SOUTHERN AFRICA MDG FORUM JOHANNESBURG, 2 – 4 JULY 2003



REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FORUM



UNDP Southern Africa Sub-Regional Resource Facility

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Yours in the MDGs Campaign

Joseph L.M. Mugore

Chief, UNDP Southern Africa Sub-Regional Resource Facility

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGOA - Africa Growth and Opportunity Act

AU - African Union

CCA - Common Country Assessment

CSO - Civil Society Organisation

ECOSOC - United Nations Economic and Social Council

GHG - Green House Gas

HIPC - Highly Indebted Poor Country

MCA - Millennium Challenge Account

MDG - Millennium Development Goal

MDGR - Millennium Development Goal Report

MTEF - Medium Term Expenditure Report

NEPAD - New Partnership for Africa's Development

NHDR - National Human Development Report

ODA - Official Development Assistance

PLWHA - People Living With HIV/AIDS

PRSP - Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

RBA - Regional Bureau for Africa

SAP - Structural Adjustment Programme

SD - Sustainable Development

SURF - Sub-Regional Resource Facility

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

WSSD - World Summit on Sustainable Development

A. BACKGROUND OF THE MEETING

1. The Forum on Sustainable Development in Southern Africa was held in Johannesburg, South Africa and was organised by the UNDP/Southern Africa Sub Regional Resource Facility with the support of UNDP South Africa, Regional Bureau for Africa and Bureau for Development Policy. The event was the third African Regional Forum on MDGs to be organized by UNDP. The Forum brought together 151 participants from fifteen southern African countries representing government, parliament, private sector, academic and research institutions, civil society organizations, regional groups, donors and UN agencies. The main objective of the Forum was to place the MDGs within the policy environment of Southern Africa in order to provide a platform for further action to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction.

(i) INTRODUCTION

2. The Forum was organized around three key themes, each theme introduced by a major presentation and supplemented by discussants. The themes were:

Policy Reforms and MDGs

3. The MDGs Forum aimed to explore the links between the MDGs targets and national development objectives and instruments such as Poverty Reduction Strategies and National Long Term Perspectives. Key cross cutting policy issues of food security and the humanitarian crisis, the feminisation of poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic were focused on.

Sustainable Development and MDGs: Parameters for Measuring Sustainable Development

4. The Forum also provided an opportunity to explore how best to integrate sustainable development issues into the areas of poverty reduction and economic development. These deliberations took into account the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) as well as the processes of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), the reporting and monitoring of environmental indicators, and critical socio-economic policy linkages.

Partnerships and MDGs

5. The Partnerships and MDGs theme reviewed developmental partnerships at the global, national and local levels. At the global level the issues of financing the MDGs as well as global responsibility for the attainment of Goal 8 were reviewed. At the regional Sub-Saharan level the focus was on the engagement of NEPAD and sub-regional bodies within the context of trade, debt and aid flows. At the national level the role of the private sector in domestic resource mobilization and corporate responsibility received particular attention. At the local level the MDGs process was looked at in relation to the engagement of civil society organizations and community groups as key partners in the development process.

Forum Approach

6. The workshop was designed to be participative, while at the same time benefiting from global and regional knowledge and expertise. The importance of having a southern Africa perspective on the MDGs was considered to be critical, and presentations were therefore short, with plenary and group discussions accorded ample time.

The Report on the Forum

7. This report covers highlights of the opening, keynote speeches and key thematic messages from the Forum. The summary of presentations and discussion are outlined in section three and the recommendations follow in the final section of the report.

B. OPENING STATEMENTS AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS

(i) INTRODUCTION

8. The Forum, which was directed by Mr Joseph Mugore, Chief, Southern Africa SURF, was officially opened by the Deputy Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye, on behalf of the Regional Director of RBA, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh. Additional statements were made by Mr. Vusi Madonsela, Director General, Department of Social Development,

Government of South Africa, and Mr. John Ohiorhenuan, UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator, South Africa.

(ii) REGIONAL BUREAU FOR AFRICA

- 9. Mr Abdoulaye Mar Dieye emphasised the importance of building upon the extraordinary opportunity provided by the Millennium Declaration as adopted by UN member states in September 2000. He went on to review the progress made so far in achieving the MDGs. He metal that several African countries have made remarkable progress and cited the examples of Mauritius, Mozambique, Tanzania and Seychelles. These countries have managed to achieve sustained annual GDP growth rates close to the 7 to 8 percent considered critical for meeting national poverty target. He also pointed to the examples of Senegal and Uganda which have made huge strides in stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS. He observed however that many challenges still hampered progress in many countries, in particular the HIV/AIDS pandemic, protracted and violent conflicts, political unrest and civil strife.
- 10. Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye recognised the resolve of African leaders to put forward a new agenda for Africa's development through the NEPAD initiative, which has consciously located itself within the context of the MDGs. He also reaffirmed UNDP's pledge to stay at the forefront of efforts to achieve the MDGs. He assured participants that UNDP would continue to place a special emphasis on Africa, where it currently allocates 60% of its core resources. UNDP would also continue to support countries in strengthening institutional capacity for policy formulation and implementation, particularly for poverty reduction.

(iii) DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

11. Mr. Vusi Madonsela reminded participants that the MDG Forum was taking place in Johannesburg just over nine months after South Africa hosted the World Summit for Sustainable Development. He commented that the finalization of all of the modalities for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Action was eagerly awaited. He observed that the WSSD outcomes not only reinforced the Millennium Development Goals but also added a fresh impetus by further developing and elaborating them. He also emphasized that for Africa the NEPAD initiative is central to the attainment of the MDGs. He reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to the MDGs and drew attention to the fact that the recent Growth and Development Summit had set a target of reducing unemployment in South Africa

by half by the year 2015. The Government of South Africa is also currently undertaking a 10 year review of the impact of policies adopted since 1994 in order to monitor the progress made in improving the quality of life of all South Africans. He noted that the review was utilising MDG indicators as the "yardstick" for measuring this progress.

(iv) UNDP SOUTH AFRICA COUNTRY OFFICE

12. Mr. John Ohiorhenuan stated that the MDGs represented a global consensus to mobilize national and international partners into action for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Endorsed by 191 member states of the United Nations, they mainstream a set of interconnected and mutually reinforcing development goals and provide a means for benchmarking and assessing progress on development. UNDP, as the designated "scorekeeper" and "campaign manager" for the MDGs, is responsible for focusing public attention on these important development goals. He also noted that in South Africa, the MDGs are already providing the context for policy discussions on environmental and other developmental issues.

(v) KEYNOTE SPEECH - FORMER PRESIDENT OF ZAMBIA

- 13. In his Keynote speech¹ Dr. Kenneth Kaunda reminded participants that historically Africa had come from a post-independence situation where earnest attempts had been made by Governments to attain development goals through meeting the basic needs of African nations. He emphasized the need to re-examine the factors that had led to the ensuing decline in the progress of human development in Africa. In particular he highlighted the humanitarian crisis in the southern African region and argued that it posed an enormous challenge to the achievement of the MDGs. He argued that natural and manmade disasters such as HIV/AIDS, chronic poverty, erratic rainfall, floods, drought and conflicts, together with often inappropriate policies responses, have adversely affected progress.
- 14. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda remarked that in many cases obstacles to development in southern Africa, such as AIDS, drought and floods, have not always been of its own making. He aptly stated, however, that "the way we respond to drought, flood and HIV/AIDS depends on us and is of our own making'. He called on Governments and donors to create an enabling policy environment for humane and sustainable

¹ The full keynote speech can be accessed on the following websites: :http://www.sasurfs.undp.co.zw/MDGsForum.html and www.sarpn.org.za

development. Dr. Kaunda stressed that participation, resource mobilisation and partnership are critical factors in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. The Former President of Zambia concluded by saying that people from all walks of life needed to be involved in finding solutions to their lives.

C. KEY THEMATIC MESSAGES

(i) POLICY REFORMS AND MDGs

- 15. It is critical for each individual country to work towards an optimal mix of appropriate policy and effective institutional performance. A broad array of policies and institutional capacities, ranging from governance and an efficient public sector to sound macroeconomic policies geared to ensure equitable growth and poverty reduction, are a prerequisite for achieving the MDGs.
- 16. The Southern Africa crisis poses a great challenge to the achievement of the MDGs. In six countries Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe there is serious food shortage affecting 15.1 million people. In addition and closely linked to this, the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Southern Africa is continuously endangering the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. The face of poverty across most of Africa is quintessentially female and the southern Africa region is no exception. This makes it imperative that the inextricable link between gender and poverty is addressed as a matter of urgency. The combination of HIV/AIDS with chronic poverty, erratic rainfall, poor government policies and natural resource degradation all culminate in an acute humanitarian crisis that demands immediate action. This has resulted in the reversal of progress already made in many countries towards the achievement of the MDGs. These are daunting challenges but great opportunities exist as well. The MDGs provide an opportunity to respond to this challenge not only in terms of crisis and disaster mitigation, but also in terms of the longer term development strategies that will prevent such crises in the future.
- 17. More recently, the commitment by African leaders to put in place a new partnership for Africa's development has been very encouraging. NEPAD is a strong assertion of ownership of the African development agenda. It constitutes a pledge by African leaders to eradicate poverty and to place the continent on a path of sustainable development anchored in Africa's determination to extricate itself from underdevelopment and global marginalisation. As well as staking a claim for Africa's destiny, NEPAD consciously locates itself within the context of the MDGs. The NEPAD strategy document lists as some of its most critical goals the sustaining of a long-term growth rate of over 7 percent per annum

and ensuring that Africa achieves the MDGs. UNDP is fully committed to supporting the NEPAD initiative and assisting African countries in implementing the NEPAD Action Plan.

- 18. In support of the Development Agenda of the Millennium Declaration, and in support of Africa's own development vision, the international community has made positive and commendable advances. The Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the G8 Action Plan for Africa, the US initiatives on the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) are powerful vectors in our collective drive towards meeting the MDGs.
- 19. The acute lack of basic regional and country statistics poses a major challenge to the implementation of the MDGs. Development progress in over 50 countries in Africa is difficult to summarise and at times regional information is not always reliable, comparable or up-to-date. A major challenge to the implementation of the MDGs lies in the weakness of basic statistics. It is critical that this weakness is overcome and that a strong focus is placed on institutional capacity strengthening for policy formulation, analysis and implementation.

(ii) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MDGs

- 20. Sustainable Development is a broad-based concept that has strong links with the MDGs. The MDGs concretise many areas of sustainable development into attainable goals and targets. The dimensions of SD political, social, economic and environmental sustainability are important in achieving the MDGs. Recognising that environment issues contribute to the achievement of the MDGs it is clear that sustainable development and the MDGs are mutually reinforcing.
- 21. In efforts to achieve Environmental Sustainability it is critical to ensure that the following targets are met:
 - Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources;
 - Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people living without sustainable access to safe drinking water;
 - By 2020, achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

There is a need to review, identify and compile environmental indicators at both national and regional level to ensure comparability of data across country borders.

- 22. Not all the indicators for Goal 7 are relevant to the Southern Africa reality. The biodiversity indicator (indicator 26), which reflects the ratio of surface area to area protected to maintain biological diversity, is a blunt indicator that does not reflect the bio-geographic representativeness of the protected area system. The issues of access and benefit sharing are not reflected in the biodiversity indicator and a more accurate MDG indicator would, for example, disaggregate targets for Protected Areas by biome. With regard to climate change there is no indicator that captures issues of vulnerability and adaptation. The indicator for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions/ capita has little relevance to the region, with the possible exception of industrialized South Africa and Zimbabwe. Most southern African countries have low emissions but are highly vulnerable to climate change, particularly with regard to dislocations in spatial and temporal precipitation patterns.
- 23. In order to achieve policy coherence there is a need for institutional alignment amongst sectors that are responsible for certain aspects of MDG 7, especially in the areas of water, biodiversity and agriculture. This alignment should be both horizontal and vertical (bottom-up process) so that stakeholder communities are fully engaged in the MDGs discussions.
- 24. Environment data is weak and fragmented in terms of sources of information and this presents additional problems for data standardization and harmonization. Some countries lack the institutional capacity and tools for collecting environmental data, and where this data does exist it remains mostly unanalysed due to limited capacity in data interpretation.

(iii) PARTNERSHIPS AND MDGS

- 25. Partnerships are crucial for the attainment of the MDGs. There is a need to develop policies that are conducive for the creation of partnerships at all levels and across all sectors, and to establish a consensus between partners to focus on the achievement of the MDGs.
- 26. Forging partnerships with CSOs and the private sector is particularly vital. Strong and vibrant CSOs can make a critical contribution by mobilising grassroots involvement and participation, facilitating dissemination of information and playing an advocacy and watchdog role over Governments

and development partners. At the same time the private sector can provide the critical breakthrough in terms of sustainable economic growth.

- 27. The MDG process cannot be a stand-alone initiative. In order to achieve the crucial development goals, MDGs must be integrated within endogenously initiated frameworks of national development plans, strategies and processes, and externally induced processes such as PRSPs.
- 28. Democratic governance is critical as it forms the context within which sustainable development and hence the MDGs can be achieved. It is essential that current efforts being made to build and strengthen democratic governance and institutional capacity building are supported and sustained. It is equally important that the role of civil society in advocating for adherence to the principles and practices of democratic governance is actively promoted
- 29. There is a need to have a common understanding on human development and to adopt an integrated framework to address it. There is also a need to have an African development approach in place. In particular, Africa needs to have a common position on financing development, advocacy for debt relief, implementation of PRSs, capacity development, democracy and the balance of power. Development partners must not be allowed to dictate Africa's development agenda.

(iv) POLICY REFORMS AND MDGS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

- 30. Five country case studies were presented with the objective of updating participants on the status of MDG reporting. These case studies also aimed to outline the recent policy reforms in selected Southern African countries that have a bearing on the progress of MDGs. The common threads in the five presentations were the call for:
 - Accurate data and statistics to facilitate analytical development work;
 - Sound economic policies and practices to accompany the pursuit of the MDGs;
 - Balance of trade;
 - Regional integration;
 - Good governance, peace and security;
 - Stronger partnerships, particularly with CSOs, the private sector, national and regional institutions, that are based on mutual trust and accountability;

- Capacity enhancement for better development programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Dynamic policies to allow for better prevention and care of PLWHAs.

Case Study 1: Angola

- 31. As a member of the AU Angola has already prepared a NEPAD status report which sets out linkages for the achievement of MDGs in Education, Health, and Agriculture. The report also outlines the status of democracy, human rights, and economic and political processes in the country. In addition, it addresses infrastructure and communications advancements to date. The MDG process in Angola has been consultative and participatory, with output indicators reflecting the conflict situation in the country. Despite the progress made on the MDG reporting, the PRSP process has been slow and is yet to be completed. Angola is in the process of developing a common "transition strategy" for the next three years to address the important concerns of a country in transition to peace. Two key questions that still need to be addressed within this context are:
 - How can the MDG report be used to feed into Angola's policy reform?
 - How can Civil Society use the MDG report as a tool for monitoring and evaluating progress?

Case Study 2: Namibia

- 32. The Global MDGs have been transformed into the Namibian Development Goals (NDGs) and focus on four key priority areas:
 - Linkages to policy framework
 - Resource mobilisation
 - Income inequality
 - HIV/AIDS
- 33. Namibia is committed to achieving the MDGs, which are closely linked to the country's policy frameworks, namely the Vision 20/20, the National Development Plan, the National Poverty Reduction

Action plan and the MTEF, all of which culminate from the 20/30 policy that is the umbrella for national development planning. The Namibia Development Goals will be used as the glue that binds all these policy frameworks together. The current Namibia Development Goal (NDG) framework provides an opportunity to revisit the MDGs and internalise them, as well as a roadmap for building capacity and strengthening institutions. The Namibian Planning Commission intends to use the NDGs to achieve national development goals, including the improvement of social welfare and the elimination of income poverty and inequality.

34. Namibia is doing well in the area of education, having attained high levels of school enrolment and retention at all levels. However, HIV/AIDS in Namibia, as in other parts of the sub-region, continues to undermine achievements made so far. Almost one in every four Namibian people is infected with HIV. Expenditure in this sector of the economy is the highest. The NDG campaign is therefore being used to reinforce the multi-sectoral approach towards the elimination of HIV/AIDS.

Case Study 3: Zambia

- 35. The MDGs are not new to Zambia and the PRSP incorporates the essential components of the MDGs. The focus therefore is on how to buttress the complementarities between MDGs, PRSPs and other policy initiatives. The former is an instrument for achieving the latter. Zambia is trying to create new development strategies and has developed a long term vision and a transitional plan which are linked to NEPAD and the PRSP. CSO partnership in the development process in Zambia has been fully secured.
- 36. The Government has forged partnerships with various partners, including UNDP. However, donors keep shifting the goal posts and this has had a negative impact on the effective utilization of ODA. Zambia acknowledges the need for technical assistance for enhancing trade opportunities and partnerships but stresses the need for it to bring about dynamic competitiveness. The case study elicited a number of questions which the country has been grappling with in its bid to advance the MDGs. These include how to use technology to improve communication and development, and how to build capacity and ensure that statistics and information technology are taken to the communities at district level.

- 37. Zambia has scored some success within the framework of the MDGs, as shown by the following indicators:
 - The female/male ratio in education has improved, but more can still be achieved;
 - Zambia has almost attained the 30% ratio of female representation in Parliament.
- 38. Key challenges remain, with the most pressing being the high maternal mortality rate which has increased as a result of HIV/AIDS, and the high under-5 mortality which has increased as a result of poor health facilities and poor maternal health.

Case Study 4: Zimbabwe

- 39. The MDGs reporting has been undertaken though a lengthy consultative process with Government and CSOs, supervised by a cabinet committee on social services and headed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. Thematic groups (including UN and Government departments) were established to address cross-sectoral issues and to cover the various constituencies within the country. This process was crucial for government's capacity building efforts and for collaborative poverty monitoring. One of the lessons learned from the Zimbabwe MDG process is the need to focus more on mobilizing internal resources, with less reliance on external aid. An attempt has been made to cost some of the MDGs by focusing on both financial and human resource needs required to meet the targets.
- 40. Zimbabwe is currently facing acute socio-economic challenges that are likely to lead to a reversal in the progress made. Some of the issues that need to be addressed include:
 - Creating a viable economic environment for economic revival and growth
 - Employment creation
 - Combating HIV/AIDS
 - Poverty and hunger
 - Humanitarian crisis
 - Weakened public service delivery systems

Case Study 5: Lesotho

- 41. In Lesotho, Government and its partners have reached a general consensus on the link between the MDGs and PSRPs. Critical partners hips have been built in the process to ensure that civil society, donors and the private sector work together. The critical step therefore is to develop mechanisms for monitoring these goals. There has been a conscious effort to clearly integrate MDGs within the current policy setting, beginning with the long term vision 20/20. Three strategies have been agreed upon as the main vehicles for achieving the MDGs in Lesotho: the PRSP, the public sector improvement programme, and the national AIDS strategic plan. All these are being undertaken in partnership with the community, government ministries, development partners and the UN.
- 42. A complex mix of economic, environmental, and socio-political challenges have converged to threaten the attainment of the MDGs in Lesotho. The key development challenges include building good governance practices, addressing the high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 31%, reversing the food insecurity trend, reducing levels of chronic poverty and unemployment and reversing environmental degradation. In addition other key challenges faced by Lesotho include:
 - Weak institutional and technical capacity for poverty-related policy formulation, implementation and monitoring;
 - Weak national capacity on statistical information;
 - Institutionalising and sustaining the MDGs partnerships;
 - HIV/AIDS.
- 43. An additional perspective on the progress of the MDGs at country level was provided by the Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Finance in Zanzibar. In the discussions it was agreed that the MDGs should not replace earlier development commitments. Most existing development policies have a clear link with MDGs. In Tanzania, for instance, the established policy framework was based on the 20/25 vision for the mainland and 20/20 for Zanzibar. The process was both visionary and participatory.

- 44. International policy frameworks also seek to eliminate hunger and there is therefore a need to link the MDGs to national poverty monitoring frameworks. In Tanzania, as of 2002, around 200 indicators have already been developed for monitoring and reporting on the MDGs, and these will also be included in national plans. Three important considerations underpin the MDG process in Tanzania:
 - Civil Society should be involved in MDG monitoring as all citizens need to be kept abreast of development initiatives;
 - Capacity shortcomings of both central and local government to undertake an effective MDG awareness campaign should be addressed;
 - The importance of harnessing of private-public partnerships for achieving results should be stressed.

(v) PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVES

- 45. The parliamentary perspective focused on the some of the reasons underlying the uneven development progress made in Africa since the 1970s. This was linked to an examination of why many African countries have experienced reversals when compared with their earlier development trajectories. The MDG monitoring and reporting process requires in-depth analytical work but this should not be a purely technocratic process. Technical considerations need to be seen in the context of how they relate to major development concerns.
- 46. Objective conditions must be stated starkly and boldly and the realities must be examined. In the development arena Africa remains poorly integrated into the global economic or der and its development agenda continues to be dominated by the powerful political economy agendas of the G8 countries. Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) have done enormous damage to Africa and continue to do so. Falling global prices for primary commodities continue to affect African economies negatively.
- 47. At the subjective level oft-repeated frustrations and false starts have resulted in the growth of Afro-pessimism in certain quarters, but this perspective should be abandoned as a false paradigm. African countries should not accept self-denigration but should rather confront the issues that hinder development on the continent and work towards finding effective solutions. Pessimism is a negative force that limits people's capacity to engage with developmental problems at a substantive level.

Scepticism and pessimism are psychological constraints that prevent people from being proactive and innovative.

- 48. The current conjuncture suggests that there is no place in Africa for non-democratic leadership, the existence of which leads to pessimism and despair. Democracy is a matter of checks and balances, and the proposed Pan African parliament will enable African parliamentarians to ensure that the instruments for achieving democratic governance are put in place across the continent. Another important AU institution is the Peace and Security Council of Africa, which will be a critical instrument for dealing with recurrent African crises and for pursuing democracy through collaborative and inclusive channels.
- 49. NEPAD was a creation of African Presidents and is now on the ground as a document that is accepted by all. It constitutes the socio economic programme of the AU, drawn up by African Scholars and situated within the context of African history. If there are errors in the NEPAD initiative, they have been made by Africans and must be corrected by Africans themselves.
- 50. There was a call by the Member of Parliament for an examination of the realities of political power in Africa. It appears that many African parliaments do not debate NEPAD and this situation needs to be examined and questions asked as to why this is the case. If the NEPAD document does not reflect the reality of African aspirations and goals then this issue should be addressed as a matter of urgency. Policy processes are undergoing a tremendous change with the creation of the AU and NEPAD.
- 51. Most of the work of CSOs is situated within the ambit of ECOSOC. Civil Society includes churches, trade unions, NGOs and others, and they are important instruments of change. In Kenyan history, CSOs and the churches played an important role in bringing down the authoritarian government.

D. WORKING GROUPS

52. A great deal of work was done in the working groups, which were divided according to the three thematic areas, and which met after the plenary sessions. The reports from the working groups reflected the fact that extensive, wide-ranging and insightful discussions had taken place. These Reports were presented to the plenary, discussed, amended and adopted as part of the Forum conclusions. The

synthesised summaries for each thematic area are presented below. The full deliberations of the working groups, as well as the outcome papers, can be viewed on the MDG Forum website at: http://www.sasurfs.undp.co.zw/MDGsForum.html and www.sarpn.org.za

(i) POLICY REFORMS AND MDGS

- There was general agreement that countries in the sub-region needed to link the MDGs process 53. to a long-term development vision, which should include the PRSP process. The policy making process involved in developing strategies around the MDGs should be consultative and participatory processes that involves all relevant stakeholders. They should also take place within the context of good governance at all levels and a commitment to decentralised decision-making and implementation processes. Progress towards achieving the MDGs can be facilitated by a decentralised approach that brings government closer to communities, provides more immediate responses to local needs and improves the delivery of basic services. Such a flexible, streamlined and multifaceted approach would assist countries in taking national ownership of the MDGs as a means to achieving meaningful and It was acknowledged that the reality is that developing countries are concrete development results. under intense pressure from competing political and economic interests and agendas, both externally and internally. These countries therefore needed to set very clear and achievable development priorities within the constraints imposed by globalisation. At the same time particular attention needs to be given to HIV/AIDS, universal primary education and food security, which constitute the most overarching threats to national development priorities and long-term sustainable development.
- 54. The connection between delivery and capacity was strongly emphasised and UNDP and other development partners were urged to support the strengthening of institutional capacity and performance, particularly in the areas of statistics, the development of quality indicators, the costing of MDGs, and the setting up of effective monitoring and evaluation systems. It was stressed that issues of governance and decentralization should be addressed more seriously as a prerequisite for the attainment of the MDGs. Initiatives such as these have very clear cost implications, often beyond the means of individual developing countries, and stress was therefore placed on the need to link resource mobilization at the national level with efforts at the international level. The issue of resource mobilisation was linked to the negative impact that debt repayment, capital flight and unequal trade relations have on the economies of developing countries and emphasis was placed on the need for developed countries to re-examine their stance on these issues.

(ii) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MDGS

- 55. The various dimensions of sustainable human development within countries, such as health, education, environment and food security, should be linked to the MDG targets in a practical and achievable manner. To assist their countries in achieving key development targets Governments should ensure that legislative and regulatory frameworks create an enabling environment consistent with the achievement of MDG targets. The MDG process does not stand in isolation from the broader development context and should therefore be linked with complimentary global and national political commitments and development processes.
- 56. There is a strong recognition that the MDGs need to be made as accessible as possible to communities across all levels of society. To make this possible updated, accurate and relevant statistics are required and to this end calls were made for a sub-regional database to be developed which would store customized indicators for the Southern African context. This should include, as a matter of urgency, an analysis of changing demographic profiles in the sub-region as a result of HIV/AIDS and its long-term implications on the management of environmental resources. The availability of such relevant data would mean that the discourse around sustainable development and the MDGs could be repackaged and disseminated to the local level in an accessible and appropriate way.
- 57. Aligning national and global policy agendas to meet sustainable development needs is a complex and challenging task that requires clear guidelines and adequate institutional capacity. To this end development partners should support institutional strengthening and enhance the capacity of Governments to deliver on specific MDG targets. CSOs are important partners in the sustainable development terrain and in areas where Governments may lack the necessary capacity to deliver on specific development priorities, for example in areas such as the collection and interpretation of environmental data, CSO capacity should be strengthened.
- 58. In order to support and monitor institutional alignment with the MDG national and regional mechanisms, standards and regulations should be established in an effort to achieve policy coherence at all levels. One means of achieving this broad objective would be to screen government programmes (including budgets) and private sector investments against the MDG indicators to ensure policy alignment. In conjunction with this national and regional approach stakeholders should lobby strongly for donor coordination around MDG 7. Clearly the mobilisation of domestic resources would strengthen the ability of countries to meet the implementation costs associated with MDG 7.

(iii) PARTNERSHIPS AND MDGS

- 59. The establishment of global partnerships for development, as set out in MDG 8, holds great potential for development progress in the southern African region. As a means to achieving this goal Governments should work towards creating an enabling legislative framework at the national level to facilitate the development of such support partnerships. National budgets and plans should reflect commitments made at the international level and it was suggested that the 2020 concept should be revisited.
- 60. The development vision articulated in NEPAD is structured within the context of the MDGs and Governments in the region should therefore endeavour to popularise and strengthen national ownership of NEPAD. At the same time Governments should develop advocacy strategies aimed at popularising the MDGs, as well as other internationally agreed instruments for poverty reduction such as PRSPs.
- 61. Partnerships at the local and national level will ideally bring together the state, civil society and the private sector in a joint effort to combat poverty and grow the economy. To achieve a workable and productive nexus of partnerships Governments will have to be more open and transparent with all stakeholders, particularly civil society. The building of successful partnerships would enable Governments and their development partners to build stronger partnerships with civil society and the private sector around thematic issues such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and the food crisis.
- 62. At the national level Governments should forge alliances with lobby groups in the North which are well disposed, are technically competent and have the capacity to lobby and advocate for support to the South. At the regional level SADC should work to strengthen its collective bargaining mechanisms with other global and regional institutions in order to leverage improved trade and financial terms for the region. To support these processes UNDP and other development partners need to support the building of technical capacity to monitor all internationally agreed instruments and initiatives, including the MDGs and NEPAD. To this end Governments need to give priority to the achievement of national and international development goals and should ensure that the responsibility for overseeing these initiatives are situated at the highest levels of government.
- 63. Effective partnerships with the private sector are critical for economic growth and development and countries in the sub-region need to ensure that they put in place policies that support and strengthen

their domestic economies and create an enabling environment for private sector and financial institutions to operate. Appropriate and well-planned endogenous development initiatives, which should include industrial and trade capacity development, will enable countries to take advantage of regional and global market access, reduce dependency on primary commodities and address their trade deficits. This can only be achieved in partnership with the international community and within a context of a global trade and finance regime that is open, rule-based and non-discriminatory and enables developing countries to benefit economically from market access.

E. CIVIL SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE

64. Within the framework of the MDG Forum the Civil Society Organisations provided their perspectives on how they can better engage with other partners in enhancing the efforts to work towards achieving the MDGs in Southern Africa. The main issues discussed and presented in a statement by CSOs are outlined below.

(i) TYPE AND SCOPE OF PARTNERSHIPS AMONG CSOS AND GOVERNMENTS TO ADVANCE MDGS

- 65. Stressing the value and importance of state / civil society / private sector partnerships in achieving the MDGs, the CSO view was that:
 - Partnership should be based on mutual accountability, confidence and trust. The current situation is uneven in that while in some countries partnerships are well developed in others they are nonexistent;
 - Partnerships between Government, Business and Civil Society, or the so-called Tripartite (negotiating) Forums, should be encouraged as a way to adopt a common development agenda, as well as foster participatory processes for all stakeholders;
 - UNDP should not bring in CSOs at the end of programmes that they have already prepared (the socalled "icing on the cake"), but should involve them right from the initial planning stages;
 - Engaging the *policy space* through analytical work is crucial if CSOs are to be effective players in all processes. CSOs need to get a sense of how and whether people understand the issues, possibly through awareness raising and advocacy campaigns where appropriate. However the lack of debate

could be a result of the way the MDGs campaign has been packaged. Perhaps UNDP should repackage the MDGs in such a way that they are more easily internalised.

(ii) ENTRY POINTS FOR CSO ENGAGEMENT

- 66. A crucial consideration for CSOs, in terms of their capacity, is where exactly to position themselves most effectively in order for them to engage with the MDGs in an optimal way. The following key entry points for CSO engagement were identified:
 - Analytical work;
 - Advocacy;
 - Dissemination of information;
 - Monitoring and watchdog function.

(iii) MAJOR CONSTRAINTS FACED BY CSOS IN THE MDGS PROCESS

- 67. CSOs face a number of constraints in their efforts to engage with the MDGs process. These constraints mainly have to do with mandate and legitimacy issues:
 - Governments tend to view CSOs as necessary evils in the mandatory consultation process, but do not take them seriously;
 - CSOs also often lack an in-depth analysis of the situation and are often ill prepared for meetings, hence their contribution is ineffectual, and their credibility is damaged forever;
 - Some CSOs tend to be too outspoken and their views are often treated as the views of opposition politics. They in themselves are viewed, and at times they act, as if they are a Government in waiting. This often marginalizes their participation in MDG processes;
 - CSOs are perceived to represent the interests and agenda of donors, which may not be acceptable to the political authorities.
- 68. In addition to these concerns other constraints were identified as follows:
 - The inclusion of private sector and business associations in the configuration of civil society results not only in confusion but also serious conflict of interest.

The tendency to homogenize civil society and treat it as a monolithic entity can be counterproductive for both Governments and CSOs. CSOs differ in their strategies of engaging their mission and vision, depending on where they are placed. Advocacy groups, for example, would be best suited to be involved in the entire process, from planning to monitoring. Others that are technical experts in their areas of operation and fields of expertise should be involved in programmatic ways. The latter group includes NGOs in service delivery.

(iv) SPECIFIC ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE UNDP

- 69. The role of UNDP and its relationship with CSOs was examined and the following points were made:
 - It is perceived to have conflict resolution expertise, particularly when there is a conflict between Governments and CSOs;
 - UNDP is an apolitical and neutral player in development and as such has the muscle to remove potential conflict between CSOs and Governments;
 - UNDP has the technical and capacity building expertise to assist and enable both Government and CSOs in development programming;
 - To an extent UNDP can mobilize financial and other resources towards development programmes

(v) CSOS: THE WAY FORWARD

70. It was agreed that a Southern Africa CSO experts meeting (composed of the CSOs that attended the Forum) should be held to map out how the partnerships will be built and/or enhanced. As a further follow up an Africa Forum aimed at clarifying the role of CSOs in the MDGs process will be held at a later stage. UNDP will liaise with the CSOs with regard to organizing the Experts meeting.

F. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

71. The MDGs Forum for Southern Africa was designed to give momentum to the MDGs campaign at the national and sub-regional level. It also sought to contribute to the vision of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for accelerated development across the whole continent. The wideranging and intensive deliberations held during the Forum highlighted the key factors that will

ultimately determine the degree of success that will be achieved in the move to accelerate the progress towards meeting the MDGs within the timeframes set.

These factors include the following:

- Ensuring country level ownership of development policies and processes, while acknowledging
 that this ownership also requires accountability, transparency and the need for countries to count
 on their own resources first before requesting external support;
- Participation that includes all actors in the development process;
- Institutional and human capacity building;
- Partnership building; and
- Monitoring of the MDG process.
- 72. There was consensus that the MDGs do not replace earlier development commitments but rather reinforce and deepen them. To this end the participants at the Forum, working in thematic groups, produced a set of core recommendations for taking the MDGs process forward in the sub-region. These recommendations are grouped below in themes:

(i) THE SOUTHERN AFRICA CRISIS

73. In the context of implementing the MDGs the biggest challenge facing southern Africa is the vicious triangle of HIV/AIDS – Food Insecurity – Weak Governance systems. It is therefore recommended that MDG strategies in the Southern Africa region address the nexus of developmental and humanitarian issues related to this vicious triangle.

(ii) CUSTOMISATION OF THE MDGS

74. It is important for countries to adopt the MDGs within a national context so that development objectives are set against the socio-economic and political realities of each country. In essence this implies that the measurement of progress should be set against the country baseline situation. It is also important that the MDGs are fully integrated within existing national development priorities and linkages between the MDGs and national planning and budgetary frameworks should be ensured.

(iii) NEPAD

75. There is a need to improve communication, commitment and enhanced participation by all southern African stakeholders in the NEPAD initiative. Deeper sensitisation campaigns on NEPAD that engage civil society organisations and the private sector are required.

(iv) POLICY REFORMS

76. If the MDGs are to be achieved within the stipulated timeframes a broad array of policies and institutional considerations need to be addressed, ranging from good governance, an efficient public sector and structural and market reorientation, to sound macroeconomic policies and policies for equitable growth and poverty reduction. The MDGs must be placed high on the development agenda of countries, with commensurate policy-setting and budgetary resources made available to facilitate implementation and delivery programmes.

(v) INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

77. Governments, civil society and the private sector require adequate levels of institutional and human capacity to take policies through the full policy cycle. Institutional capacity strengthening is therefore critical for successful policy formulation, analysis and implementation. Such institutional capacity building should be carried out in collaboration with internal and external partners to ensure that best practices are built into the process.

(vi) STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING

- 78. Overcoming the weak statistical capacity of many countries in the sub-region is a crucial priority for capacity building. Governments and development partners need to work together to strengthen statistical systems so as to enable regular monitoring of the MDGs and other essential information required for evidence-based policy making.
- 79. UNDP, as "scorekeeper" and "campaign manager" of the MDGs should continue to forge strategic partnerships and support the strengthening of national statistical capacity as a basis for policy and decision-making, performance tracking, monitoring and reporting.

MDG Forum Report, Johannesburg 2-4, 2003

80. It is essential for UNDP, in partnership with other agencies and donors, to work together and better coordinate their support in their efforts to strengthen statistical capacity in the sub-region.

(vii) ENGAGEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER PARTNERS

81. The potential entry points for civil society engagement - undertaking analytical/research work, advocacy, disseminating information on the MDGs and monitoring/social watchdog function - need to be better appreciated and utilized in partnerships with all stakeholders.

82. The effective and strategic realignment of government, private sector and donor initiatives, programmes and budgets allocated to the MDGs will be important in realizing achievements.

(viii) DONOR PRACTICES

83. To achieve the MDGs in the sub-region within the stipulated timeframe ODA, trade, global technological priorities and debt relief will of necessity need to be driven by human development concerns. Aid practices will need to be harmonized and simplified to help recipient countries reduce transaction costs related to the absorption of ODA. Donor coordination around the MDGs is crucial, in order to avoid duplication, reduce the pressure on communities from different donor models and approaches, and promote synergies between various initiatives.

84. Industrialized countries will need to change their lending policies, lower their tariff barriers and subsidies, and widen access to markets to help developing countries build capacity to diversify and expand their trade. It is imperative that technological innovations reach the poor, in particular improving access to vaccines and new drugs for HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria

La séance est levée
The meeting is concluded

ANNEXES

A. ANNEX 1: SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

(i) THE COST OF FINANCING THE MDGS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Introduction

- 1. In the presentation by Jubilee Research U.K. on the cost of financing the MDGs in Southern Africa, an attempt was made to provide ballpark figures for achieving each goal. In order to provide sufficient funding to meet Goal 1, taking account of existing savings rates in the region, it has been estimated that external financing of **US\$17.6bn** will be required. Taking account of existing inflows (including private flows, loans and grants) and outflows (debt service and profit remittances) to the region, the outstanding funding gap for Goal 1 in the sub-region is **US\$15.5bn**.
- 2. The cost of achieving the remaining goals has been calculated at **US\$10.5 billion**. This figure excludes parts of Goals 7 (Sustainable Environment) and 3 (Gender) for which the data is currently incomplete. The actual breakdown is as follows:

Goal 2 (Education) - US\$2.9 billion

Goal 3 (Gender)
 No reliable data

■ Goal 4 – 6 (Health) - US\$6 billion

■ Goal 7 - Incomplete data

* Water and Sanitation Target - US\$1.1 billion

* Slum Dwellers Target - US\$0.5 billion

3. It is important to stress, however, that Southern Africa as a whole requires resources for other areas of expenditure, including public administration, infrastructure, law and order, and debt servicing. These items require total funding of **US\$8.1bn**. Taking into consideration Southern Africa's existing capacity to mobilize resources including tax revenues, and the existing level of loans and grants, the funding gap for Goals 2-7 is around **US\$5bn**.

Addressing the funding gap

4. In summary, therefore, it seems that the funding gap for meeting the MDGs in Southern Africa amounts to somewhere between **US\$5bn** and **US\$15bn**. These figures do not include the effects of the current crises in Africa such as drought, famine, HIV/AIDS, and the impact that they may have on internal resource availability. Resources to fill this funding gap can be mobilized through trade, aid (including the International Financing Facility), private capital flows, worker's remittances and debt relief.

Targeting debt relief

- 5. Debt continues to impose a serious drain on the resources of Southern African countries:
 - Total debt stock US\$78.1bn
 - Annual debt service US\$6.8bn
 - Debt as a % of GDP 50% (100% excluding South Africa)
- 6. Jubilee Research, U.K. is targeting its efforts on debt relief for the following reasons:
 - There has been poor (or negative) progress on trade liberalization;
 - Global aid flows are in a long term decline and even the IFF is unlikely to achieve significant long term improvement;
 - Debt relief is de facto budget support so it can be spent very flexibly without countries having to become involved in costly donor funded projects and consultancies;
 - Debt relief provides for greater ownership in recipient countries;
 - There is small but growing political support in creditor countries;
 - Expenditure of resources released by debt relief is transparent, predictable and flexible (unlike aid which is subject to political concerns in donor countries);
 - Debt relief is the most effective means of transferring funds to the poorest countries.
- 7. There is growing support for debt relief to achieve the MDGs and this has been articulated in the following instances:

- NEPAD contains a specific element calling for debt relief to be linked to the MDGs;
- The UN Financing for Development (FfD) Summit called for debt sustainability assessments to be linked to the MDGs;
- HIPC ministers have issued a statement supporting debt relief;
- Support has been expressed by certain creditors (i.e. Ireland);
- Southern and Northern NGOs continue to advocate to have debt relief taken more seriously in the context of the MDGs;
- MDG Goal 8 specifically commits the international community to try to make debt sustainable.
- 8. Increased effort to achieve sustainable debt is clearly and urgently required. At present the HIPC Initiative is not working in the Southern Africa region for the following reasons:
 - 7 of the 15 Southern African countries are HIPC countries;
 - Only 2 of the 7 have reached the completion point of HIPC and will therefore receive a debt write off;
 - 2 countries have still not reached the decision point.

The debt scenario clearly has serious implications for the attainment of the MDGs in the Southern Africa region.

(ii) MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORTS: CHARACTERISTICS AND STRUCTURES

- 9. A recent review by UNDGO of the guidelines for preparing Millennium Development Goals Reports (MDGRs) has led to the distillation of a number of lessons regarding the structure of country MDG reports. Key factors to consider are:
 - The reports need to take into account the context in which the MDGs are being tackled in the country. The macroeconomic context needs to be considered, as should the linkages between the various goals;
 - Poverty needs to be addressed more fully and the language used to discuss it needs to be agreed upon for greater consistency;

- Disaggregation is very important in the reports and needs to be improved. This should be done
 across regions, as well as for ethnicity, gender, and income groups;
- Consideration of the progress made on Goal 8 requires greater emphasis.

Purpose of the MDGR

10. The MDGR should be considered as a tool for awareness raising, advocacy and mobilizing support for achieving the MDGs. The report should help to focus attention on the local development debate. Preparation of the report will help to build national capacity for monitoring progress and will generate a common assessment methodology which can be used by all stakeholders to debate key development issues.

Content of the MDGR

11. Reports should be concise and written in non-technical local language to allow for easy access by everyone in the local community. To avoid over-detailed analysis, MDG reports should draw on existing reports, national development plans, the Common Country Assessment (CCA), National Human Development Reports (NHDR), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and JIM. The indicators selected should be informed by global agreements but still located within the national context. The report should also reflect the fact that the focus on the MDGs is on results and not on inputs.

Goal 8 and the MDGR

12. In the initial MDG guidance notes, countries were not required to report on Goal 8. This has however been changed by practice from the developing countries.

Positioning the MDGR

13. The opinion was expressed that it is essential to embed the preparation of the MDGR in the national poverty monitoring strategy rather than developing it as a stand alone document. In this way, the MDGR is empowered to have a greater impact on policy.

Standard Terminology in the Millennium Development Goals Reports

14. Concern was expressed over the need to use standard terminology in all country reports since the language should be specific to the country and the text should be crafted to serve as an effective advocacy and awareness raising tool. The key issue is to initiate the MDG debate in all countries.

(iii) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MDGS

Background

- 15. The interconnectedness between development and environment has long been empirically established. The concept of **Sustainable Development** (SD) emerged as a means of clarifying these links at the policy level and thereby establishing a nexus between development policies and programmes, and environmental protection objectives and strategies. The concept was first propounded in the World Conservation Strategy (1980) and further developed in the *Bruntland Commission Report* in 1987 and later in *Agenda 21* (negotiated at the UN Conference on Environment and Development "Earth Summit" in Rio in1992).
- 16. In the years immediately following the Earth Summit, it became apparent that the world community was making poor progress in implementing Agenda 21 and national sustainable development action plans. Analysts variously attributed this to problems in setting priorities for different SD goals in the face of budget constraints, and uncertainties regarding how to integrate programmes across sectors to implement the SD action plans. The MDGs provide a framework as well as clear targets for pursuing sustainable development and should be approached as a conceptual road map for addressing social, environmental and economic issues in a holistic and integrated manner.

Navigating the Road Map

17. Questions still arise as to how the road map should be interpreted. Planners in many African countries as well as elsewhere have grappled with the problem of integrating social, economic and environmental goals in the face of tradeoffs and budget constraints. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, in 2002 established a Plan of Action for the Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity (WEHAB) sectors in an attempt to provide greater coherence. The WSSD outcomes recognized that poverty eradication would be a key pre-condition for sustainable

development in Africa, coupled with efforts to improve governance, establish an enabling environment for investment and the formulation of sound environmental, social and economic policies.

- 18. Several issues need to be addressed if MDGs are to provide an effective road map for achieving sustainable development. The following factors are critical:
 - Developing a shared national vision for development and clarity on strategies and policies that
 must be pursued. In order to achieve this there needs to be clarity about vision, tactics and
 obligations;
 - The linkages between the MDGs in specific country contexts need to be uncovered, which is particularly pertinent to the integration of MDGs 1 and 7 (Poverty and Environment);
 - Building and sustaining partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society;
 - Founding policy analyses and national programmes on sound economic principles;
 - Improving governance systems, including accountability;
 - Strengthening decentralization (applying the principal of subsidiarity), which means that problems should be tackled at the most decentralized level where effective management is possible. This requires enhancing the capacity of the poor to manage the environment;
 - Policy reform will be crucial to successfully navigating this process. Experience from around the world has shown that there are ten preconditions for effecting policy change. Pertinent among these are timing (pursuing reforms at opportune moments in history), rooting environmental policy in the development discourse, nominating 'policy champions' to steer policy processes and mediate between different interest groups, allowing time to resolve conflicts, and ensuring donor coordination. To achieve this, adequate time budgets need to be allocated.

Outstanding Challenges

19. There are a number of key challenges to the effective integration of environmental objectives into national development policies and programmes in Southern Africa. These include, *inter alia*:

- A paucity of information (indicators need to be customized to the needs of the region and statistics need to be improved);
- Ensuring a better intersection between policy making and budgetary appropriation processes (including ensuring that environmental concerns feature in PRSPs, so as to assure adequate appropriations), and the development of monitoring mechanisms tied to the policy process;
- Effecting regional cooperation; and
- Building and sustaining partnerships across different stakeholding constituencies.

The Business Perspective

- 20. The paradigm urged is that sustainable development is everyone's problem and everyone's opportunity. Several sectors of the business community in Southern Africa are contributing to the realization of sustainable development goals, both by creating the engine for economic growth and by ensuring greater levels of corporate social and environmental responsibility. The businesses at the vanguard of this movement tend to be multi-national corporations, with listings on European and North American Stock Exchanges, where aggressive share holder and consumer activism has catalysed changes in business practices.
- 21. In South Africa, progressive businesses have invested in poverty alleviation and environmental protection, such as through the Business Trust, capitalized at ZAR 1 billion (approximately US\$ 700 million). Businesses are also supplying, among other things, anti-retroviral medication to HIV infected employees. Such investment is motivated by good business sense. While the immediate payback is limited and diffuse, private sector participation in the SD arena contributes to nation building and the expansion of the country's productive functioning. In other cases, business is motivated by the desire to improve productivity, reflected in the programmes implemented by some companies that offer healthcare to their employees.
- 22. A number of challenges exist in terms of catalysing durable private-public partnerships for Sustainable Development:
 - The lack of clarity regarding country specific MDG targets and priorities;

- A tendency to view the private sector as a 'cash cow', and simply a vehicle for supplying finance. The private sector may also provide technical assistance and in-kind inputs, which are often undervalued;
- Weak articulation of the role of business. Business is motivated by profit-making principles, and while some companies do commit sizable resources for not-for-profit concerns, opportunities for involving businesses in the SD quest would be expanded if win-win investment opportunities were to be identified. This requires the development of an enabling policy and regulatory environment, political leadership and the fostering of productive stewardship;
- Suspicion amongst other stakeholding groups regarding the motivation of businesses, which tends to undermine the process of partnership construction and divide constituencies;
- Businesses are seeking efficient solutions with low transactions costs. In this context it is important that the private sector be actively involved in the process of articulating issues that feed into legislation.
- 23. Key to success in creating private-public partnerships will be the development of incentive mechanisms. Implementation mechanisms should be tested and adapted to avoid unintended consequences. The use of voluntary codes of conduct rather than prescriptive measures for facilitating participation should be encouraged, wherever practical. Changing business practices should be recognized and rewarded, such as Corporate Social Investment initiatives, better company reporting, and the institutionalisation of ethical business codes. Business tends to respond very well to real opportunities with real paybacks and this demands the identification of practical measures for implementation. Unless these issues are collectively addressed, business involvement in the pursuance of SD objectives is likely to remain sub-optimal.

The View from Civil Society

24. "The World is like a casino and the World economy is based on a gamble - but the South does not understand the rules of gambling, thereby contributing to its disenfranchisement through globalisation". With these words a CSO representative cautioned against the MDGs becoming yet another development buzzword, smacking of tokenism in the face of accelerating poverty, environmental degradation, and health crises. Due diligence should be exercised in framing the strategies to be used in achieving MDGs.

- 25. There is a need to prioritise interventions, a process that will necessarily be moderated by the given political environment and cultural values, norms and needs of individual countries. While the MDGs deservedly focus on the poor, decision-makers tend to assume they know what the poor need. Sustainable Development strategies are not always compatible with the actual needs and priorities of the poor. There is a need to change mindsets in order to enable the poor to define their own solutions. In this context, a very clear definition is needed for poverty that does not focus solely on monetary targets (for example the % of people subsisting on less than US\$ 1 per day), but which also looks at expanding the space for people to participate in decision-making on matters that concern their daily lives and livelihoods, that affords them poor property rights, and that offers them real choices.
- 26. SD is being defined in different ways and there is an urgent need to reach a societal consensus. The tradeoffs, given the prevailing budget constraints and capacities, need to be carefully weighed. For instance, countries should be cautious about focusing on primary education at the expense of secondary and tertiary education. A lack of attention to the latter would unintentionally undermine the ability of the South to participate in the "globalised" world, with the accompanying risk that the South will become more rather than less externally dependent. There is a need to recognize that there are strong interrelationships between the MDGs and that they should not be pursued in a segmented or compartmentalised manner owing to their inter-dependent nature.
- 27. One shortcoming associated with the MDGs is that they do not look explicitly at over-production and over-consumption, which are both root causes of environmental degradation at the global level. It would be useful to have another MDG looking at this issue. Finally, caution should be exercised in financing the MDGs with the concern that ODA may become just another form of "AIDS", further entrenching Africa's dependency.

Regional Dimensions

28. Plenary discussions also called for national reports to look at the regional dimensions of sustainable development more coherently. Many development and environmental problems (the food crisis being one) are shared by several countries in the region. There is a need for regional coordination and integration to address many of these issues satisfactorily. Regional cooperation would also create a common platform for tabling pressing concerns with the international community.

Responsibility of the North

29. Concerns were raised at the manner in which the indicators for Goal 7 have been framed. It was suggested, for example, that target nine should have been included in Goal 8: the Global Compact. The MDGs do not look explicitly at what the North should be doing to protect the environment. This is a major omission, as several global environmental problems, such as climate change, are disproportionately caused by the North.

Governance

30. It was also noted that the MDGs do not include a goal/target indicator for governance, which is critical for assuring sound environmental management, particularly in Southern Africa.

(iii) IS MDG 8 ON TRACK AS A GLOBAL DEAL FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?

Making trade work for the people

- 31. The presentation made was based on the recent UNDP publication "Making Global trade Work for People", which bases its analysis on the following propositions:
 - Economic growth is not sufficient to reduce poverty;
 - Trade liberalization does not necessarily lead to accelerated aggregate growth;
 - Inequality is not good for growth.

In this perspective poverty is viewed not only as lack of income and jobs, but also as a lack of access to basic social services, lack of equity and powerlessness.

32. In order to achieve the MDGs, more will depend on the global commitment to finance the MDGs. The global consensus reached in Monterrey is that while developing countries are held responsible for achieving the MDGs, developed countries are requested to support the process and agree on a fair deal in trade. Suggestions for the successful achievement of the first seven MDGs by 2015 depend on global commitments for improved aid, steep debt relief, and fairer trade. This requires accountability from developed countries to fulfil their pledges and live up to international commitments.

Way Forward

- 33. At the global level the International Financial Facility was proposed by Gordon Brown, the UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer. The idea behind this facility is to double annual ODA to US\$ 100 billion through the use of long-term donor pledges for issuing bonds to cover the MDG needs of developing countries. Strong emphasis is put on flexibility in disbursement, conditionalities and reporting procedures. For accelerated progress it will be important to take into consideration the following:
 - There is a need to recognize mutual accountability/reciprocity;
 - Fiscal prospects in G7/EU are not promising for sustained increases in ODA;
 - As the Jubilee Campaign rightly put it, in the case of debt "radical solutions are required";
 - In relation to trade the five point agenda (agriculture, TRIPS and public health, services, policy space and strengthening trade capacity) is critical;
 - Slow or continued inaction on these issues will cast doubt on the viability of Goal 8, which stresses global partnerships.
- 34. If the MDGs in the sub-region are to be achieved within the stipulated timeframe the following factors will need to be addressed as a matter of urgency:
 - Aid, trade, global technological priorities and debt relief will of necessity need to be driven by human development concerns;
 - Industrialized countries will need to change their lending policies, lower their tariff barriers and subsidies, and widen access to markets to help developing countries diversify and expand their trade;
 - Aid practices will need to be harmonized and simplified to help recipient countries reduce transaction costs related to the absorption of ODA;
 - Ensuring that technological innovations reach the poor, including access to vaccines and new drugs for HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

(iv) TRADE AND THE MDGS

Introduction

- 35. The UNDP presentation on Trade and Liberalization presented a realistic and contextualised perspective that took into account the reality of current development trends. It also reflected the extent to which developing countries have been disillusioned by so many broken promises over the last 40 years. The question posed at this juncture was whether the MDGs signal yet another false development promise.
- 36. Doha has contributed to a certain extent to the realization of the MDGs, but progress on it is still elusive. Debt relief shows a discouraging trend as the Doha AID commitment and Debt relief strategy do not seem to be working. What is now required is a reality check because 2015 the deadline for achieving the MDGs is not that far off. If is appears that there is little hope of attaining the goals within the stipulated timeframe given the resources at hand and the tremendous development challenges that continue to reverse gains, such as HIV and AIDS and poverty then we need to either review these goals or abandon them altogether.
- 37. There is a need to include a recipient country perspective and developing countries should have adequate space to decide on their own policies. At Doha, African representatives fought against the propositions put forward by developed countries, but the WTO put pressure on African leaders to accept the propositions without any contradictory debates. This is not the way forward for sustainable development.
- 38. There are three blocks upon which the whole trade negotiation process seems to be built:
 - The imperial factor: There is need to create more space for developing countries to set their own agenda;
 - The social factor: Each society should have the right to decide who constitutes the most vulnerable segment of society whether that be children, the disabled, and/or the most poor;
 - **The Governance factor:** This means calling for truth and accountability with regard to issues of national power.

39. Since the UN system – which is leading the campaign on the MDGs – cannot challenge the imperial factor, it is very difficult for the MDGs to challenge it and make space for developing countries to set their own development agendas.

Debt relief and resource mobilisation

- 40. This discussion revolved around debt relief for Africa and what African countries could do as a block to lobby for debt relief. Clearly debt relief cannot be forced, and African countries can only continue to lobby for debt relief as a contribution from donor countries to Africa's pressing development needs.
- 41. The question of resources mobilization is crucial and UNDP has a very important role to play in ensuring that sufficient resources are budgeted for the achievement of the MDGs. Discussions also centred on how the MDGs could be used to reorient budget expenditures towards basic social services. There was general consensus that strong policy-oriented CSOs could play a significant role in keeping Governments focused in this direction.

Trade vs. Debt Relief

- 42. Concern was raised that too much emphasis is being placed on Debt Relief over improvements in the international trade regime. It was felt that while debt relief was an essential part of any package in support of the MDGs, there was also a need to include trade improvements since debt relief packages are proving very slow and cumbersome. Without the ability to trade on fair terms, no debt relief benefits will be sustainable in the long run.
- 43. An opinion was expressed that some weighting should be applied to the MDG balance sheet to reflect the potential impact of trade reform on achieving the MDGs. The complementarity of trade and debt relief was discussed. It was highlighted that in order to make the necessary capital investments to enable participation in trade, the government should not be required to allocate all of its revenues to debt servicing.
- 44. It was pointed out that those countries that have made the most progress on the MDGs on the back of increased trade have previously invested heavily in human development, thus increasing their

competitiveness in the global marketplace. It was generally agreed that achieving the MDGs will require a holistic approach which combines both aggressive trade reform and debt relief.

Investment Levels

45. The 49% investment rates required to achieve the large growth rates required for meeting the MDGs appear far too high. Some countries have achieved growth with far lower levels of investment than that. However, the 8% sustained growth rates will require drastic action, and the figures on investment serve as a much-needed wake up call.

Distribution Policies

46. It was noted that distribution does not mean taking away from some to give to others, but rather following human development strategies to achieve more equitable distribution. As an example, greater investments in health and education can be considered as de facto distribution policies and have been shown to build economic growth faster than stabilization.

(vii) NEPAD AND THE MDGS

- 47. Three main challenges have been identified in working with the MDGs:
 - There are very limited linkages between the MDGs and NEPAD;
 - NEPAD is a new paradigm and donors and partners need to act differently. To achieve the MDGs, a paradigm shift is fundamental in terms of policy, and enga gement with CSOs;
 - It is difficult for NEPAD to tackle the MDGs where there is no market.

In order to engage effectively with the MDGs, it is important to address two fundamental questions:

- Are the MDGs relevant?
- Are other indicators of performance in Africa required?
- 48. After 10 years the development community is still talking about and discussing the same development issues, while poverty continues to worsen. Yet the world provides both enormous

opportunities and tremendous challenges. Despite the plethora of research and documentation on the MDGs, there appears to be no single solution that comprehensively addresses the issue of poverty. What is urgently required is a more integrated approach to the issue of poverty. The MDGs have the potential to be the vehicle for sustainable human development, and UNDP should be congratulated for bringing back human development to the debate. However, it should be acknowledged that no human development is possible without macroeconomic stability.

- 49. The PRSP and the MDG frameworks are not sufficiently intertwined and integrated to create an ideal situation for sustainable human development and poverty eradication. More work needs to be done to ensure that these two frameworks talk to each other and become more integrated. Secondly, NEPAD should be fully endorsed as the framework for Africa's development as there is a pressing need to have one comprehensive overarching framework that addresses Africa's daunting development challenges. The NEPAD framework cannot and should not replace country-specific frameworks, but should be at the centre of all initiatives that address issues of sustainable human development. To achieve this responsible and committed leadership is required at all levels of Government, the private sector and CSOs. NEPAD is a very important vehicle and a cornerstone for the African development agenda, as it is through NEPAD that African countries can access a mechanism that provides them with the capacity, the mandate and the expertise to negotiate with external partners.
- 50. The issue of whether or not to institutionalise NEPAD is a crucial concern. A general concern was raised that the over-involvement of G7 countries may divert NEPAD from its primary objective to address the continent's development challenges, as has been the case previously with donor interests dominating the African development agenda. There is an urgent need for coordinated advocacy to promote the development agendas of African countries, and it was generally agreed that NEPAD provides this space.
- 51. It was also pointed out that the NEPAD framework cannot and must not replace country-specific frameworks, but should be at the centre of all initiatives that address issues of sustainable human development. It is a welcome sign that the indicators of the MDGs are fully in line with the performance indicators of NEPAD and thus provide an excellent opportunity for inter-linkage without overburdening national processes.

52. Several participants expressed deep concern that the MDGs could prove to be a mirage or another failed development promise. They pointed out that the North has made numerous development assistance undertakings in the past, including the New World Economic Order, North-South Dialogue, UN Development Decade for Africa, Structural Adjustment Programmes (macro adjustment to assure stability), followed by the UN Programme for Africa's Economic Development. These have created expectations in Africa, which have remained largely unmet. The lack of continuity and follow up to development promises has led to erratic delivery. Another delegate posited that there was a need to challenge Bretton Woods / United Nations prescriptions, and to find home-grown locally adapted development solutions. In response, other delegates argued that the MDGs should not be interpreted as yet another development solution for Africa. They represent concrete time-bound targets for which solutions needed to be framed and they do not represent a development programme, *per se.* NEPAD could provide an avenue for pursuing the MDGs, in a manner allied with African interests. The MDGs can provide leverage for NEPAD, as they represent a globally agreed set of goals.

(viii) THE MDGS: TOWARDS A CIVIL SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE ON REFRAMING POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

- 53. Since the mid-1990s, southern African civil society organizations have consistently campaigned against poverty and for policy and governance transformation towards defined social development objectives. The MDGs correspond directly with the objectives of civil society organizations that have been active in social and economic justice advocacy work in the region.
- 54. Consistent with the objectives of the MDGs, unemployment, the delivery of effective social services like health care and education, and poverty reduction are the main issues of concern to citizens in the region. Civil society discontent with government performance in Southern Africa and the lack of confidence in democratic participation translates into economic policy and social development concerns. The Afrobarometer, a comparative series of national civil society sample surveys on the attitudes of citizens to democracy and other aspects of development in Africa, showed results for 2000 in 7 southern African countries. These results indicated that civil society has relatively low levels of trust in public institutions in the region.
- 55. The CSO perspective argued that Southern Africa will remain mired in a poverty trap if there is a failure to transform poverty reduction policies from the basis of a developmental goal-driven framework

rather than through broad macroeconomic targeting policies. The MDGs can therefore provide Southern African civil society organizations with a credible, politically endorsed, global framework for democratic institutional and policy transformation in the interests of the poor at the local level. It was noted that the MDGs provide a ready-made and widely supported framework of social development benchmarks that can be effectively used as an advocacy tool by civil society organizations to monitor and expand social development programmes.

- 56. Concerns around the capacity of NEPAD to deliver on the MDGs were addressed in the CSO presentation. Some of the issues raised were:
 - NEPAD proposes a long-term and indirect poverty reduction strategy but what is to be done about the poor at this moment in time;
 - What is the role of private capital development for Africa's development?
 - NEPAD links debt cancellation to government revenues and costed poverty reduction programmes rather than export earnings;
 - There needs to be a strategy for addressing the problem of regional winners and losers;
 - The capacity for CSO participation and partnerships remains compromised by a lack of consultation;
 - NEPAD is a politically pragmatic economic development framework based on voluntary benefit and reward, and is not a target-driven social development strategy;
 - NEPAD has put African development back on the global political agenda;
 - NEPAD has created political will and civil society focus.
- 57. The position taken by the CSO grouping at the Forum was that in order for the MDGs to be successfully realised they needed to be integrated into Civil Society work and CSO activities. This perspective clearly engages with a number of key issues related to the MDGs:
 - MDGs should be used as benchmarks for policies and as advocacy tools;
 - Upward policy coherence is needed to reframe PRSPs;
 - New issues need to be raised, for example, secondary and tertiary education reduction to about
 1% of primary school allocation in Tanzania;
 - The Basic Income Grant (BIG) campaign in SA proposes to reduce South Africa's poverty gap by 74%, lifting 6.3 million people above the poverty line;

- An MDG civil society network for information and communication should be established;
- Not all CSOs will take up or support MDGs.

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