tel.: (613) 241-3535
Fax.: (613) 241-7435
E-mail: nsi@nsi-ins.ca

www.nsi-ins.ca