House of Commons
International Development Committee

Post–2015 Development Goals

Eighth Report of Session 2012–13

Volume I: Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence

Additional written evidence is contained in Volume II, available on the Committee website at www.parliament.uk/indcom

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The International Development Committee

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The Reports of the Committee, the formal minutes relating to that report, oral evidence taken and some or all written evidence are available in a printed volume.

Additional written evidence may be published on the internet only.

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Summary

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were launched at the UN General Assembly in 2001, and have had great influence on the field of international development. The Goals cover areas such as extreme poverty (i.e. living on less than US$1.25 per day), primary education, child and maternal mortality, and HIV/AIDS; each Goal is supported by underlying targets, most of which have a target date of 2015. In July 2012, the UN Secretary-General established a High-level Panel, tasked with making recommendations as to what should replace the MDGs after 2015. The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, is one of three co-Chairs of this Panel. We urge the Prime Minister and the High-level Panel’s other members to remain engaged with the process after their report is published and to continue to mobilise public opinion and to press Heads of Government to support their post-2015 agenda.

Under the MDGs, some of the targets are phrased in universal terms, but others are relative—on extreme poverty, for example, the target is not to eliminate it but to reduce it by half. The Prime Minister has argued that the post-2015 framework should aim for the elimination of extreme poverty, and we agree. Whilst this is ambitious, for the first time in history it is also eminently achievable.

Another key debate is whether the post-2015 framework should incorporate issues of environmental sustainability: our view is that it should. Poverty reduction and environmental sustainability are interdependent: the task of the present generation is to meet development challenges without compromising the interests of future generations.

Progress against MDG targets can mask significant inequalities between countries. For example, the MDG target to halve the proportion of people without access to safe water has already been achieved, but this is largely due to rapid progress in China and India: sub-Saharan Africa remains off-track. To ensure that the post-2015 framework does not hide such disparities, we recommend that—whilst the goals themselves should be global in scope—the underlying targets and indicators be specific to individual countries’ circumstances.

There is room for improvement in the means by which progress is measured. Under the MDGs, the tendency to assess progress by means of national averages has allowed great disparities, such as those between women and men or between particular regions of a country, to be hidden. Under the post-2015 framework, data should be broken down (‘disaggregated’) by gender and region, and by other variables as appropriate.

Since 2005, David Cameron has espoused the notion that successful development needed to be underpinned by a ‘golden thread’ of governance-related issues. We share the Prime Minister’s belief that good governance is fundamental to development, and we believe that it should be included in the post-2015 framework. The Prime Minister has defined the ‘Golden Thread’ in a number of different ways. We recommend that the Prime Minister give a clear and consistent definition of what he means by the ‘Golden Thread’ in response to this report given its importance in his thinking on the post-2015 framework and goals.

Job creation is one of the most crucial of all development challenges. Whilst the issue of
employment was included in the original MDG framework, it was insufficiently prominent and failed to capture the public imagination. In the post-2015 framework, the task will be to design an employment ‘goal’ which captures the imagination of people around the world.

The MDGs undoubtedly had great resonance around the world. The simplicity and measurability of the MDGs, and the level of responsibility countries have taken for meeting them, have been crucial factors in their success. For those involved in developing the post-2015 framework, the most critical task is to ensure that these strengths are retained.
1 Introduction

1. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were launched by the UN General Assembly in 2001 and cover such areas as extreme poverty (i.e. living on less than US$1.25 per day), primary education, child and maternal mortality, and HIV/AIDS. They have had great influence with policy makers in both developed and developing countries, as well as with civil society.\(^1\) The MDGs will expire in 2015; what will replace them to be of fundamental importance.\(^2\)

The Millennium Development Goals

2. The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were launched in 2001.\(^3\) Each MDG is supported by underlying targets and indicators: in most cases, the target date is 2015. The MDGs, together with some of the most prominent targets, are listed in Box 1; for a full list of the underlying targets and indicators, see Annex 1.

Box 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• MDG 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (targets include halving, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MDG 2 – Achieve universal primary education</td>
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<tr>
<td>• MDG 3 – Promote gender equality and empower women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MDG 4 – Reduce child mortality</td>
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<tr>
<td>• MDG 5 – Improve maternal health (targets include reducing by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MDG 6 – Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MDG 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability (targets include halving, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MDG 8 – Develop a global partnership for development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3. The MDGs were themselves derived from the Millennium Declaration, a broad-based document adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 8 September 2000.\(^4\) The key components of the Millennium Declaration are shown in Box 2.

\(^1\) Q 49

\(^2\) Official list of MDG indicators, effective 15 January 2008, www.un.org. A small number of the underlying targets have target dates other than 2015; see Chapter 5.

\(^3\) Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Report of the Secretary-General, 6 September 2001, www.un.org

Box 2

Key components of the Millennium Declaration

- A declaration of fundamental values, including freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility.
- Sections on the following topics:
  - Peace, security and disarmament;
  - Development and poverty eradication;
  - Protecting our common environment;
  - Human rights, democracy and good governance;
  - Protecting the vulnerable;
  - Meeting the special needs of Africa;
  - Strengthening the United Nations.


The UN High-level Panel

4. In May 2012, the UN Secretary-General announced his intention to establish a High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to be co-chaired by Prime Minister David Cameron, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia. The Prime Minister is supported in his role as co-Chair by a cross-Whitehall Committee of officials, including representatives from DFID, DEFRA, DECC, FCO and the Cabinet Office.

5. Subsequently the Panel was established, and its full membership announced, in July 2012. The role of the High-level Panel is to present a report making recommendations on the nature of the post-2015 development framework—in other words, the successor to the MDGs. The formal Terms of Reference for the Panel are set out in Annex 3.

‘Sustainable Development Goals’ process

6. The importance of sustainable development has long been recognised. In 1992, eight years before the MDGs were launched, the United Nations held a major conference on the subject in Rio de Janeiro. In June 2012, on the twentieth anniversary of that conference, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) took place. At this conference, separately from the post-2015 process outlined above, it was agreed to establish ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs). The Rio+20 ‘outcome document’ stated that an Open Working Group of thirty geographically representative members (nominated by UN Member States via the five UN Regional Groups) would be created with a view to drawing up SDGs.
7. This process, which is being overseen by the UN Permanent Representative of Brazil, has encountered significant delays. The Open Working Group was due to be set up in September 2012, yet its membership was not announced until December 2012.7

8. The task of the Open Working Group will be to draw up the SDGs, and to report back to the UN General Assembly during its 68th session (between September 2013 and September 2014).8 Amina Mohammed, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, stated in her evidence to us that: ‘We use the one secretariat to make sure that the inputs that go for both the High-level Panel and the support to the SDG working group will be given by the UN system.’9

Our inquiry

9. This inquiry represents a departure from our usual work: rather than holding DFID to account for its existing work, we are seeking to contribute to a broader debate around future priorities. As a Committee, we regard the post-2015 debate as being of fundamental importance to the future of international development. This, together with the presence of the British Prime Minister in such a prominent role, was the key reason behind our decision to undertake this inquiry.

10. Following this inquiry, we intend to remain engaged with the post-2015 development process. In the coming months, we will be publishing relevant reports on violence against women and girls and on DFID’s programme in Pakistan, with a major focus on education. During the remainder of this Parliament, we will be conducting a longer-term inquiry into the future of UK development cooperation.

11. Our report begins (Chapter 2) with a more detailed exploration of the processes by which the post-2015 development goals are being developed and the consultations which are being undertaken. In Chapter 3, we consider what the overarching purpose of the new goals should be, including consideration of the extent to which development should be integrated with issues of environmental sustainability. In Chapter 4, we assess the potential content of the post-2015 framework. In doing so, our intention is not to be prescriptive, but to set out some broad issues to be borne in mind when the framework is being developed. Finally, in Chapter 5, we assess the potential structure of the new framework, including a consideration of the role of targets and indicators.

12. We received 82 pieces of written evidence from a wide range of individuals and organisations. Some submissions addressed the issues very broadly; others focused on particular areas of expertise (Action for Global Health UK, for example, focused on health issues).10 We also held three oral evidence sessions. Witnesses at the oral sessions included Amina Mohammed, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning.

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10 Q 11
11 Q 109
14 Q 11
15 Ev w5-9
Development Planning; Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, the Secretary of State for International Development; Michael Anderson, the Special Envoy to the Prime Minister on the Development Goals; and leading academics and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Finally, we are grateful to Claire Melamed, of the Overseas Development Institute, for serving as our Specialist Adviser to this inquiry, and for providing us with invaluable guidance.
2 Post-2015 Development Goals: the process

Progress of the UN High-level Panel

13. The High-level Panel members were selected by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Deputy Secretary-General, based on 'a process of consultation with member states, with different constituencies, so from civil society and from business.'\(^{16}\) Subsequently, the Panel's co-Chairs appointed Dr Homi Kharas, Senior Fellow and Deputy Director of the Global Economy and Development Programme of the Brookings Institution,\(^{17}\) as Executive Secretary of the Panel and lead author of its report.\(^{18}\)

14. The Secretariat for the High-level Panel was due to be fully operational by September 2012. In practice, however, it was not fully operational until December.\(^{19}\) In addition, we were told that the Secretariat would only have a core team of 'about seven or eight,' plus external support.\(^{20}\) In contrast to the Commission for Africa, a similarly prestigious panel whose recommendations informed the 2005 G8 Summit at Gleneagles,\(^{21}\) this is extremely small: the Commission for Africa's own Secretariat had 42 members.\(^{22}\)

15. Even if the High-level Panel's secretariat had been appointed on time it would have had much less time and far fewer staff than the Commission for Africa secretariat. The High-level Panel's conclusions and recommendations are therefore less likely to have secured international political 'buy-in' before they are published. It is imperative to win international commitments to implement post-2015 development goals and we recommend that the UK retain its cross-Whitehall Committee of officials which has supported the Prime Minister in his role as co-Chair as well as trying to seek international agreement with the other co-Chairs to keep a UN secretariat in place until the UN General Assembly agrees the post-2015 development agenda.

16. The High-level Panel held an introductory meeting in New York in late September 2012, followed by its first substantive meeting in London on 31 October–2 November.\(^{23}\) Over the course of three days, the Panel members were briefed by a number of experts, engaged in various outreach activities and discussed the Panel's future programme of work.\(^{24}\) The Panel is due to meet next in Liberia from 29 January–1 February\(^{25}\) and again in

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\(^{16}\) Qq 3-4
\(^{17}\) "Homi Kharas of Pakistan appointed to lead Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda", Press Release SG/2185 BIO/4418 DEV/2955 from the UN Secretary-General, 19 September 2012
\(^{18}\) Q 6
\(^{19}\) Ev w130
\(^{20}\) Q 26
\(^{22}\) Q 28
\(^{24}\) Q 100
Indonesia in March. The Secretary of State for International Development, Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, told us that the Panel would discuss ‘national development’ at its Liberia meeting, and ‘global partnerships’ at its Indonesia meeting.26 The final meeting is expected to take place in New York in May 2013, with the High-level Panel presenting its report to the UN Secretary-General on 31 May 2013.27

Figure 1: timeline of key events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Millennium Declaration adopted by UN General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) launched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>UN Secretary-General announces intention to create High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and appoints the British Prime Minister as one of its co-Chairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>High-level Panel formally launched; full membership announced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td>High-level Panel holds introductory meeting in New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 October – 2 November 2012</td>
<td>High-level Panel holds first substantive meeting in London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 January – 1 February 2013</td>
<td>High-level Panel due to meet in Monrovia, Liberia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>High-level Panel due to meet in Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2013</td>
<td>High-level Panel expected to hold final meeting in New York; High-level Panel’s report to be presented to UN Secretary-General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequently</td>
<td>Post-2015 framework to be developed based on intergovernmental negotiations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. The High-level Panel conducts some outreach work during its meetings: its recent meeting in London, for example, included engagement with civil society, with business and with young people.28 However, it also holds private meetings29 whose minutes are not published. The Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning told us that: ‘The background papers will be open, but as far as the work goes, until such time as it is concluded, I believe that will remain internal to the Panel.’30

18. We accept that the High-level Panel wishes to hold some of its meetings in private. However, it is regrettable that no notes of such meetings are available to the public. In an age where transparency is increasingly important, publishing a note of meetings would have helped to achieve public ‘buy-in’.

25 “Extreme poverty could end within 20 years, Save the Children says”, Save the Children press release, 8 January 2013
26 Q 101
27 Q 18
28 Q q 10, 100
29 Q 21
30 Q 20
Taking forward the Panel’s recommendations

19. Following the High-level Panel’s report, an intergovernmental process will be launched to negotiate the post-2015 framework. This will be informed both by the High-level Panel’s report and by a subsequent report from the Secretary-General himself.31 However, the UN has not yet announced what form this intergovernmental process will take.

20. We know that the High-level Panel’s report will be followed by an intergovernmental process, but it is currently unclear what form this process will take or how the Panel and its secretariat will mobilise and lobby internationally to win political support for its proposals. To ensure that the current levels of momentum and public interest are not lost, we hope that this uncertainty can be resolved as soon as possible. We urge our Prime Minister, and the Panel, to set out clear proposals for an international campaign to secure support for the Panel’s proposals during the intergovernmental process.

21. Within the context of this intergovernmental process it will be important to ensure that the recommendations made by the High-level Panel are taken forward. Following the Commission for Africa’s first report in 2005, the UK Government invested great time, effort and political capital in persuading the heads of government of both donor and developing countries to implement its recommendations.32 If the High-level Panel’s recommendations are to have a similar degree of traction, our present Prime Minister should make it one of his personal priorities to build international political support for the High-level Panel’s proposals. Following publication of the High-level Panel’s report, the Prime Minister and his fellow panellists should focus on building international political support for its recommendations with a view to ensuring that they are incorporated in the post-2015 framework. To this end, it will be important to engage with heads of government from both donor countries and developing countries.

22. The UK has assumed the Presidency of the G8 for 2013.33 This presents another parallel with the Commission for Africa: in 2005, when the Commission for Africa’s first report was published, the UK also held the G8 presidency.34 On that occasion, the UK Government was able to use its G8 Presidency to win important commitments from a number of other G8 countries: deals were agreed for a $50billion increase in development assistance and for large-scale debt cancellation.35 However, some states failed to honour their commitments.36 Through its Presidency of the G8 in 2013, the present UK Government has an excellent opportunity to challenge its fellow G8 members to honour their existing commitments, and to push for further commitments. The UK Government, during its Presidency of the G8 in 2013, should encourage its fellow G8 members to make further, specific commitments to development.

33 Ev w69
36 Ev w41, w132
Consultation

23. For all their successes, the MDGs were born out of a process which was by nature unconsultative. As Lawrence Haddad, Director of the Institute of Development Studies, pointed out to us, the process ‘did not really engage many people who [were] actually suffering in poverty.’ In an attempt to ensure that the same is not true of the post-2015 framework, the UN is conducting various public consultations on the post-2015 process:

a) A number of country consultations in developing countries (due to report in March 2013)—see Box 3;

b) eleven thematic consultations (due to report in June 2013, and hence aiming to inform not the High-level Panel but the subsequent intergovernmental process)—see Box 4.39

Box 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UN country consultations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The initial number of participating countries was 50 – a ‘stratified sample of countries from different regions, of different income levels.’ Subsequently a further seven countries have joined, and any others which wish to join are free to do so.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• These consultations will be led by the UN Development Group (UNDG) teams in each participating country;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The consultations will seek the views of NGOs, community-based organisation, universities and research institutions, private sector entities, interest groups (trade unions, employers’ organisations, advocacy groups), national human rights institutions or ombudsmen, and political decision-makers.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Qq 40-3; ONE (Ben Leo with Khai Hoan Tram), ‘What does the world really want from the next global development goals: Ensuring that the world’s poor define the post-2015 framework, 2012, p 3.

37 Q 83
38 Q 40
39 ONE (Ben Leo with Khai Hoan Tram), ‘What does the world really want from the next global development goals: Ensuring that the world’s poor define the post-2015 framework, 2012, p 3.
40 Q 40
41 Q q 41:3
42 ONE (Ben Leo with Khai Hoan Tram), ‘What does the world really want from the next global development goals: Ensuring that the world’s poor define the post-2015 framework, 2012, p 3.
Box 4

UN thematic consultations

- Consulted parties will include academics, media, businesses, trade unions, and civil society.
- Each consultation will be led by the UN agency most relevant to the thematic area, and co-chaired by two Member States (one developed country and one developing country).43
- The eleven thematic areas are inequalities; governance; health; education; growth and employment; conflict and fragility; food security and nutrition; energy; water; environmental sustainability; and population dynamics.44

Source: ONE (Ben Leo with Khai Hoan Tram), ‘What does the world really want from the next global development goals: Ensuring that the world’s poor define the post-2015 framework, 2012, p 3; Overview of ongoing Thematic Online Consultations, held in the Framework of the UN’s Post-2015 Development Agenda, United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, 30 November 2012, www.un-ngls.org

24. Additionally, DFID has agreed to fund the ‘Participate’ initiative, which is to be convened jointly by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and by the ‘Beyond 2015’ civil society campaign. This initiative will seek to assimilate participatory research (both existing research and research which is currently ongoing) from a variety of sources, in an attempt to ensure that ‘the most vulnerable and marginalised communities’ have their voices heard.45

25. Furthermore, a global survey called My World has been developed by UNDP, the UN Millennium Campaign, ODI, the ONE Campaign and the World Wide Web Foundation. Its purpose is to ask people around the world which issues are most important to include in the post-2015 framework: each participant will be asked to choose six out of sixteen possible goals, with the additional option to suggest his / her own. The survey is accessible in a variety of formats: via a website, via a smartphone app, via social media, via SMS, and in paper form.46

26. DFID has agreed to provide US$1.6million in funding for My World. Other sources of funding are as follows:

a) Around US$1million from the UN

b) Around US$700 000 from a ‘mobile implementing partner’

Additional funders are still being sought.47

27. Some of these consultations will be completed before the High-level Panel’s report in May 2013, and will thus be able to inform this report. Others will not be completed until

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43 ONE (Ben Leo with Khai Hoan Tram), ‘What does the world really want from the next global development goals: Ensuring that the world’s poor define the post-2015 framework, 2012, p 3.
45 Ev 82. Participatory research involves ‘engaging the most marginalised and vulnerable groups, helping them to directly communicate the reality of their lives and what is most important to them.’
46 Ev w128
47 Ev w129
later, and will thus be seeking to inform the subsequent intergovernmental process rather than the High-level Panel per se.

28. It is vital that the post-2015 development framework reflects the needs of the poorest. We welcome the many consultation processes which have been launched: such processes will help the world’s poor to contribute to the debate. We commend DFID for providing funding for the ‘Participate’ and ‘My World’ initiatives. As the post-2015 process continues to develop, during and beyond the lifetime of the High-level Panel, the outcomes of these consultations should be taken fully into account. We urge the Prime Minister and the High-level Panel’s other members to remain engaged with the process after their report is published and to continue to mobilise public opinion and to press Heads of Government to support their post-2015 agenda.
3 Post-2015 Development Goals: the purpose

29. There is widespread agreement that the MDGs have been, broadly speaking, a success. At the same time, progress on some of the Goals has been limited, and there is a need to address additional areas which the MDGs neglected. This chapter addresses these issues in more detail.

Building on the MDGs

30. It is generally accepted that the MDGs since their launch have provided a useful focal point for development policy:

a) In his written evidence, Lawrence Haddad argues that the MDGs have led to an increase in levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA), and an increase in the proportion of ODA which is directed towards sub-Saharan Africa.

b) He also argues that some donor countries—particularly Scandinavian countries—have placed great emphasis on the MDGs.48

c) Moreover, the simplicity and measurability of the MDGs has enabled them to resonate with people and governments across the world (see Chapter 5).

d) In her oral evidence, Eveline Herfkens, former Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, told us that:

   It has been so important for the goals that they were signed on to by every head of state and head of government in every country in the world. The empowerment of civil society in developing countries comes from the fact that their own government, at the highest level, has signed on to it.49

31. The MDG targets to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and to halve the proportion of people without safe drinking water have been achieved already; there has also been significant progress towards the targets for completion of primary education; and gender equality in primary and secondary education. It should be noted, however, that targets are global in scope, rather than relating to specific countries. As such, progress against MDG targets can mask significant inequalities between countries. Broadly speaking, progress has been strong in East Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean; less strong in South Asia; and weakest of all in Sub-Saharan Africa.50

32. Moreover, progress towards some other MDGs is significantly off-track. In particular, progress towards the targets for infant mortality, maternal mortality and sanitation is
lagging. In these areas, there will be considerable ‘unfinished business’ to address after 2015.

33. **One of the key purposes of the post-2015 framework must be to build on the successes of the MDGs and where necessary to ‘finish the job’.** The successes of the MDG framework derived primarily from the fact that the MDGs had great resonance around the world: with governments, with civil society organisations and with ordinary people. If the post-2015 framework is to achieve similar success, it must retain these qualities.

**Interaction with ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ process**

34. There is much discussion about the extent to which the new goals should differ from the MDGs. This debate has implications for the content of the new framework (see Chapter 4), but it also has broader implications. More specifically, there is a debate as to whether the post-2015 ‘development’ agenda should be merged with the ‘sustainability’ agenda. This, in effect, would entail merging the post-2015 framework with the ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ (see Introduction).

35. The Gates Foundation argues that the new framework should ‘have extreme poverty as its core focus’. It has been reported that some organisations are reluctant to see the agendas merged, for fear that this core focus might be lost. CAFOD, in spite of its own support for a merged framework, acknowledges that ‘A lack of trust in the international system, coupled with successive disappointments at international summits, has left key governments with little confidence that an integrated process will deliver their priorities.’ Additionally, the Brazilian and Egyptian representatives at the UN have argued that there should in fact be two separate sets of goals.

36. However, the majority view is that the end result should be one combined set of global goals, covering both post-2015 and sustainability agendas. Paul Ladd, Head of Team on Post-2015 at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), argued that:

> From our perspective, we see very many occasions whereby progress on extreme poverty, which is what the MDGs were about, is now inseparable from many aspects of the natural environment, whether it is access to energy, access to water resources, or the use of ecosystems. Increasingly, it is becoming somewhat difficult to separate these issues for poor people living in poor countries.

Furthermore, in his evidence to us Lawrence Haddad, Director of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), argued that:

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51 Ev 44  
52 Ev w19  
53 Ev 77  
54 Ev w127-8  
55 Ev 72, w2, w132, w187  
56 Q 25
we now [...] recognise that there are trade-offs between generations and we somehow have to deal with the inequality within generations, at the same time as we are dealing with it across generations. If you have two ways of reducing poverty that are equally effective and one uses less resources than the other one, you need to know which one is using less resources and do it.57

37. Integration of the two agendas need not necessarily mean having a specific ‘sustainability’ goal within the post-2015 framework. Instead, it might mean including sustainability as a component part of all the post-2015 goals. Lawrence Haddad, of the Institute of Development Studies, suggested that resource use and emissions should be factored into each individual goal.58 Others have suggested the concept of ‘planetary boundaries’—i.e. ‘the environmental limits which human activities should stay within.’59 In its written evidence, the ESRC Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS) Centre argues that ‘Planetary boundaries can be understood as defining a ‘safe operating space’ for humanity within which development goals must assist societies to steer.’60 The Planetary Boundaries Initiative, in its written evidence, suggests a number of possible goals based on this concept, such as the following:

the goal could be an adequate supply of safe drinking water for all, achieved within the local and regional boundary for freshwater appropriation for each area. According to the recent ‘GEO5’ report (p97) the planetary boundary for human consumptive blue water use—hen used groundwater and surface water is not made available for reuse in the same basin—is estimated to be 4 000 km³ per year, with current consumptive blue water use estimated at approximately 2 600 km³ per year.61

38. We recommend that issues of sustainability be incorporated into the post-2015 framework. Poverty reduction and environmental sustainability are intimately connected: the task of the present generation is to meet development challenges without compromising the interests of future generations. As such, we believe that the arguments for merging the two agendas are stronger than the arguments for having two separate sets of goals. One option would be to include one specific goal on sustainability issues in the post-2015 framework. Ideally, however, sustainability should be included as a component part of a number of the post-2015 goals.

57 Q 82
58 Ibid.
59 Ev w137
60 Ev w54
61 Ev w138
4 Post-2015 Development Goals: potential content

39. As stated above, there are a number of consultation processes underway, of which full account should be taken when determining the content of the post-2015 framework. As such, whilst the evidence we received contains many suggestions for potential content, our intention in this chapter is not to be prescriptive, but to set out some broad issues to be borne in mind when the framework is developed.

The ‘Golden Thread’

40. David Cameron has long argued that successful development needed to be underpinned by a ‘golden thread’ of governance-related issues.62 There has been some debate in the media as to whether, in his role as co-Chair of the High-level Panel, he will seek to incorporate the ‘golden thread’ into the post-2015 development agenda.63

41. The Prime Minister has described the ‘Golden Thread’ in different ways at various different points. For example, addressing the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) on 13 June 2011, the Prime Minister said

The same conditions create prosperity the world over. They include access to markets, property rights, private sector investment… and they make up what I see as the golden thread of successful development.64

42. By contrast, at New York University on 15 March 2012, he said:

I think there is a huge agenda here where we stop speaking simply about the quantity of aid, important as it is, and start talking about what I call the ‘golden thread’, which is you only get real long-term development through aid if there is also a golden thread of stable government, lack of corruption, human rights, the rule of law, transparent information.65

43. It has been pointed out that descriptions of the Golden Thread tend to omit certain key issues such as empowerment, fairness and collectivity. During his recent evidence to the Liaison Committee, the Prime Minister agreed that these issues should be included, stating:


64 “Speech at Vaccine Summit”, official site of the British Prime Minister’s Office, 13 June 2011, www.number10.gov.uk

I think that is a very fair point... You will never, as a country, succeed unless you deal with the problems of conflict, injustice and rights. 66

44. We share the Prime Minister’s belief that good governance is fundamental to development, and we believe that the issue must be included in the post-2015 framework. The Prime Minister has defined the ‘Golden Thread’ in a number of different ways. We recommend that the Prime Minister give a clear and consistent definition of what he means by the ‘Golden Thread’ in response to this report given its importance in his thinking on the post-2015 framework and goals. We also feel that the ‘Golden Thread’ would be strengthened by the inclusion of issues such as empowerment, fairness and collectivity. The Prime Minister should consider incorporating these issues.

Health

45. Under the MDG framework, health features in MDGs 4, 5 and 6. 67 It has been suggested that, under the post-2015 framework, there should instead be one overarching goal on health. 68 Such a goal could focus on the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), which is defined as follows:

UHC is when all people have access to health services (promotion, prevention, treatments and rehabilitation), without fear of falling into poverty. 69

46. As Health Poverty Action argues, “the provision of and access to these services is a vital component of achieving the right to health for all. Universal health coverage, i.e. access to an essential package of quality health services without the risk of financial hardship associated with paying for healthcare, remains elusive to many.” 70

47. There is a strong argument that post-2015 framework should include one overarching goal on health based on Universal Health Coverage, rather than the three health-related goals which feature in the original MDGs. This should be done in such a way that the current vital emphasis on maternal and child mortality is not lost.

Employment

48. Employment—whether salaried employment or self-employment—is critical to development. 71 This is an issue of fundamental importance to poor people around the world. Based on household survey data from sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and Latin America, 72 there is a strong argument that post-2015 framework should include one overarching goal on health based on Universal Health Coverage, rather than the three health-related goals which feature in the original MDGs. This should be done in such a way that the current vital emphasis on maternal and child mortality is not lost.

66 Uncorrected transcript of oral evidence taken before the Liaison Committee on 11 December 2012, HC (2012-13)484-ii, Qq 80-1
68 Ev w8
69 Ibid.
70 Ev w65
71 Q 123
America, ONE argues that the poor in all these regions regard jobs as their most urgent priority.  

49. Simply including employment in the post-2015 framework is not enough. Employment was, after all, included in the original MDG framework: one of the targets under MDG 1 is ‘to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.’  

72 This target suffers from two key problems: aiming for ‘full employment’ is somewhat unrealistic and—moreover—the target has not ‘captured the collective imagination.’  

74 As Michael Anderson, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister on the Development Goals, rightly argued, the task for the post-2015 framework is therefore ‘to get a narrative so that the world mobilises around that [employment] with the same passion that they mobilise around maternal mortality and infant mortality.’  

75 This will clearly be difficult (in the evidence we received, there was little detail as to precisely what form an ‘employment’ goal might take), but it remains fundamentally important.

50. **Job creation is one of the most crucial of all development challenges.** Whilst the issue of employment was included in the original MDG framework, it was insufficiently prominent and failed to capture the public imagination. In the post-2015 framework, the task will be to design an employment ‘goal’ which captures the imagination of people around the world.

**Education**

51. Results UK argues that there has been excessive focus in many developing countries on the question of enrolment in primary education during the lifetime of the MDGs. This has led to insufficient focus on other issues: quality, completion, and transition to secondary education. Results UK argues that this was due to the underlying indicators for the MDG on education: the indicator for primary enrolment received far greater attention than the indicator for primary completion, whilst secondary education did not feature at all.  

76 The importance of secondary education in developing countries is critical: we have discussed this issue at length in previous reports, whilst the Commission for Africa has also identified the importance of the issue.  

77 We have also highlighted the importance of girls’ education, particularly at secondary level.

52. **Whilst primary education is important, this Committee has found in its work over several years in this Parliament and the last that secondary education is equally critical to development.** Under the post-2015 framework education targets should cover

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72 Ev 62
74 Q 123
75 Ibid.
76 Ev w159
primary enrolment, primary completion, secondary education and quality of education.

53. Additionally, we received evidence highlighting the importance of tertiary education to development. At present only about 5% of Africans are educated to tertiary level, compared to a global average of 25%. If poor countries are to build their capacity to grow their economies and provide public services, they will require more people with high quality technical and vocational qualifications and more graduates. Therefore, as the post-2015 framework is developed, the importance of tertiary education should be actively considered.
5 Post-2015 Development Goals: potential structure

54. Designing the post-2015 framework will not simply be a task of identifying the relevant issues and compiling a list. The way in which the framework is structured will be critical in determining its success. This chapter deals with a number of key structural issues, including targets and timescale.

‘Getting to zero’

55. Under the existing MDG framework some of the targets are phrased in universal terms. For example, target 6B is to achieve ‘universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it.’ However, other targets are relative, as follows:

a) Target 1A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day

b) Target 1C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger;

c) Target 4A: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate;

d) Target 5A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio;

e) Target 7C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.80

56. We recognise that relative targets were appropriate when the MDGs were designed, as they were more immediately achievable than absolute targets would have been. However, as World Vision highlights in its written evidence, relative targets had the unintended effect of exacerbating inequality. For example, one of the targets under MDG 1 is to reduce the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day. It is far easier to focus on someone whose income is already $0.90 per day, increasing their income by just a few cents, than to make a real difference to a very poor person living on $0.50 per day. The relative target may thus have actively reduced the focus on the very poorest. World Vision thus argues that the post-2015 framework should focus on universal targets.81 Moreover, in his evidence to the Committee, John McArthur, Senior Fellow of the UN Foundation, made the following argument:

Some colleagues and I have recommended a simple vision of getting to zero on extreme poverty as at least one central component of the overall agenda. That means

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81 Ev w222
minimum standards for humanity by 2030, with explicit targets for every community, sub-national unit and country in the world.82

57. In his role as co-Chair of the High-level Panel, the Prime Minister has stated publicly that he hopes to see a universal goal on extreme poverty (i.e. zero extreme poverty) included in the new framework, describing this as the ‘principal aim’ of the post-2015 process.83 In its written evidence, Development Initiatives argues that the elimination of extreme poverty is achievable by 2025.84 Following the High-level Panel’s recent meeting in London, the Prime Minister indicated that he too believes that the elimination of extreme poverty is achievable:

[...]

58. We warmly welcome the Prime Minister’s commitment to ‘getting to zero’ on extreme poverty. We firmly agree that this should be one of the new Goals. Whilst this is ambitious, for the first time in human history it is also achievable.

Inequality

59. Under the current MDG framework, whilst the UN website tracks progress against each indicator on a country-by-country basis,86 targets remain global in scope. Progress against MDG targets can thus mask significant inequalities between countries. For example, the MDG target on access to safe water has already been achieved, but this is largely due to rapid progress in China and India. Sub-Saharan Africa remains off track: over 40% of all those without access to an improved drinking water source live in sub-Saharan Africa.87

60. Moreover, even if a specific country is said to be making good progress, there may nevertheless be persistent or increasing levels of inequality (for example, income inequality, gender inequality, ethnic inequality, inequality between urban and rural areas) and a complete lack of equality for the disabled within that country. The MDG target for primary education refers to ‘boys and girls alike,’ but all other targets are based on national averages88 and hence mask such inequalities. As Eveline Herfkens argued:

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82 Q 54
84 Ev w46
85 “UN High-level Panel press statements”, official site of the British Prime Minister’s Office, 2 November 2012, www.number10.gov.uk. ‘Absolute poverty’ is used here as a synonym for ‘extreme poverty.’
86 Country Level Data, www.un.org
The problem with the goals is they are averages, averages, averages. They really hide the ugly underbelly of globalisation in inequality.89

61. We believe that advancing the rights of women, especially with regards to education, health, land ownership, family planning and protection against early marriage, is central to development. These rights should be explicitly set out in quantitative detail in the post-2015 framework.

62. Given the incidence of disability, especially in poor developing countries, a high priority should be given both to the prevention of disabilities and to rights, including political empowerment, for people with disabilities.

63. It is widely argued that the post-2015 development framework should focus more closely on questions of inequality. This could most easily be achieved by using data which is broken down (‘disaggregated’) in order specifically to monitor progress amongst ‘hard to reach’ populations (which—depending on the context—may include the poorest people, women, people in rural areas, ethnic minorities, etc.)90

64. There is room for improvement in the means by which progress is measured. Under the MDGs, the tendency to assess progress by means of national averages has allowed great disparities (such as those between women and men, or between particular regions of a country) to be hidden. Under the post-2015 framework, data should be broken down (‘disaggregated’) by gender and region, and by other variables as appropriate.

**Targets and indicators**

65. One of the great successes of the MDGs was that they provided an incentive to improve data collection. In his evidence to us, Richard Morgan, Senior Adviser in UNICEF’s Executive Office, argued that:

> they [the MDGs] catalysed efforts to improve data availability, data collection and data analysis in developing countries, such that, although I would say we are only halfway there, there is a lot more available in terms of household-level data now than there was 10 years ago.91

66. Under the MDG framework, the robustness of the targets and indicators is mixed. This has in turn had a significant impact on the level of progress towards the Goals. For example, as shown above, the structure of targets and indicators led to an over-focus on enrolment in primary education, at the expense of other issues (quality, completion, and transition to secondary education). Moreover, there is sometimes a contradiction between the goals and the underlying targets. For MDG 1, for example, the goal is to ‘Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,’ yet the underlying targets require only the halving of poverty and hunger.92

89 Q 73
90 Ev w222
91 Q 71
67. Once Member States reach agreement on the post-2015 goals, the corresponding targets and indicators will have to be developed. Since targets and indicators play such a fundamental role, the question of who will develop them is of great importance. The Secretary of State told us that she expected the UN to take the lead on this, whilst Michael Anderson added that:

   … a lot of the other countries, and even specialised agencies, look to some UK institutions—ODI [Overseas Development Institute], International Institute for Environment and Development, IDS [Institute of Development Studies]. They are seen as intellectual powerhouses in this area. I think the UK will play an important role not only through the Government but through a range of the think tanks that we have.\textsuperscript{93}

68. The development of robust targets and indicators will be a key determinant of the success of the new framework. We agree with the comments made by Michael Anderson, the Prime Minister’s Special Envoy on the Development Goals: UK institutions such as the Overseas Development Institute and the Institute of Development Studies should seek to play an active part in developing these targets and indicators.

69. One criticism of the existing MDG framework is that its architecture—goals, targets and indicators—confuses ends with means. As Professor Jeff Waage, Professor Andrew Dorward and Professor Elaine Unterhalter have argued:

   Some goals and their targets focused on the achievement of impact (e.g. poverty and health goals) whereas others focused on the achievement of inputs, that is they were implementation goals (e.g. completing primary school and access to water). Many of the impact goals (eg. MDG3, 4 & 5) had both impact and implementation targets. Under different goals different emphasis was given to impact and implementation targets and indicators – and while impact indicators could be criticised for failing to specify investments and actions for their achievements, implementation indicators could lead to emphasis on achievement of these targets without consideration of their wider impact (a process known as ‘goal displacement’).\textsuperscript{94}

70. Professor Dorward therefore argues that—in order to avoid similar confusion arising in the post-2015 framework—there should be:

   a distinction between impacts (desired changes in achievement of fundamental objectives), outcomes (results of actions), outputs of actions, and inputs (resources into activities)… According to this way of looking at things, post 2015 goals should all be concerned with impacts (eg poverty, incomes, nutrition security, communication, health status, life skills, sustainable resource use and maintenance, population growth rates, etc). For many of these there will be useful ‘outcome’ targets (eg school enrolment, km of roads per person, health service access and utilisation, etc).\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{93} Q 115
\textsuperscript{94} Ev 51
\textsuperscript{95} Ev 55
71. The post-2015 framework should make a very clear distinction between the ultimate ‘ends’ of development (which should be set out in the goals) and the means by which those ends might be achieved (which should be set out in the underlying targets and indicators).

72. We have received written evidence which argues that whilst the goals should be global in scope, the underlying targets should be specific to the circumstances of each individual country. As DFID argues:

> Many themes and indicators—such as maternal mortality or access to safe drinking water—may apply more readily to developing countries. Others may be relevant and important in all countries—this may be the case in particular for issues around accountability, transparency, or the environment.

Moreover, as John McArthur argued, targets should be specific to country circumstances because “there are principles of sovereignty, and countries should have their scope to do things as they want.”

73. Despite this, it may be unrealistic to expect each individual country to develop its own set of targets and indicators. UNICEF UK suggests that the post-2015 framework should include a ‘menu’ of targets, able to be ‘adapted according to varying national context.’

74. We agree that the new goals should be global in scope whilst the underlying targets and indicators should be specific to individual countries’ circumstances. Individual countries may, however, lack the capacity or political will to develop their own targets and indicators. Therefore, we would propose that various sets of targets and indicators be developed, and individual countries choose the set most appropriate to their circumstances.

75. Despite theoretically being global in scope, the nature of the MDGs is such that they are unchallenging for developed countries. In her evidence to us, Eveline Herfkens argued that: ‘What rich countries should do to put an end to global poverty should be part and parcel of the new compact to make it a fair compact, where both parties have to achieve such an agenda.’ The post-2015 agenda should set specific and measurable goals for all countries, including traditional donors and middle income countries, in key areas of international cooperation such as development aid, climate change, tax, trade, transparency, migration and intellectual property rights.

**Timescale**

76. CAFOD points out that given the inevitable time lags in data collection, data on development indicators pertaining to 2015 is unlikely to become available until several years afterwards. In view of this, it argues that the ‘baseline’ year for the post-2015
framework (that is, the benchmark against which progress is measured) should be 2010 rather than 2015.\textsuperscript{101} Richard Morgan was slightly more optimistic about data availability, but nevertheless agreed that the baseline year for the post-2015 framework must be earlier than 2015.\textsuperscript{102}

77. Due to inevitable time lags in data collection, it will not be possible to use 2015 as the baseline year for the post-2015 framework. Whilst it would be desirable for the baseline year to be as close to 2015 as possible, we recognize that—for reasons of practicality—it will have to be several years earlier.

78. The original MDG framework generally requires the tracking of progress over a 25-year period, with progress monitored retrospectively from 1990 and prospectively until 2015. A small minority of the MDG targets have different timescales, as follows:

a) Target 3A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015;

b) Target 6B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it;

c) Target 7B: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss;

d) Target 7D: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.\textsuperscript{103}

79. In the evidence received by this Committee, there is general agreement that whatever the ultimate timescale for the post-2015 framework, some interim targets are needed, to ensure that progress can be monitored on an ongoing basis. (Such targets do not exist under the current MDG framework.)\textsuperscript{104}

80. Whatever the ultimate timescale for the post-2015 framework, it will be important to include some interim targets, perhaps every five years. This will help to ensure that policymakers’ attention remains focused on the framework.

Simplicity and measurability

81. The MDGs have undoubtedly had great resonance around the world. Eveline Herfkens told us that:

[...] the Millennium Development Goals galvanised attention on issues of global poverty more than anything else ever in the development business has. That has been an incredible achievement. [...] I am personally absolutely convinced that, without the Millennium Development Goals and the campaigns that went with them in several countries in Europe, the 2005 EU commitments on the 0.7% would never

\textsuperscript{101} Ev 80

\textsuperscript{102} Q 77

\textsuperscript{103} Official list of MDG indicators, effective 15 January 2008, www.un.org

\textsuperscript{104} Ev 67, 80, w22, w30, w193
have been made. Not everybody lives up to them, but it was really a breakthrough after decades. [...] It was really unique. It took 12 years to build international consensus on these goals, but it had never happened before. Every Government in the world signed up to them, at the highest political level—the financial institutions, the UN system, civil society and local authorities. It has been an incredible help in focusing this agenda.105

82. One of the principal reasons why the MDG framework has had such great resonance is because of its simplicity.106 John McArthur, Senior Fellow of the UN Foundation, argued in his oral evidence to this Committee that:

I have spent the past 10 years explaining the Millennium Development Goals to people, and by the time I get to Goal 5, the eyes glaze... We have eight goals right now, some of which are highly specific and highly quantified in targets, some of which not. My view is that they all should be, and so that is a criterion for including anything... I would not go to more than 10, for sure, but I would like to keep it close to eight if possible, because that will help.107

83. Moreover, in his recent evidence to the Liaison Committee, the Prime Minister himself recognised the importance of keeping the new framework simple:

The easiest thing in the world is to sit on one of these UN panels, take the Millennium Development Goals and then produce something incredibly complicated. Frankly, I think that is the danger... We’ve got to try and find a way of describing a simple set of things.108

84. The simplicity and measurability of the MDG framework have been crucial factors in its success. We believe that the post-2015 framework must retain these strengths, and we are pleased that the Prime Minister shares this view. The number of goals should be no higher than 10, and all should have quantifiable targets. If the new framework is to be as successful as the MDGs, this simplicity will be fundamental.

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105 Q 71
106 Ibid.
107 Q 64
108 Uncorrected transcript of oral evidence taken before the Liaison Committee on 11 December 2012, HC (2012-13)484-ii, Q 82
Conclusions and recommendations

Post-2015 Development Goals: the process

1. Even if the High-level Panel’s secretariat had been appointed on time it would have had much less time and far fewer staff than the Commission for Africa secretariat. The High-level Panel’s conclusions and recommendations are therefore less likely to have secured international political ‘buy-in’ before they are published. It is imperative to win international commitments to implement post-2015 development goals and we recommend that the UK retain its cross-Whitehall Committee of officials which has supported the Prime Minister in his role as co-Chair as well as trying to seek international agreement with the other co-Chairs to keep a UN secretariat in place until the UN General Assembly agrees the post-2015 development agenda. (Paragraph 15)

2. We accept that the High-level Panel wishes to hold some of its meetings in private. However, it is regrettable that no notes of such meetings are available to the public. In an age where transparency is increasingly important, publishing a note of meetings would have helped to achieve public ‘buy-in’. (Paragraph 18)

3. We know that the High-level Panel’s report will be followed by an intergovernmental process, but it is currently unclear what form this process will take or how the Panel and its secretariat will mobilise and lobby internationally to win political support for its proposals. To ensure that the current levels of momentum and public interest are not lost, we hope that this uncertainty can be resolved as soon as possible. We urge our Prime Minister, and the Panel, to set out clear proposals for an international campaign to secure support for the Panel’s proposals during the intergovernmental process. (Paragraph 20)

4. Following publication of the High-level Panel’s report, the Prime Minister and his fellow panellists should focus on building international political support for its recommendations with a view to ensuring that they are incorporated in the post-2015 framework. To this end, it will be important to engage with heads of government from both donor countries and developing countries. (Paragraph 21)

5. The UK Government, during its Presidency of the G8 in 2013, should encourage its fellow G8 members to make further, specific commitments to development. (Paragraph 22)

6. It is vital that the post-2015 development framework reflects the needs of the poorest. We welcome the many consultation processes which have been launched: such processes will help the world’s poor to contribute to the debate. We commend DFID for providing funding for the ‘Participate’ and ‘My World’ initiatives. As the post-2015 process continues to develop, during and beyond the lifetime of the High-level Panel, the outcomes of these consultations should be taken fully into account. We urge the Prime Minister and the High-level Panel’s other members to remain engaged with the process after their report is published and to continue to mobilise
public opinion and to press Heads of Government to support their post-2015 agenda. (Paragraph 28)

**Post-2015 Development Goals: the purpose**

7. One of the key purposes of the post-2015 framework must be to build on the successes of the MDGs and where necessary to ‘finish the job’. The successes of the MDG framework derived primarily from the fact that the MDGs had great resonance around the world: with governments, with civil society organisations and with ordinary people. If the post-2015 framework is to achieve similar success, it must retain these qualities. (Paragraph 33)

8. We recommend that issues of sustainability be incorporated into the post-2015 framework. Poverty reduction and environmental sustainability are intimately connected: the task of the present generation is to meet development challenges without compromising the interests of future generations. As such, we believe that the arguments for merging the two agendas are stronger than the arguments for having two separate sets of goals. One option would be to include one specific goal on sustainability issues in the post-2015 framework. Ideally, however, sustainability should be included as a component part of a number of the post-2015 goals. (Paragraph 38)

**Post-2015 Development Goals: potential content**

9. We share the Prime Minister’s belief that good governance is fundamental to development, and we believe that the issue must be included in the post-2015 framework. The Prime Minister has defined the ‘Golden Thread’ in a number of different ways. We recommend that the Prime Minster give a clear and consistent definition of what he means by the ‘Golden Thread’ in response to this report given its importance in his thinking on the post-2015 framework and goals. We also feel that the ‘Golden Thread’ would be strengthened by the inclusion of issues such as empowerment, fairness and collectivity. The Prime Minister should consider incorporating these issues. (Paragraph 44)

10. There is a strong argument that post-2015 framework should include one overarching goal on health based on Universal Health Coverage, rather than the three health-related goals which feature in the original MDGs. This should be done in such a way that the current vital emphasis on maternal and child mortality is not lost. (Paragraph 47)

11. Job creation is one of the most crucial of all development challenges. Whilst the issue of employment was included in the original MDG framework, it was insufficiently prominent and failed to capture the public imagination. In the post-2015 framework, the task will be to design an employment ‘goal’ which captures the imagination of people around the world. (Paragraph 50)

12. Whilst primary education is important, this Committee has found in its work over several years in this Parliament and the last that secondary education is equally critical to development. Under the post-2015 framework education targets should
cover primary enrolment, primary completion, secondary education and quality of education. (Paragraph 52)

13. If poor countries are to build their capacity to grow their economies and provide public services, they will require more people with high quality technical and vocational qualifications and more graduates. Therefore, as the post-2015 framework is developed, the importance of tertiary education should be actively considered. (Paragraph 53)

**Post-2015 Development Goals: potential structure**

14. We warmly welcome the Prime Minister’s commitment to ‘getting to zero’ on extreme poverty. We firmly agree that this should be one of the new Goals. Whilst this is ambitious, for the first time in human history it is also achievable. (Paragraph 58)

15. We believe that advancing the rights of women, especially with regards to education, health, land ownership, family planning and protection against early marriage, is central to development. These rights should be explicitly set out in quantitative detail in the post-2015 framework. (Paragraph 61)

16. Given the incidence of disability, especially in poor developing countries, a high priority should be given both to the prevention of disabilities and to rights, including political empowerment, for people with disabilities. (Paragraph 62)

17. There is room for improvement in the means by which progress is measured. Under the MDGs, the tendency to assess progress by means of national averages has allowed great disparities (such as those between women and men, or between particular regions of a country) to be hidden. Under the post-2015 framework, data should be broken down (‘disaggregated’) by gender and region, and by other variables as appropriate. (Paragraph 64)

18. The development of robust targets and indicators will be a key determinant of the success of the new framework. We agree with the comments made by Michael Anderson, the Prime Minister’s Special Envoy on the Development Goals: UK institutions such as the Overseas Development Institute and the Institute of Development Studies should seek to play an active part in developing these targets and indicators. (Paragraph 68)

19. The post-2015 framework should make a very clear distinction between the ultimate ‘ends’ of development (which should be set out in the goals) and the means by which those ends might be achieved (which should be set out in the underlying targets and indicators). (Paragraph 71)

20. We agree that the new goals should be global in scope whilst the underlying targets and indicators should be specific to individual countries’ circumstances. Individual countries may, however, lack the capacity or political will to develop their own targets and indicators. Therefore, we would propose that various sets of targets and indicators be developed, and individual countries choose the set most appropriate to their circumstances. (Paragraph 74)
21. The post-2015 agenda should set specific and measurable goals for all countries, including traditional donors and middle income countries, in key areas of international cooperation such as development aid, climate change, tax, trade, transparency, migration and intellectual property rights. (Paragraph 75)

22. Due to inevitable time lags in data collection, it will not be possible to use 2015 as the baseline year for the post-2015 framework. Whilst it would be desirable for the baseline year to be as close to 2015 as possible, we recognize that—for reasons of practicality—it will have to be several years earlier. (Paragraph 77)

23. Whatever the ultimate timescale for the post-2015 framework, it will be important to include some interim targets, perhaps every five years. This will help to ensure that policymakers’ attention remains focused on the framework. (Paragraph 80)

24. The simplicity and measurability of the MDG framework have been crucial factors in its success. We believe that the post-2015 framework must retain these strengths, and we are pleased that the Prime Minister shares this view. The number of goals should be no higher than 10, and all should have quantifiable targets. If the new framework is to be as successful as the MDGs, this simplicity will be fundamental. (Paragraph 84)
## Annex 1 – current MDG targets and indicators

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1.2 Poverty gap ratio  
1.3 Share of poorest quintile in national consumption |
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H.E. Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia
Co-Chair

H.E. Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia
Co-Chair

H.E. Mr. David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
Co-Chair

Fulbert Gero Amoussouga (Benin)

Vanessa Petrelli Corrêa (Brazil)

Yingfan Wang (China)

Maria Angela Holguin (Colombia)

Gisela Alonso (Cuba)

Jean-Michel Severino (France)

Horst Kohler (Germany)

Naoto Kan (Japan)

H.M. Queen Rania of Jordan (Jordan)

Betty Maina (Kenya)

Abhijit Banerjee (India)

Andris Piebalgs (Latvia)

Patricia Espinosa (Mexico)

Paul Polman (Netherlands)

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Nigeria)

Elvira Nabiullina (Russian Federation)

Graça Machel (South Africa)
Sung-Hwan Kim (Republic of Korea)

Gunilla Carlsson (Sweden)

Emilia Pires (Timor-Leste)

Kadir Topbaş (Turkey)

John Podesta (United States of America)

Tawakel Karman (Yemen)

Amina J. Mohammed (ex officio)


1. The High-level Panel of Eminent Persons will be convened by the UN Secretary-General to advise him on a bold and at the same time practical development agenda beyond 2015.

2. The High-level Panel will consist of 26 Eminent Persons, including representatives of governments, the private sector, academia, civil society and youth, with the appropriate geographical and gender balance. Panelists are members in their personal capacity.

3. The panel should conduct its work on the basis of a rigorous analysis of credible shared evidence. The panel should engage and consult widely with relevant constituencies at national, regional and global levels.

4. The Special Advisor of the Secretary-General for Post-2015 will be an ex-officio member of the HLP and serve as link to the UN system.

5. The output of the Panel will be a report to the Secretary-General which will include:

   a) Recommendations regarding the vision and shape of a Post-2015 development agenda that will help respond to the global challenges of the 21st century, building on the MDGs and with a view to ending poverty.

   b) Key principles for reshaping the global partnership for development and strengthened accountability mechanisms;

   c) Recommendations on how to build and sustain broad political consensus on an ambitious yet achievable Post-2015 development agenda around the three dimensions of economic growth, social equality and environmental sustainability; taking into account the particular challenges of countries in conflict and post-conflict situations.

6. To this end, it would be essential for the work of the HLP and of the intergovernmental Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to inform each other in order to ensure both processes are mutually reinforcing. The HLP should advise the Secretary-General on how the SDGs relate to the broader Post-2015 development agenda.

7. To prepare the report, the Panel will take into consideration:

   a) The Millennium Declaration, The Outcome Document of Rio+20;

   b) The findings of the Report of the Secretary-General’s UN Task Team for the preparation of the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda; as well as lessons learned and best practices from the MDGs.
c) The findings of the various national and thematic consultations at regional and national levels which are coordinated by the UNDG as part of the preparations for the Post-2015 Development Agenda;

d) The need to build momentum for a constructive dialogue on the parameters of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and propose innovative ways for governments, parliaments, civil society organizations, the business sector, academia, local communities to engage continuously in such a dialogue;

e) The ongoing work of the UN Task Team, the Special Advisor to the SG on Post-2015, the report of the Global Sustainability Panel of the Secretary-General and the findings of the Global Sustainable Development Network Initiative; as well as

f) Any other relevant inputs it may deem appropriate.

8. The HLP will be supported by a dedicated and independent secretariat headed by a senior official (Lead Author of the HLP report). The secretariat will also be able to draw from the wealth of knowledge and expertise made available to it by the UN system.

9. The Deputy Secretary-General will oversee, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the Post-2015 process.

10. The Panel will present its report to the Secretary-General in the second quarter of 2013. The report will serve as a key input to the Secretary-General’s report to the special event to follow up on efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to discuss the possible contours of the Post-2015 Development Agenda to be organized by the President of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly in September 2013.

Formal Minutes

Wednesday 9 January 2013

Members present:

Sir Malcolm Bruce, in the Chair

Hugh Bayley
Fiona Bruce
Richard Burden
Pauline Latham
Jeremy Lefroy

Mr Michael McCann
Alison McGovern
Fiona O'Donnell
Chris White

Draft Report (Post–2015 Development Goals), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 84 read and agreed to.

Annexes and Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Eighth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for printing with the Report (in addition to that ordered to be reported for publishing on 16, 23, 31 October and 8, 28 November and 11, 18 December.

[Adjourned till Thursday 17 January at 9.00am]
Witnesses

Tuesday 23 October 2012


Charles Abugre Akelyira, Africa Regional Director, United Nations Millennium Campaign, Professor Andrew Dorward, Professor of Development Economics, School of Oriental and African Studies, and John McArthur, Senior Fellow, UN Foundation

Wednesday 31 October 2012

Eveline Herfkens, Former Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, Professor Lawrence Haddad, Director, Institute of Development Studies, and Richard Morgan, Senior Adviser, Executive Office, UNICEF

Jamie Drummond, Executive Director, ONE, Brendan Cox, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Save the Children, and Dr Amy Pollard, Lead Analyst on Post-MDGs, CAFOD

Tuesday 20 November 2012

Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for International Development and Michael Anderson, Special Envoy to the Prime Minister on the UN Development Goals

List of printed written evidence

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2. School of Oriental and African Studies Ev 50: 54
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8. Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Participate Project Ev 82
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Session 2012–13

First Report  DFID’s contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria  HC 126 (609)
Third Report  The Development Situation in Malawi  HC 118 (641)
Fourth Report  Tax in Developing Countries: Increasing Resources for Development  HC 130 (708)
Fifth Report  DFID’s programme in Zambia  HC 119 (759)
Sixth Report  Afghanistan: Development progress and prospects after 2014  HC 403 (862)
Seventh Report  UK Aid to Rwanda  HC 726
Oral evidence

Taken before the International Development Committee on Tuesday 23 October 2012

Members present:
Sir Malcolm Bruce (Chair)
Hugh Bayley
Richard Burden
Pauline Latham
Mr Michael McCann
Alison McGovern
Chris White

Examination of Witnesses


Q1 Chair: Good morning to you both. Thank you very much for coming in to give evidence to us. As you know, we are looking at the post-2015 development goals, both the process and what we hope the outcome might be. Just for the record, could you introduce yourselves?

Amina Mohammed: Good morning. My name is Amina Mohammed, and I am the Special Adviser and the Assistant Secretary General to the SG of the United Nations on the post-2015 Development Planning. It is a bit of a mouthful.

Paul Ladd: My name is Paul Ladd. I work in the United Nations Development Programme, and I head up the UNDP team on post-2015.

Q2 Chair: As I say, thank you both. This is the first formal evidence session we have had. We have had a lot of written evidence submitted; obviously you have explored some of the issues informally. Just to put it in context, can you give us an indication of why you think the Panel was set up the way it has been, both in terms of the chairs and the membership, and particularly how the members were selected? Then perhaps we can go on to look at the secretariat as well.

Amina Mohammed: Thank you very much. We welcome the opportunity to explain the High Level Panel’s role in all of this, but there are other parts to it. We are happy to present what the UN system is doing to support member states, and this does include the High Level Panel. Later we will talk about the relationship with the Open Working Group, because that is the other important part of it. Paul is here for the UN systems response to the whole process.

The Panel itself was a response of the Secretary General to his mandate in 2010 to present a report in September 2013 to the General Assembly, in which he would give a broad outline of what he thought the post-2015 agenda would look like. What he put in place at that time is the High Level Panel, with three co-chairs, as you know. 26 members and me as the ex-officio representative of the SG. The hope is to get a view from the Panel that gives a bold and ambitious report to take what has happened so far, remembering that we still have three years to go in finishing off the MDGs, and to present to the Secretary General what would be essentially the guts of his report in 2013. So it should be something that is realistic, that gives us a balance of where we are coming from on the poverty agenda, and recognises that there are many other issues that come into play from 2012; we are not in the same place as we were in 2000.

Q3 Chair: Sorry, how were they selected? Was it by a process of consultation?

Amina Mohammed: There was a process of consultation with member states, with different constituencies, so from civil society and from business. There were terribly long lists, and one looked at the criteria, the expertise, and this led to the final list.

Q4 Chair: But the Secretary General then made the final decision.

Amina Mohammed: The Secretary General made the final decision, in consultation to the Deputy Secretary General, who just came on board. We came at the same time.

Q5 Chair: Has that been controversial, or do you think that the general mix of the Panel has been broadly accepted?

Amina Mohammed: There have been very high expectations; everyone wants to be involved. I think that we have had responses, if any, from civil society on the membership. This is not the only opportunity to engage with the High Level Panel, but by and large we succeeded in putting together a fairly representative panel. It is, again, the first time that we have had more women than men on this Panel, so in terms of the gender balance that was a welcome sign.

Q6 Chair: So just going on to the detail then: having selected a panel, Homi Kharas was selected as the lead author, and the secretariat is being established. So can you just briefly tell us how Homi Kharas was
selected, and again, whether that has the broad acceptance, and what the state of the secretariat recruitment is at the moment?

**Amina Mohammed:** We had a number of recommendations for lead authors, and we went through their CVs, checked their backgrounds, and looked at the track records for being able to do this. Then the three co-chairs and their envos sat in a technical group, and we went through criteria that selected Dr Homi Kharas as the best candidate. That happened over a period of about three months.

**Q7 Chair:** Do the usual political issues run through it?

**Amina Mohammed:** For the selection of Dr Homi Kharas, we did not have political issues; that really was a technical base. People really thought that it was important to get somebody who was going to pull together a document that reflected what the Panel and the co-chairs would be talking about. That was really what we underscored: who was going to be able to do this in the tight timeframe that we have. We have nine months to try to pull all of this together, and that really was the criterion. This was one time that politics was not in the room.

**Q8 Chair:** Just a final point on that: is the secretariat fully recruited yet, or is it still being recruited? Who is funding it?

**Amina Mohammed:** It is a work in progress. The Secretary General has written for support to member states for it, and we have had some indications of resources for it. It is not fully up and running. Dr Homi Kharas is in place, and he has two or three staff that have come on board, and we are recruiting as we speak now. The UNDP is helping with that process; they have been mandated to do that. The secretariat itself is independent, but it has three major parts to it: the research part that Dr Homi would be co-ordinating, the outreach, and then the operational side, for which we have the support of the UNDP and the one secretariat that we keep to co-ordinate all these moving parts.

**Q9 Hugh Bayley:** I am just interested in how you are going to engage the public with your research of the issues. Just while you were talking with the Chairman I remembered that, way back in the 1980s, when Gro Harlem Brundtland was doing her environment and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran. We shared research and development report she had a partnership with a television company I ran.

We have only just started, so we will certainly take advantage of what is available now.

**Q10 Chair:** I just wondered whether Mr Ladd wanted to add any comment.

**Paul Ladd:** I will add two things, very briefly, if I may. Clearly there will be an opportunity for outreach in the margins of each and every High Level Panel meeting, which is an important method of engagement. However, I think Mr Bayley’s question responds to how you get people really engaged and really interested. I wanted to quickly refer to two things. First of all we have invested in a standard web platform, which we hope that members of the public in all parts of the world will be able to use to find the current status of the debate, and upload not just documents but also pictures or other things that are coming out of the national consultations. The second thing is that we have invested with partners in an option survey called My World. which we are going to be explaining to members of the High Level Panel on 2 November, which we hope will be a way of engaging millions of people around the world and getting them to choose the priorities that they would wish to see in any future development framework. I can explain that in more detail later on, if you wish.

**Q11 Mr McCann:** Can I ask some questions, please, about how the High Level Panel process will interact with the sustainable development goals process? How will the membership of the post-Rio Open Working Group be chosen, and when do we expect the make-up of that to be announced?

**Amina Mohammed:** The selection of the 30 experts for the SDG process itself is a work in progress right now. The member, the permanent representative for Brazil, is co-ordinating that, under the guide of the PGA, and that still has not yet been decided. We understand that it should be fairly soon, and so one really cannot comment. However, for us right from the onset it is very clear we have these two processes. We hope to see co-ordination of the processes from the Secretary General’s office. We use the one secretariat to make sure that the inputs that go for both the High Level Panel and the support to the SDG working group will be given by the UN system. We believe that process in itself will come to what we hope will be a convergence of ideas and work towards September. For now it is probably pretty premature to see how that is going, because the terms of reference are not out, and the members are not known. But we are prepared at the UN to make sure that both these processes in fact will remain coherent. They are
complex; this is the member states’ mandate coming out of Rio, for one, to get not just the SDGs but a financing framework too. But in a sense our focus for the High Level Panel is really to get the report out that informs the SG’s report in 2013.

Q12 Mr McCann: If I heard you correctly, there is the one single secretariat who will serve both the High Level Panel and the Open Working Group.

Amina Mohammed: Absolutely, yes. That is reinforced again, as I said, by the system itself. While the co-chairs of the UN Task Team that produced the first report are still co-ordinating the work that goes into this, there will be a subset of that group that specifically addresses the SDG Open Working Group.

Q13 Chris White: I have just a couple of questions. There is a great deal of debate about integrating the post-2015 process into the post-Rio process. How do you think this is going to be achieved?

Amina Mohammed: At the end of the day what we want is one development agenda. The good news is that with all discussions and outreach that we have had with the member states, this is one thing that there is consensus on—one development agenda. We have the next three years to get there. What is really important is how we are going to finish off the MDGs, and that is the unfinished business of the day. In learning from that and bringing through what the strengths have been, where the gaps are, the situation that we have today, there is a fairly good convergence between those that are talking about the SDGs. The SDGs have come out of Rio, and there is a perception that they are the environment goals, but there is also a great deal of effort to try to make sure that the poverty agenda also comes into that. A lot of this is going to be related to the outreach we have and the consultations with member states. We believe that the closer we come to September next year, the more we will have that convergence.

Q14 Chris White: Will the Panel’s findings be fed into the Open Working Group?

Amina Mohammed: We have a report. The SG’s report comes in September, and so the General Assembly will be a high-level event. There are a number of other reports that come out at that time, including the Gap Report and the Acceleration Report, and all of these will converge then.

Q15 Chris White: Thank you. Finally, will there be one specific goal on sustainability, or will sustainability be included as a component part of the other goals?

Amina Mohammed: If we had the answer to that now, we would not have this process. That is going to be part of the discussion that we have going forward. It is certainly a contention.

Q16 Chris White: Do you have view on the direction?

Amina Mohammed: Not currently, no.

Q17 Chair: You are having a joint secretariat, which I had not fully appreciated before. So there is a joint secretariat, or the same secretariat. Are you quite sure that the minority of people who are suggesting there should be two separate sets of goals will not prevail? Are you concerned that there will be some kind of divergence?

Amina Mohammed: We will work to ensure that they do not prevail. We have said that there has been a really good turnout of opinion around one development agenda. There will be many conversations politically and otherwise through the course of this. While we co-ordinate the one secretariat, certainly the three co-chairs have a strategy for outreach with the member states. This has started already; we have had informal sessions, and retreats in Indonesia and Liberia have helped. As we go back to New York after the High Level Panel meeting, these will continue in a broader and a deeper manner. So, yes, I am confident that those will be minority voices, although they must be taken on board.

Q18 Pauline Latham: The High Level Panel had its first meeting in September. Can you tell us what the main outcomes and achievements of that meeting were?

Amina Mohammed: Essentially that was the first meeting of the Panel as a whole. So really the three co-chairs were laying out what their hopes were for it, and then we heard from each one of the panelists how they thought they would engage with this and what they had to bring to the table. It was a very short meeting; 19 minutes is not a long time, so it was the introductory meeting.

They then agreed to how we were going to run the work-plan programme for the High Level Panel, which consists of five meetings. The first happened in New York. There will be one in each of the capitals; the first is in the UK, the second will be in Liberia; and the third in Indonesia. We will have a final meeting at the beginning of May in New York to wrap up the report, which will be handed over to the SG on 31 May.

There were a number of outreach sessions during that time, so it was not just the Panel report. We had a debrief for all the Panel members the day before, to bring them up to speed on where we were with the MDGs and the acceleration framework, and what the issues were coming out of Rio. Then we had another outreach with civil society, where civil society was very clear about their expectations of the Panel members and then the Panel members’ commitment to that open outreach.

Q19 Pauline Latham: Do you think the Panel members hope to maintain some continuity with the Millennium Development Goals, or do you think they would prefer a different approach?

Amina Mohammed: It is rather soon to see that. What came out of that was that they were all very concerned about the poverty agenda. They all recognise that there is a different set of circumstances today compared with 2000. There are issues of conflict, of environment, of the youth bulge; these are all things that have to be factored in now. But there was unison in everyone’s statement around that table that we had
to finish off the MDGs. There was also the belief that they were a good thing; they did have gaps, but these were all things that could be taken into consideration moving forward, as we tried to be more ambitious with the next agenda.

Q20 Pauline Latham: There was no outcome document following the meeting. Do you know why that was?
Amina Mohammed: There is a read-out of the meeting and notes on the meeting that are internal to the Panel itself. This is an independent panel that will do as much as it can in terms of outreach. The background papers will be open, but as far as the work goes, until such time as it is concluded, I believe that will remain internal to the Panel.

Q21 Pauline Latham: So does that mean they will always meet in private?
Amina Mohammed: We have closed sessions of the Panel, yes.

Q22 Pauline Latham: Can you tell us what will be on the agenda for the remaining meetings of the Panel, and are you able to tell us which specific issues will be discussed at each meeting?
Amina Mohammed: We have not yet finished. As we go through all the meetings, no. At every meeting itself, the experts and envoys sit round to look at the issues that have come out and that the co-chairs would like to discuss. This is the first substantive meeting, so essentially we will be getting around the idea of the vision of the committee itself and the Panel itself, and the specific issues they would like to start talking about. Sustainable development will be at the core, and they will be speaking about the social elements, the economy and the environment. The focus on this will be a balance between the poverty and the environmental agenda.

Q23 Pauline Latham: You mentioned having a meeting in May 2013. When do you expect to see a first draft of the Panel's report? Will it be before that date? When do you think it will be published?
Amina Mohammed: We expect the first draft around March, and then we will publish the report as soon as it is handed to the Secretary General, which will be at the end of May or the beginning of June. There is a short timeline between when that report will be received and it being fed into the Secretary General’s report that has to go to General Assembly, but it will be published independently.

Q24 Chair: I do not know whether you want to add anything, Mr Ladd? The process all sounds very smooth and comfortable—it is all going down the track. Clearly there are going to be arguments and rows and so forth. How do you think these will be resolved? To what extent do you think the timetable might slip? It is not unknown for timetables to slip at EU level, and when you are trying to get 200 countries to agree on something—
Amina Mohammed: Do you want to speak about the process itself? There have been a number of questions around how we do the outreach, and how that all feeds in with the different reports on time. The UN Task Team has a huge task to try to bring all of that in from 100 countries or so.

Paul Ladd: Where I would start is that we find ourselves in October 2012. There is a job to remain on the MDGs until the end of 2015, and we do not need any successor framework or agenda in place until January 2016. So we have a considerable amount of time between now and then to build a trustful multilateral process that could be more successful. In our experience, the way to generate a good multilateral agreement is by starting early on, by generating a common discourse and a common language, and then letting coalitions form, which eventually builds a momentum to a successful outcome. We believe that on the UN side we have invested early enough to provide the environment in which this could happen. So the High Level Panel is clearly one part of that, and your question is really, “Can anything be brokered by the members of that High Level Panel?” There will be arguments of course, but there will also be a report at the end of it, which will set the tone for the subsequent debate. We then will have the process of the Open Working Group, and a report of the Open Working Group, which we see as a limited intergovernmental process, which will then set the tone for the full intergovernmental process. Member states have not defined when it will start, but a likely guess would be September 2014 to run until the end of September 2015.

Q25 Chair: I suppose what I had in mind is the difficulties that the climate change agenda has presented every time we have tried to get international agreement, and whether or not bringing sustainable developments into the post-MDGs will bring with it the problems that go with that.
Paul Ladd: Clearly there are many issues. It is not just the environmental sustainability ones that certain member states find difficult to discuss and agree on. There are other parts of the development agenda that are contentious in a full intergovernmental setting, so this is a challenge across the board. Again, this is firmly in the domain of member states to agree, and they may decide ultimately that some things are not unimportant but better to take forward in other processes, through protocols, through other agreements, and through other tracks. But this will be in the domain of member states to decide.

From our perspective, we see very many occasions whereby progress on extreme poverty, which is what the MDGs were about, is now inseparable from many aspects of the natural environment, whether it is access to energy, access to water resources, or the use of ecosystems. Increasingly, it is becoming somewhat difficult to separate these issues for poor people living in poor countries.

Q26 Hugh Bayley: Looking at the High Level Panel and its work specifically, how many people are on the secretariat that will be organising the meetings, collecting papers, writing and researching for Mr Kharas?
**Amina Mohammed:** We are envisaging that he would probably have a core team of about seven or eight, but that there would be people who would come on and off with the external work; they would have short papers that would come in for three months or for four or five weeks, depending on the need. He is working that out right now. In fact, we do have a shortlist of about 11 background papers that are currently being produced.

**Q27 Hugh Bayley:** You have not got much time, have you?
**Amina Mohammed:** No.

**Q28 Hugh Bayley:** It is five months, and you are done. You will have noticed that in the back of the room is the head of the secretariat from Blair’s Commission for Africa. He has just reminded me that they had a secretariat of 42 people who worked for 18 months to produce the 2005 Commission for Africa report. “Quick and dirty” would be the wrong phrase, but in comparison this is going to be a much, much quicker and a much less considered process. Will it therefore provide the sort of cornerstone to the debate that the Commission for Africa report did before Gleneagles?

**Amina Mohammed:** Quite a lot of work has been done before this that is going to feed in to what the High Level Panel is going to do. They are not starting afresh on the work that has to be considered, and quite a bit of work did go into the UN Task Team report. There are also a number of reports that have come out of the system and without. There are many gaps that need to be addressed, and there is a short timeline to try to consider those. But as we go out on multiple tracks, the challenge will be the co-ordination of that, and bringing that into the group and being able to discuss it, and to get that report together, rather than the substance of it. There is really quite a bit of substance there already.

**Q29 Hugh Bayley:** This is my fault, not Paul’s fault, but I got a little bit lost with all the acronyms of the different follow-on groups that are going to build upon the High Level Panel’s findings. In constructing a process between now and the time when the new agreement on post-2015 is taken, such a short period has been given for the initial launch document, if I can call it that. Why has the High Level Panel decided to do a six-month piece of work rather than a one-year or an 18-month piece of work?

**Amina Mohammed:** It is actually a nine-month piece of work, and it is a component of the Secretary General’s report; it is not the Secretary General’s report. What it does is narrow down. The member states have asked us for a broad outline of what post-2015 is supposed to look like. They have not asked us to layer this, and to give them a set of goals, targets and metrics. They have said, “What should the shape of this look like by then?” That is what we want to put on the table, so that then begins the discussion for 2015 and 2016. We can then deepen that and end up with our development framework. So this is the skeleton of it, if you will.

**Q30 Hugh Bayley:** So the timetable set by the Secretary General is the timetable for the Secretary General’s report?

**Amina Mohammed:** The member states set that timetable. The Secretary General’s report—

**Q31 Hugh Bayley:** Yes, but that is why this is conceived as a short and concentrated piece of work. How confident are you that the recommendations from the High Level Panel will be taken forward in the post-2015 deal?

**Amina Mohammed:** I am fairly confident. I am co-ordinating it, and so I expect that this for me is one of the most important parts of the work that we have to do. As an ex-officio member of that, I am very keen to see that come through. We really do see this being the equivalent of what Threats, Challenges and Change were to the In Larger Freedom report. The quality of this report will come from its outreach, from the research that we do, and from how well we communicate what the Panel and the co-chairs have. It is unusual that member states have given us the direction for this, but they are also co-chairing it. There is a great interest in making sure this works. It is the hope to give a balanced view of what should happen post-2015. This is one independent group of people, and certainly when you look around at the Panel members themselves, you will find that we will get what we need to in terms of its robustness and ambition.

**Q32 Hugh Bayley:** How difficult will it be to get agreement from member states?

**Amina Mohammed:** It will be really difficult; it will be a big challenge. But what we have been able to do is continuously reach out and keep them abreast of this—that there is not another agenda, that it is one about a global agenda. It is going to be an awful lot of outreach. That has begun with the Panel members; those that are member states, those in business, those in civil society. So I do not think that this is easy, but expectations are high. As I said, the good news in all of this is that people are working towards one development agenda and that some good work has come out of the MDGs that has focused a lot of momentum on the successes. It is also something that we drive towards, saying, “Foot on the accelerator; we have to finish.” The settings are very complicated, but I think that this will happen.

**Q33 Hugh Bayley:** The G8 is, of course, different from the UN, but I clearly saw Blair as politically driving the process: picking up the telephone, speaking to other Heads of Government and Heads of State, asking for commitments, asking for briefings before Gleneagles itself. Who is the key driver who will be politically organising to get buy-in from member states right across the spectrum, from richest to poorest?

**Amina Mohammed:** The difference we find today is that in 2001 and thereafter, there was very much a global-north, global-south agenda. This is a global agenda today; this is about all three co-chairs being concerned about what we get globally. So all will be present, and will be picking up the phone, and will be
political, and will have to be, because there is the climate change agenda, there is the poverty agenda, there are many issues around conflict financing. Every one of those three will pick up the phone. They already are, and we see the synergy of that happening.

Q34 Hugh Bayley: But in a sense it is more than just a high-level panel, isn’t it? They are producing—I am not sure what to call it—a call to action, a strategy, something that goes into the Secretary General’s report. The political process will take us way beyond the publication of the High Level Panel’s Report. Who is going to lead that political process?
Amina Mohammed: The Secretary General, I hope, is going to lead that process.

Q35 Hugh Bayley: The Secretary General?
Amina Mohammed: Yes, with the member states.

Q36 Hugh Bayley: Politics is a process. It is a process of moving from where you are, winning support, generating interest, buying agreement, obtaining commitments. You need to timetable a series of steps in a staircase that will take you from where we are now, where there is a general view that something ought to happen after 2015, to a buy-in that makes countries, from the richest to the poorest in the world, buy into this, and say: “We are committed; we are going to make the difference.” How likely is that to happen, and what leverage does the Secretary General have over the President of the United States and the President of Mali, shall we say?
Amina Mohammed: The first thing is that the mandate has been given by the member states to have something done, and they are fairly serious about having it done. All the indications point to that. There has been an enormous amount of communication as to what we are doing and how we are doing it. There are a number of milestones that have been put in place, and we will work towards them. The outreach and the partnership that we need on this will go outside the UN to member states, to civil society, to business, and the way and manner in which we do that, and how we timetable it towards each one of those milestones to put the momentum up, will make that call to action happen.

The Secretary General has a five-point agenda, and part of that is the post-2015. It also includes sustainable development, and all these will form part of what will make the case, and give us the political momentum that we need to make those changes happen, and to produce a development agenda that is ambitious, that is bold, but at the same time realistic—feet on the ground and head in the clouds. This is what we have to have. I do not think we can afford to say, “Will it happen, will it not happen?” It has to happen. When we look back to see what is happening on the MDGs in many of these countries, it does not give us the luxury of saying, “Will it happen? How can it happen?” We have to work towards that. I think there is enough, there will be enough, and we can bring those outliers into the process to make this happen.

Q37 Hugh Bayley: If we get the agreement, it will just be a platform—a starting point. Who will be tasked with developing the tasks, implementation, and the indicators on performance? Who will make sure it is not just a statement of grand ambitions but of policy changes in member states to achieve the goals or the priorities that are set?
Amina Mohammed: Ultimately it is member states. This is a development agenda that should be embraced by them, whether we negotiate it or we do not negotiate it. At the end of the day, if 193 member states sign on, it is up to them. It is not legally binding. This is one thing that we still credit to the MDGs. Certainly in our country we found different mechanisms, in Nigeria, to make the MDGs work. One of those was the debt relief that we got from the United Kingdom. That was used as leverage to better governance, to target expenditure, and to use domestic resources better. Ultimately it will be the member states.

They will, of course, be supported and encouraged by the UN system: hopefully the advocacy that will come from civil society to Parliaments to make those decisions and instruments like the recent resolution on the rule of law will play out to provide an anchor for a lot of this to happen. But ultimately it will be up to the member states. What we hope is that not only do you have a set of goals, but that this time the targeting itself is much more focused on results, and that you have a set of metrics that enables you to measure not just GDP for growth of an economy but how much impact that has had on inequality and on the lives of the poor. There will be much more work that will go into that.

But around what? This is what we need to have in place before September 2013. Before you can go deeper into those other issues of what should make this an actionable plan, what I hope to see is that we can craft something globally that we will be able to implement at the local level. My coming to the United Nations is after 30 years at the country level. I have every intention of trying to make something global work locally, because I intend to go back and have that played out on the ground in a real way, making a difference to people’s lives.

Q38 Hugh Bayley: One final question. Yes, of course, who is the key player in developing policy in Nigeria? It is the Government of Nigeria, of course. But around the Millennium Development Goals, a series of policies were made by multilateral agencies, such as UNDP, such as the World Bank, to change the way they work to ensure, in a loose sense, that there was conditionality. The World Bank, during that post-2000 period, developed its poverty-reduction strategy process, and it was refined as time went on—more consultation was built in and so on. To what extent will UN agencies and the Bank amend their ways of working so as to maximise the opportunities for member states to change policy in the ways that the post-2015 framework recommends? Where will the pressure come from, and the encouragement, and the support?
Paul Ladd: It is a little too early to say, but clearly we will be thinking ahead of time as to what the likely
shape of this agreement will be, and how we need to change ourselves internally so as to meet the challenge of then implementing the goals. What I would say is that the PRSPs were more closely connected to the debt relief scheme, which was coming to fruition at the time, rather than the MDGs in and of themselves. All I would say to reinforce an earlier question is that the MDGs have been a tremendously powerful communications and implementation tool—a tool for progress. For the first few years, however, there was very little traction on them. There was very little traction on them because they did not have, if you like, the absolute buy-in of Governments who signed up to the Declaration—the Declaration did not include the full framework of the goals and targets and indicators. That came later, and took time to bed down.

This time we want to make sure that people are engaged in that debate on the goals, and then potentially targets and indicators, so that from day one there is an implementation agenda that is much stronger at the beginning. There were several member states who, as late as 2005, did not refer to the MDGs, and therefore was credible. Since then we have been pleased, but also surprised, that a number of other Governments have approached us and asked to initiate national conversations and that has to change this time, because clearly we cannot lose a third of a 15-year implementation schedule.

Q39 Chair: That is extremely helpful. Just perhaps as a final point, we have a major challenge. You will produce, as you put it, your framework—your set of work—but then the Goals, the final outcome, will be the second part of the process. Picking up a bit on Mr Bayley’s point about political leadership, do you envisage the three co-chairs will simply hand on the job at the end of nine months and say, “We have done our work; here it is. Now you get on and turn it into however many goals you want to agree on”? Or do you think they ought to maintain some degree of political commitment? We could ask our own Prime Minister, for example, whether or not he thinks he wants to see what happens after he stops being a co-chair in nine months’ time. Do you think that is a reasonable ask of the three co-chairs, or not?

Amina Mohammed: I think so. They will continue to be involved in this to varying degrees, remembering that they are representing the member states of whom this has been asked. Currently, when we look to see the commitment that they have in engaging with member states in New York, I think this will continue. It will also go to the ownership of that report: I believe that the three of them are very serious about putting a good report in front of the Secretary General in May, and that will continue. In what form? We will wait until then, because for us, the Open Working Group will be in place, and we will see how far that has gone. The country consultations will also give us feedback, which will help to inform “What then?” after the Secretary General’s report is given to the General Assembly.

Q40 Chair: Thank you very much. We obviously wish you well. We recognise that, precisely as you say, the MDGs perhaps had a slow start and a mixed reception, but they have certainly had an impact in many practical ways. Although we obviously need to take a lot more evidence, there is a requirement to ensure that, whatever the succession is, they are bought into. You have individual countries taking part in the consultative process. It is a rather broad number, between 50 and 100, and that is not all of them. Can you just perhaps clarify that process, so that we can be sure at the end of it that what we have is a set—I do not know how many, but presumably not too many—of goals, which may be aspirational but also practical and that have the buy-in, and how that process will bed these people in? What about the countries that are not taking part?

Paul Ladd: The architecture that we have tried to put in place for consultation is at three levels: national-level dialogues on post-2015; thematic, slightly more expert-oriented dialogues, of which there will be 11; and then a global outreach through the web platform that I mentioned earlier. The national dialogues, we think, are the cornerstone, and they are important for many reasons, but firstly we think it is the right thing to do. If you are going to have a development framework that seeks to change people’s lives for the better, then it is simply the right thing to do to ask them what they think should be in it. But secondly, there is a political imperative to make sure that the work of not just the High Level Panel, but also the Open Working Group, which is this limited intergovernmental process, is informed by the perspectives of people living in different parts of the world. Also—more importantly, I believe, than this slightly extractive approach—national conversations around the sort of future that people want have the potential to influence the national political process, thereby informing national Government positions, which are then brought to the UN for the full intergovernmental process. This is an investment in getting conversations started in parts of the world where they would likely not start for a long time, and therefore redressing the balance of a conversation that is very well established in Europe, but not so well established in other parts of the world.

We started off with 50. It was a stratified sample of countries from different regions, of different income levels, facing different development challenges. We wanted to say, with that group of 50, that it was a broadly representative group of countries, and therefore was credible. Since then we have been pleased, but also surprised, that a number of other Governments have approached us and asked to initiate the same sort of national conversation, and we have sought to support them by mobilising additional resources and technical support from the UN system to make that happen. Currently there are 57 national processes under way, and should there be more interest, then we will also support anything up to a larger number, possibly 100.

Q41 Chair: So what about the countries that do not take part?

Paul Ladd: We have focused in the UN system on what we would call our UN Development Group programme countries, which are countries that are middle-income or lower-income. We do not have a remit to help with, or start, or be engaged in conversations that will take place in Europe or North
America, but we are very aware that those conversations have already started. We hear from Canada, for example, and Belgium, that they will be seeking to initiate something very similar to a national conversation on post-2015, and that will be reflected then on the web platform as a place where views from all over the world are sought. Now if I understand correctly, your question is about, “What if there is a particular country where this conversation does not take place?” They may have other priorities. There may be something more pressing than thinking of something that may be slightly esoteric and not really bite for another two to three years. Where there is interest, all we can commit to is to have this outreach and process, and we will be there to support it. Where it is not a priority for a country, we will not twist any arms. Amina Mohammed: In addition to that, the Regional Economic Commissions within the UN system do have a strategy for outreach and are producing a report in the new year, which will reflect those regional concerns. In that we believe that their outreach on consultation will have reached all countries.

Q42 Chair: I understand your sensitivity, and I do not want to identify a country—that would be invidious—but you say they have other priorities. What greater priority is there than trying to ensure that they eliminate poverty in a sustainable way?

Paul Ladd: There may be countries that are recently out of crisis or a natural disaster, where the time of the Government, which is quite limited on some of these aspects, will be focused.

Q43 Chair: So is it about the resource to actually focus?

Paul Ladd: Yes, but our position is clear. For those countries that have the capacity and the willingness to engage, the UN is there to support them.

Q44 Chair: Thank you very much indeed. That has been an extremely helpful start. Is there anything you want to ask us, or leave with us? Obviously this is an inquiry that we will be conducting over the next few weeks, so if there are any comments or thoughts that occur to you that you feel you want to communicate with us after this, please do so. We very much welcome that, and you will be able to see on the web what is going on as we take further evidence. Thank you both very much indeed, and can I simply say from the chair, but on behalf of the Committee, we wish you well. It is a big challenge.

Amina Mohammed: The UK are very much a part of the challenge, so we will do it together.

Q45 Chair: We appreciate that; thank you very much.

Amina Mohammed: Thank you very much for giving us this opportunity.

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Charles Abugre Akelyira, Africa Regional Director, United Nations Millennium Campaign, Professor Andrew Dorward, Professor of Development Economics, School of Oriental and African Studies, and John McArthur, Senior Fellow, UN Foundation, gave evidence.

Q46 Chair: Good morning, gentlemen; thank you very much indeed. You have obviously been here through the previous session, and perhaps just for the record, to begin with, you could introduce yourselves, then we can continue the discussion. Charles?

Charles Abugre: I am Charles Abugre; I am the Africa Regional Director of the UN Millennium Campaign, and I am based in Nairobi.

John McArthur: I am John McArthur. I am a Senior Fellow at the UN Foundation and non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute, and I was previously Manager and Deputy Director of the UN Millennium Project, in the early days of the MDGs.

Professor Dorward: My name is Andrew Dorward; I am Professor of Development Economics at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, and representing a group across different colleges in the university with different disciplinary expertise.

Q47 Chair: Perhaps we can just pick up from where we left off, with where the High Level Panel process is going. You obviously come to it from an outside perspective. I suppose the first question is—and perhaps particularly the last part of the engagement we have just had was illustrative of this—do you think the Panel’s approach is sufficiently consultative, or is it likely to be perceived in the way that the MDGs were, certainly at the outset, as a sort of gift to the world from the political elite, rather than something that is organically created by the people it is supposed to impact on—namely, poor people, or people in need of development progress?

Charles Abugre: The process has kicked off quite a bit of a buzz, at least from where I come from. Already, independent of the High Level Panel process, there are various civil society groups organising, organisations for people with disabilities, women’s movements. There are a lot of poverty hearings and community hearings that have been planned, well ahead of the official, national-led process. This buzz is useful by itself, and we have time then to extend it. We have also seen quite a bit of buzz already beginning at the regional level. I think that point was made by Paul earlier. It is not just the national processes; there are also regional processes. In the case of Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union, together with the African Development Bank, have already started a process of reviewing the MDGs, establishing the gaps, and they have a survey going on expectations post-2015. This is
complementary. The real task is how to pool all of this buzz together in a manner that makes sense—both feeding into the High Level Panel’s report, and ultimately the Secretary General’s report, but beyond that, keeping the conversations going up to the point of negotiations.

**Q48 Chair:** Are you confident that this buzz is around the same agenda, if you know what I mean? You hear people say, “We want this, we want this, we want this.” You have a Panel, and then the process beyond the Panel needs to crunch all that down into something that is manageable. Do you feel the people engaged in all these dialogues are connecting that they need to turn it into something that fits? Indeed, if you take that approach, is that reasonable, or should they simply say we want to demand that it is done the way we want it?

**Charles Abugre:** There will have to be both. It has to be pooled together in such a way that it is a meaningful feed in to a report, and into the UN-led process. Those are some of the things that we are trying to do, for example. Civil society organisations are getting together creating their own web platform; they are intending to create their own secretariat close to the co-chair in Monrovia, so there is a singular feed in to it. They are working on a framework for synthesising their own input, so that it is meaningful and can be absorbed by the High Level Panel.

**Q49 Chair:** So we are in quite a different space than we were at the time that the MDGs were effectively hatched up in a room in New York, but perhaps other members of the panel would like to comment?

**John McArthur:** I give a slightly different view of the history of the MDGs, with full respect to the history from which they emerged. In a sense it is an extraordinary victory that we are even talking about the MDGs today, because it is a myth in many places and it requires people to step out of their comfort zone, and it is very difficult to have poor farmers represented. You can find farmer organisations, but it is normally essential to this whole question, whether it is domestic or global, that they are engaged in all these dialogues.

**Q50 Chair:** Mr Dorward?

**Professor Dorward:** I am not an expert on the High Level Panel processes, so I will not comment much on that, but I very much agree with Charles that the convergence that needs to happen, iteratively, towards the finishing line of the next three years and the country process was confirmed in the World Summit outcome, paragraph 22(a), which said that every country would have support to implement a national development strategy ambitious enough to achieve the MDGs by the end of 2006. That was a huge process of convergence, I would say, of many, many threads being woven together: many, many activists, many academics, many politicians and so forth.

I worked with Ambassador Wickstead when I was managing the UN Millennium Project. Just to clarify the history, it was not just the Commission for Africa; there was this extraordinary global process around the MDGs, with hundreds and hundreds of people involved. But even as it was implemented, I would say it was implemented imperfectly in many quarters. I am publicly on the record saying that I think the World Bank should have done better on this, because even the World Bank, with all its tremendous talent and leadership, to this day has not fully converged the goals with the processes. We have to understand that these goals are not an end in themselves. They are a policy instrument, which has, imperfectly but verypowerfully, been a common reference point for civil society, for policy, for developing countries and developed countries.

In one sense, yes, these conversations came out of a conference room in New York, but in another sense they came out of a global funnelling of conversations into one place, in time to become real. There is a real balancing act that the world faces today. I have had the privilege to work with Ms Mohammed for many years. We could not be more fortunate as a world than to have someone with her credibility and talent in that position, and we all owe her gratitude for taking on such responsibility, because as has been discussed, it is so difficult.

But as we move forward, we need to understand that there is a very tight balancing act between the finishing line of the next three years and the convergence that needs to happen, iteratively, towards the following generation. The success of the next three years will beget the success of the following generation. Not to go into it at too much length, but we really need to understand the multiple threads that are under way here, which come together. Ultimately, in my view, this is not just a government conversation today; it is a global conversation. We need to figure out how to make those, with the new technologies of the world, converge as well.
middle-level farmers who are the leaders in it, who then have the most voice. I do not think that problem is going to be unique to agriculture. There is a real challenge there. Another challenge is matching the bottom-up and the top-down views and processes, and trying to make them meet, and particularly getting the views of middle-level professionals, who will be the ones actually implementing these matters. One other question here that I think is challenging, and which I have not heard mentioned today, is the question of what the objectives of this process actually are. Is it to mobilise resources? Is it to get political buy-in at global level? Is it to improve political buy-in at national level? Is it to increase accountability at national level? What are the objectives? Is it all of the above? I would have thought that is a really big question. There are chicken and egg problems: how do you deal with process objectives and content all at the same time, since they all depend on each other? Which comes first? I do not think that any of them come first, but they all have to be addressed. That relates to another issue, which is something that we have thought about a lot: the question of holism, and trying to have a holistic view that takes account of the interactions between the different goals. This was a weakness of the MDG process, and an understandable one. It is very challenging to try to achieve that holism; it is particularly challenging to try to achieve it in processes of consultation.

Q51 Chair: Thank you for that; those are three different but complementary views. Mr McArthur quite rightly took us through the process of how the MDGs got to where they are today, but to the extent that they are well acknowledged, I suppose, just to pick up your point about what it is for, is it not the case that they gave practical focus to actually delivering measurable improvements in people’s quality of life? Isn’t it about mobilising all the various players to try to deliver something that is concretely improving the lives of poor people? The question is how you mobilise all the right parts, and ensure that the people who are most affected by it have a say in how it is articulated and expressed. Is that fair?

Professor Dorward: I would just like to raise a question there, which is how far there was complete national ownership of the MDGs. It took time, and for example, how far are the MDGs part of China’s policies? That is a big question, because China has its own goals, and China is a very big global player. We have a very different global architecture from what we had in 2000 and in the years immediately following that. That has implications for asking what the goals of the MDG, or International Development Goal, process should be in the future. We also have, as we have heard this morning, a much greater set of issues around the environment. As you said, they have particular problems and difficulties: are they addressed through protocols, through targets, or through resource allocations? Those are quite big questions.

Q52 Mr McCann: My questions lead on from that, gentlemen. There has always been a debate about the aspirational nature of the MDGs, or the practicality of delivering them, and there is a train of thought now, which many people advocate, that the incorporation of human rights should be part of the post-2015 framework. Do you buy that, each of you? Do you take on board that argument? Where do you think the balance lies? Do you think that human rights should be incorporated post-2015?

Charles Abugre: In many ways, yes; in some ways, be careful. Yes, because if you look at the human rights framework holistically, both the civic and political rights issues and the socio-economic rights, you could say that by an extension of a lot of the current MDG goals, you would be addressing some of the socio-economic rights issues, such as universal access to healthcare and universal access to education, including secondary education, and so on and so forth. It is moving from the minimalist to something broader, ensuring that you do not undermine the basis for human rights principles, addressing issues of discrimination and inequalities, and finding a way to measure those very significant issues of human rights principles that also affect civic and political rights issues, part of which is reflected in the current conversations about what is doable in terms of targets or goals on governance and political freedoms. Some of those elements could meaningfully be reflected in the follow-up agenda as a bigger exchange. I said “Be careful,” because we could also lose the essence of a global agreement when we frame the issues in such a broad way that we are unable to achieve the issue of concreteness as well. If the principles can feed in to very specific goals and objectives, that will definitely take us forward, and there is that type of discussion. The final issue, of course, on human rights principles is the question of accountability. The accountability question is particularly important, especially when we evaluate MDG 8, for example. Other MDGs have a weak but clearer accountability framework. For MDG 8, or the International Partnership Framework, whatever the future goal is, accountability as a human rights principle would be useful, but again, what does that mean concretely?

Q53 Mr McCann: In a practical sense, does that mean you would differentiate, for example, in terms of human rights, that there should be a commitment in relation to women’s issues, but that it would be more difficult in the sense of the right to health regarding our commitments on HIV and AIDS?

Charles Abugre: It is easier in the right to health, in the sense that you extend it to universal healthcare. There is already a movement building on universal healthcare, seeking to extend the gains of the health-related MDGs, and universal education, but also quality and equitable education. On the issues of socio-economic rights, it is much easier to apply the human rights principles. On the civic and political rights agenda, the debate will be more difficult, but the entry point will be on the governance and accountability framework.
**John McArthur:** I would generally agree with what Charles said. I am of the view that the MDGs have been extremely beneficial to many core human rights, for example the progressive realisation of the right to health, a fundamental tenet of many in the human rights community. We have had dramatic breakthroughs in that area globally. There is another general tension to be navigated on all of these issues, which is goals around areas where we have clear agreement globally, versus goals around areas for which we might want to seek agreement. The example of climate change was raised before. It is somewhat analogous in the nature of the debates, with very different views among different constituencies. The Millennium Declaration has very clear statements on human rights as preamble, if you will, to the Millennium Development Goals. It is there, but the notion of solving the political rights through a set of goals is quite different. It is also much more difficult around issues of measurement and tracking, which are so central to the Goals’ success. We have seen that where the measurement is tighter as a system, there is a much higher probability of success of the Goals. This is particularly true in terms of how to track progress. There’s a level of governance, which is in my view one of the other central debates of this discussion: how can notions of accountability be pursued? How might that link to issues of transparency in fiscal matters, which is a common view around the world, even where there are political debates? This has to be managed very carefully, and there is a movement in some quarters to use the goal process to solve the political debates. My view is that we should use the goals to establish targets around areas where there is pre-existing agreement, and then diffuse. I would just add briefly that the MDGs, as we look at history, have what I would call direct effects and indirect effects. The indirect effects are much less appreciated. We have seen things like the fusion of the global MDG campaign and the global health campaign, originally through the AIDS treatment effort. Dr Jim Kim, when he was head of the HIV/AIDS effort, of course now there are more phone accounts in 2000; of course now there are more than 6 billion. This is a very controversial issue. There are many anti-globalisation protests and, after the Asia crisis of 1997 and 1998, at a very profound time of anti-globalisation, to international health. They were at a critical time in much of officialdom, and we have to remember that at the beginning of 2001, there was no international effort for any treatment. By the end of 2005, the target was 3 million people on treatment. By 2005, roughly 1.4 million were on treatment. They did not even get 50% of the way. However, this was very much of one with the notion of goal-based service delivery targets, and the introduction of that target changed mindsets around what was possible, because only four years previously there was no real effort to do anything. Now today, as at the end of 2011, we have more than 8 million people on treatment.

Even the “3 by 5” goal, which only went halfway there, if you will, was fundamental in changing the way the subsequent scale-up worked, with the Gleneagles agreement and the World Summit agreement for universal access to treatment by 2010. There were spillover effects that changed things, and I would argue even China had a doubling of the rate of decline of child mortality since 2000, which is conceivably linked to a broader global effort to scale up public health services. One cannot say that in a conclusive manner, but it is quite likely. We need to understand how these norms proliferate quite distinctly from the policy mechanisms that are very explicit.

**Professor Dorward:** I think both of those are very helpful. This is something that in our group we debated quite a lot. We came to the conclusion that we have to put aspirations on the table and not shy away from difficult things. This, as was mentioned earlier, will be a process of negotiation, and one has to start negotiations putting as much on the table as possible, and then seeing what you can get out of it in the end. Different aspects of human rights should definitely be there, in our view, on the table at the beginning.

**Q54 Mr McCann:** John, perhaps I can put this directly to you. There is a danger that there is a massive contradiction here. Under the existing MDG framework, some of the targets are based on universal terms, and others are relative. For example, the target for income equality is to halve the number of people living below the poverty line, and by dint of that, we are condemning the other half not to be looked after during the period concerned. Does that not then impinge on the human rights of the other half?

**John McArthur:** I have two answers to that. One is that the MDGs are put in a no-win situation on this. Even if they help transform the outcomes for half, they will be criticised for the other half not being addressed. The world is quite different today, as many have said, from 2000, when poverty rates in Africa had been going up for a generation and child death rates had been going up throughout the 1990s, for example; there were many problems where the trends were quite terrible. Many of these goals have helped and been part of a deep process of changing the trends.

Keeping in mind the history, where these goals were extracted from the Millennium Declaration, which was a political process speaking largely to the anti-globalisation protests and, after the Asia crisis of 1997 and 1998, at a very profound time of anti-globalisation in many corners of the world, I do believe this was a best effort among diplomats and politicians to pull things together. What we have now, which we did not have then, is the chance for a more rigorous process, a more consultative process. There were 700 million mobile phone accounts in 2000; of course now there are more than 6 billion. This is a very different global conversation opportunity. There are many imperfections in the way the goals were designed, like primary education but not secondary, which is clearly an imperfection. Over the next couple of years, through the High Level Panel, for which I think a political-visions process would be my description of its best role, rather than an academic process, there is the opportunity to bring many of these constituencies on to a similar page. We could then see a very clear vision set that is universal. Some colleagues and I have recommended a simple vision of getting to zero on extreme poverty as at least
one central component of the overall agenda. That means minimum standards for humanity by 2030, with explicit targets for every community, sub-national unit and country in the world. That would be a universal standard for human rights, and it would be a very interesting and historic achievement for humanity. What needs to go into that vision, and who needs to set their own mechanisms of accountability, inside and outside government, is a very important conversation. I believe there is a lot of scope for creativity around that, and many of us, whether we are in civil society, the research community, or the industry and business community, can start to set quite ambitious processes around this.

One of the other things that is different about the world is that, firstly, it is not strictly bifurcated between high-income and low-income countries. We know the majority of the poorest people now live in middle-income countries. There is also a lot more, I would say, respect and support for ingenuity in the complements to Government. That is not to minimise the role of Government, which is profound, but to work alongside it. I think that is one of the more exciting threads of discussion that the High Level Panel cannot necessarily answer in the first instance but at least create processes around, and even norms around, where the three co-chairs, for example, could convene leaders from all walks of life around the world to set their agenda for this over the next couple of years.

Q55 Mr McCann: A final question, Chair, and it is to all three gentlemen: how should women’s rights be addressed in the post-2015 framework? Charles, give John a rest.

Charles Abugre: There are a lot of consultations on that, and we will begin to get that from the gender rights and women’s rights groups as we go along. What I am hearing from the discussions so far is both specific and cross-cutting—cross-cutting in the sense that, if we took the issues of inequities seriously, the targets set in each goal would include issues to deal with inequities, including gender inequities. If we take food and nutrition, it is not an average that we want.

We know enough now about the implications of malnutrition in women, and the impact on children and the rest of their lives, to understand that we need to break that down. If we address inequities, including gender inequities, in all of these goals, including the income goal, then we would see that, when it comes to certain targets, whether those targets are globally set or nationally set, our challenge would be statistical. How do we invest in the ability to generate the data to demonstrate such things? That is the cross-cutting. On every issue of power and powerlessness, when you simply integrate, you lose.

There needs to be a focus on gender inequalities, maybe in an extension of the more political part of the MDG-type goals—the issues of participation in the economy, and the issues of participation in politics and decision-making. But again, it is a statistical thing that we need to invest in, in order to show it. The specific and the cross-cutting allow us to address the issue of gender, but also various forms of differentiation that feed back into gender inequalities as well.

Q56 Mr Michael McCann: Andrew, go ahead.

Professor Dorward: Excellent. I agree.

John McArthur: I would too. Again, on this notion of minimum standards for humanity, if we take a notion of zero extreme poverty, broadly defined, it could include child mortality targets for boys and girls, and it could be gender disaggregated on each thing. It would mean thinking systematically about the groups, and it could apply also to many parts of groups, which in many parts of the world are dramatically excluded from core services. It is a nice simple framework to tackle a lot of the inequality questions that have many angles of inequality, of which gender is one of the most profound.

We have a challenge coming out of the MDGs. I would call the gender equality target inadequate for tackling many of the challenges. This is ultimately a political conversation. There is no issue where active global debate is more merited, in my view. It is different from child mortality, which is a little more nuts-and-bolts technical; people die for certain reasons. This is more of an autonomy question, or an autonomous set of questions around identity, rights, self, and manifestation of pursuit of the things we all consider of value in a global society. We know that it should be better than past goals.

A big question is how this applies to other countries. It is certainly not just a question of low-income or middle-income countries. It is equally, in many instances, a question of high-income countries, and of course that is a hot topic of debate in many parts of the world this week. Those are serious issues that merit very serious and intensive global discussion around not only how we pursue these things but how we measure progress against them.

Q57 Chair: A particular point you mentioned was the elimination of absolute poverty by 2030. This is something that the President of the World Bank has indicated he wants the World Bank to consider as a possible objective. That suggests a more common set of goals. Do you think the World Bank is more bought-in this time, or will be more bought-in than was the case before?

John McArthur: I have enormous admiration for Jim—Dr Kim—and I was delighted when I saw him making these comments publicly. Again, I have had the privilege to work with him for many years, in different capacities, and he is very serious about this. At the same time, I tweeted, “Remarkable that this even merits a headline,” in response to the news that the World Bank is considering focusing on extreme poverty and ending extreme poverty. I think it was the Financial Times. That speaks, in my view, to a bit of drift in the governance of that institution, and this links back to points on accountability. One of the challenges around the Millennium Development Goals that my colleagues and I spent a couple of years on was the financing estimates—what it might cost to achieve these goals. We spent a couple of years on bottom-up assessments of several countries, best
Of course we are nowhere near that, and also we know that the famous, historic Gleneagles commitments of 2005, as an aggregate, fell short by more than $10 billion. We know that the L’Aquila commitments of the G8 and G20 in 2009 have fallen short. That puts colleagues at the World Bank in a very difficult position as a financial institution. My own view is that, in looking at the Bank, this has to be a conversation at the staff level. It is important that their board is asking them for ideas. It is a management issue to help provide the leadership.

The management of the Bank has been quite politically committed to these goals, but also the boards, the members, and the shareholders have a real responsibility to drive the agenda as well, because there is a reporting relationship. Bank staff are ultimately operating within the financial constraints of their shareholders that are handed down to them. This is, in my view, underappreciated, because that often leads to a suppression of discussion of true need. It would be an enormous service to the world if we can have a more amplified discussion called for, even if it is a matter of saying, “How far could we get, if there were more support?” or, “What would it look like to release the bottlenecks to get this job done?” I would just add that we have to keep in mind that the previous President of the United States did not say the words “Millennium Development Goals” publicly until September 2005, and his Ambassador to the UN tried to eliminate the Millennium Development Goals from the international system in August 2005. This was not a 100% conducive environment. But the Goals were so strong and so resonant, and then Prime Minister Blair and at the time Chancellor Brown, and so many others, provided tremendous leadership, with many others, to keep it on the agenda. We have to see this never as a predetermined set of processes, but as an iterative set of processes, where a partnership strategy of political leaders from different constituencies and different corners of the world can be extremely effective, if they approach it with a very persistent mindset.

Q58 Hugh Bayley: I was very impressed with the way Charles focused on the need to address inequalities. I am sure the Millennium Development Goals have, in catalysing change, done more good than harm, but it is undoubtedly the case that, if you set relativistic goals, you will increase inequality. There is no incentive to raise somebody from 50 cents per day to 90 cents a day, because you do not receive a tick in the MDG box. You concentrate on the people with 90 cents a day, and bringing them up to 100. This process has to look ruthlessly at the intended and unintended consequences of the MDGs. For instance, “3 by 5” was great for generating medication for people with HIV and AIDS, but it was pretty bad news for a whole-health-system approach. If we are going to set targets for post-2015 and do not address the issue of reducing inequality, it seems to me we will perpetuate some of the downside of the MDGs. It is easy to say, but it is very difficult to do, so perhaps I should start with the economist here. You obviously need, as Charles suggests, to focus on women, to focus on ethnic minorities, to focus on the very poor, low-caste people, and so on. But how do you construct goals that will address inequality? Some universal goals will, but some may not have that effect.

Professor Dorward: I do not know that I have answers. What Charles said is that one sets goals that focus on those for whom they are most important, which will be those who are at the bottom. One does not necessarily set boundaries to cross, but one sets shifts to make in which everyone is included. Relative shifts, “reduce the proportion” and things like that, are not particularly helpful. Achieving particular standards is more useful than changing proportions.

Then one comes up with the huge practical problem that different countries have different resources, and different extents of problems. There is the well known problem of, if you like, not so much a moving of the goalposts but the African goalposts being set an awful lot further back than the goalposts of other countries on other continents. A very important principle here is disaggregation, and also subsidiarity, so that working towards particular targets, countries are able to set their own goals that reflect priorities between different sectors and different goals, and reflect also the availability of resources and the likelihood of being able to achieve things. More subsidiarity allows and encourages more local ownership, local buy-in, and allows the possibility of a more equitable focus.

Q59 Hugh Bayley: I am encouraged by that approach, but I would not want to create a series of targets that allow countries—I am going to stereotype here—with autocratic Governments that are not particularly interested in poverty alleviation to say, “We are setting local targets.” I am going to be very cynical here, but those will be targets that do not address rural poverty. Following Andrew’s comments, first of all, does it make sense within each target or goal to add a coda that says, “And in doing so, to reduce inequality in access to healthcare,” or whatever? Does it make sense to put an inequality and equality framework around each area of work? That is the first question.

Secondly, following Andrew’s suggestion that you might have a different set of goals—he called it subsidiarity—in different parts of the world and different countries, it has long occurred to me that if you want to address absolute poverty in Mozambique, shall we say, you need donor countries to fund access to a basic universal healthcare system, and access to universal primary and perhaps secondary education; but in India, you do not need outsiders to do it. Somebody said that there are more poor people in middle-income countries than in poor countries, but the difference between Mozambique and India is that if there is a political will in India, the Government of India can redistribute from a middle class that is bigger than the whole of the population of the European Union to people who are poorer. To what extent should you set funding responsibilities from the international community for the poorest countries as well as internal redistribution priorities to
address inequality for middle-income and richer countries? I take that point as well. Charles Abougre: On an earlier question, Andrew made the point about what the objective of all of this really is. Clearly there are multiple objectives, and he outlined them. One of the important things is that they offer one more opportunity and space for conversations between citizens and state, citizens and their Government. It does not resolve everything, it is not the only one, but it is an important space that feeds into a global space. Inequality is one of these issues that clearly require a political consensus to address it. It requires a coalition, politically, in any country to address it. It is more than simply targets.

The hope is that, as this issue becomes part of the discussion, we all realise, as more work is being done, that the inequalities affect us differently but similarly in many ways. It affects our ability to develop our economies, to keep ourselves in relative peace and harmony, and so many things that we now know from research. The way that I see it, for example, would be giving the political opportunity to discuss this. Target setting is actually national, in my view. Goal setting could be broader, but if you can encourage goal setting, and maybe one layer of target setting that also addresses inequalities, then each country level discusses what that actually means in terms of the reality of their context.

If there is a broad goal on addressing inequalities, then we can have a shared understanding of what we mean by the inequalities and we can start to work on the data issues, which means that we are looking at a multiple approach to reporting on inequalities. Doing something about that in terms of resource allocation is then part of the political consensus. Now there is always a role for the international community in terms of international finance and development assistance, but as John was saying, we are in a different situation, where, increasingly, most countries can do a lot more than they are currently doing, or were able to do from 2005. That is the political consensus. It is also the reason why, in my view, this ought to be truly global; addressing inequalities and differentiations remaining in our society is for all countries. Many developing countries will find encouragement in not only being told to address their inequalities but in seeing also that the richer countries have committed themselves to addressing their own differentiations as part of the global agenda. Then, I think, it is doable.

John McArthur: This is a very tricky issue, because even the word inequality has so many different connotations in different parts of the world. However, this is fast evolving. In the United States, where this would not have been a common conversation, you are seeing real public debates over inequality for maybe the first time in a generation or more. My general view is that the goals should go as far as the politics allows. At the same time, I would argue that this has often been misunderstood in the context of the MDGs. What we have seen in the MDGs in practice is much more emphasis on universal access and systems building. I have a slightly different read, again, on the HIV debates, because what we saw is that the notion of needing to deliver pills drew extraordinary attention to the need for broader health systems, and in that process we have seen an apex model where there has been a fanning out of investments and prioritisation, to the extent that we now have a major global effort around community health workers and frontline health workers, as a low-cost delivery mechanism. Similarly, as the efforts for infectious disease and child mortality were making so much progress, the goal for maternal mortality stood out that much more for its stagnation, and then in 2008 we saw a big global push on maternal mortality, which of course hinges on health systems. Even the malaria control effort was based on universal access to long-lasting, insecticide-treated nets—universal access.

In practice I have seen very few instances of people going for the cheap, inequality-enhancing option. What I have more commonly seen is that often, semi-paradoxically, it is cheaper to go for the easiest cases, like the expansion of immunisations, so that has been where people have gone first, because it is quite low cost to go after the very first level of service delivery in some instances. This has to be appreciated as more layered than often discussed. I would also agree with the notion of thinking through this in terms of building on the programmes of universal access, and then to the extent that the politics can handle the word “inequality”, loaded as it might be, the world community is more ready for that conversation than it has been for quite some time. That is an important attribute of this.

Q60 Chris White: Thank you for that comprehensive answer. What do you think should be included in the post-2015 framework? Do you think there is a danger of trying to include so much that the framework becomes overly complex?

Professor Dorward: That is the big question, isn’t it?

Chris White: Yes.

Professor Dorward: It should try to be as holistic as possible. I would favour having main themes. We as a group put together a proposal that had something like 12 main themes, but instead of having three on health, it had one on health. But we have to address other things, like climate change. We have to think about our population stabilisation, about water, communications; these are critical things that were not in the MDGs or were in the MDGs “light”, if you like. These things need to be there, and I would suggest the simplification comes from having some overarching sets of goals. We have proposed something like wellbeing; stunting is another potentially very useful one, because so many things feed in to stunting. Underneath that you have these different areas, if you like, but there will be different priorities in different countries as to which of those areas they should focus on, depending on where they are furthest behind or most problematic.

Q61 Chris White: Do you think that a simplification, or your suggestion for simplification, could lead to a lack of focus?

Professor Dorward: It could do, yes. Another problem is that the MDGs have been politically successful because they are easy to grasp and communicate. If you have too many areas, then you
lose that simplicity. But that also has led to gaps, and there is the old problem of whether, as the world moves on, you can put things out in order to bring other things in, or whether you just bring other things in. It is quite difficult to push out many, if any, of the things in the current MDGs, but we know there are some things that need to come in.

By dealing with an overarching goal or measure, like wellbeing or hunting, which is very good measurability-wise and in its links to other things, and making that a focus, and then allowing this question of global goals and national targets, which I think is very helpful—and those national targets would be targets for how to work towards and contribute to the global goals—you address to some extent your problem of particular countries, in a sense, opting out.

Q62 Chris White: Do you think it will be more difficult to measure progress under these terms?

Professor Dorward: How do we measure progress at the moment? We have these particular goals and targets, and there are three or four targets for most of the goals. You are getting up to quite a large number of goals and targets respectively. MDG 1 receives possibly the most attention; gender does of goals, and then we pick them out selectively: MDG 3 receives as much attention. We already have some that that. Whatever the outcome of this global political process is, it does truly, sincerely, seriously need to make sure that there is, in my recommendation, a crisp vision with ample scope for the “how to”. One of the reasons that the Millennium Goals were so effective is that they were agnostic on the “how to”. It is often an underappreciated point, but we do need an extra layer, because the local discussion has to be specific on what it is going to do.

Q63 Chris White: That is a fair comment. Just while we are on the theme of the framework, where would you see employment, or adequate levels of employment, being there?

Professor Dorward: I would put it in terms of livelihoods and people’s incomes. That links in with poverty levels in terms of incomes. It also links in with food, because food prices are so critical to people’s real incomes, and so I would see those things coming in there. I would bring a lot together under a livelihoods headline. If you were to quiz me on how we could have a livelihoods goal, I would have to say, “Let me go away and think for a few months.”

Q64 Chris White: You have answered my question, thank you. Would you like to add to that?

John McArthur: I just wanted to add that I have spent the past 10 years explaining the Millennium Development Goals to people, and by the time I get to Goal 5, the eyes glaze. We have to appreciate that there is a carrying capacity for advocacy. We have eight goals right now, some of which are highly specific and highly quantified in targets, some of which not. My view is that they all should be, and so that is a criterion for including anything. But there is a bit of a magic number issue in terms of how many we can have as goals. I agree that there should be a straightforward goal of basic health for all, with proper targets under that. There should be a basic goal of basic education for all, with proper targets under that. Whatever the outcome of this global political process is, it does truly, sincerely, seriously need to worry about how many items there are on the agenda. That will matter with enormous consequence. It is a dilution effect. I would not go to more than 10, for sure, but I would like to keep it close to eight if possible, because that will help.

At the same time, I want to come back to the notion of subsidiarity. The basic answer here is that it depends on how the global goals are framed. If the global goals are framed as some common standard, then by all means it makes total sense to have every country figure out their targets so that they are locally actionable. It is very important that they are actionable and monitorable at the local level. If the global vision is very vague, such as, “Incorporate the principles of sustainable development into national strategies,” then we can predict how that will turn out. We need to make sure that there is, in my recommendation, a crisp vision with ample scope for the “how to”. One of the reasons that the Millennium Goals were so effective is that they were agnostic on the “how to”. It is often an underappreciated point, but we do need an extra layer, because the local discussion has to be specific on what it is going to do.

Charles Abuge: I just wanted to add, from the intergovernmental discussions that I have been involved in in Africa, there is much less contention. We have to achieve all of the goals in the end, even the goal of addressing disparities and inequalities, politically, at that level, as distinct from national level. Then there are the so-called enablers—the question of “how to”. The main critique of the MDGs by many African Governments, although they were also probably the ones who bought into them the most, is that somehow or other they have tended also to undermine their key enabler, or did not enforce them, which is structurally changing their economies.

This is a bigger thing than growth, for example. It is more like: “We want to get out of primary commodity dependence. We want to diversify our economies. We want to build bigger local capacity for business. We want our civil service to be more equipped and stronger, not reduced and weak.” This enabler-level discussion is probably the hottest issue to deal with. Whether they are appropriate for global-level agreement, I am not sure, because there is also buy-in to the subsidiarity issue. The balance of goals, however, must be set such that they are not seen to undermine the building of more holistic societies, in a way that many would interpret some of the MDGs to have done, in the sense that they biased the way societies are built with the limited resources that they have, and things like that, and the planning process.

Q65 Richard Burden: You may have covered this already, so my apologies for not being here for the early part of the session. Listening to discussion so far, which seems to be crystallising around a comprehensive but nevertheless limited—it sounds like I am contradicting myself—number of goals but with regional or local or national differentiation around targets or semi-targets below that, the question that was coming into my head, and has been done in some of the discussions on the High Level Panel and so on, is the question of governance: about where that appears, and whether it should appear, as a goal or a target, across the board or differentiated.
You may have answered this question already, but Human Rights Watch, for example, have said political participation and freedom of speech should be there in the framework and should be part of the process that answers the “how to” question you have been talking about. What are your thoughts on that?

**John McArthur:** Charles? We did talk about this a little bit, and Charles gave a good answer.

**Charles Abuge:** I have two things from what you said. On the issue of political participation, I do not know how this will eventually fan out. I am sure that if we go back to the Millennium Declaration, from which the MDGs are partially derived, it is the vision of a world in which development, peace, security and political participation are clearly spelled out. In a sense we are not starting afresh in that discussion. If you go back to the Millennium Declaration as the starting point, the question is whether this then translates into overarching shared principles, or specific goals. If they become shared principles, that is already there. We can scale it up; we can highlight it. If it is about goals, Andrew said he favours putting everything on the table so we can have a good debate, including on national participation, political freedom, and civic and political rights, those issues. But we know that we would then have a tough negotiation. It is about treatment as opposed to whether or not the world has addressed them one way or another.

The only thing I also wanted to add is: at governmental level, where do you approach this, countrywide? In the consultation process, the difficulties we are seeing come from the absence of an interministerial approach to this. The absence of an interministerial approach means that it ends up being a planning activity, with the finance ministry being the closest partner. That means that everything to do with building the democratic framework for development becomes difficult to feed in to the national-level consultation in that sense.

Also, at the regional level, the particular set of political entities that tend to have the least support are the ministers of public services and the ministries of public services—the entities that support the civil service structure and deliver services. In terms of an implementation framework, I would say that we do need to think carefully about interministerial approaches on public services for the right to services. On the issue of political freedom, it already exists; it is no-one’s fault, but if a child dies for a bad pill, there are also individual failures, and there are profound points here: if a child dies for lack of a pill, it is no-one’s fault, but if a child dies for a bad pill, someone loses their job. We have an asymmetry in how the world deals with these things, which is a deep injustice. We need more accountability in the international system, where people have delivery targets for the organisations they run. We also need to understand—and in the UN Millennium Project we recommended—that the country-level strategy should be very explicit, where the local government would say, “Here is our part,” the international system would say, “Here is our part,” and the donor community, where that was pertinent, would say, “Here is our part,” and be explicit about it. That is remarkably difficult to do—to put that basic logic of accountability into these structures. That is why it was such a victory, as simple as it might seem, to say, “Let each country be empowered to craft its own strategy as the centrepiece to achieve these goals,” in 2005, as imperfect as that has been. Who in the G8 should be held accountable for the Gleneagles shortcomings in 2010? That is a deep question. Who in the ministries of health of the countries that do not have the $10 billion should be held accountable for scenario planning around whether the donor community follows through or not? That is another very complicated question. I do not know whether they can be perfectly solved, but we can add many...
layers of transparency, with sunlight as disinfectant, so that we at least avoid the downward spiral blame games of people pointing their fingers at each other, saying, “It is everyone’s fault,” which it often is not.

Q68 Chair: That is a very reasonable answer. What we and the Panel will be wrestling with over the next period of time is how you split the difference between very high aspirations and very practical delivery, and then the subdivision of what that means in practical policies. As a Committee, for example, when the Department for International Development produced in its Annual Report a series of traffic lights showing what the Millennium Development Goal performance was country by country, what they did not do initially, until we pressed them to do so, was explain how they thought the UK Government’s policies were affecting the colour of the traffic light. Otherwise they were not accepting the linkage. These are things that will be interesting to explore.

We very much appreciate the evidence you have submitted, both in writing and in coming here, and as I said to the other panellists, and always do say, this is a process that we are continuing with; if you have any reflections after this that you think would be helpful to us, comments or additional thoughts, please feel free to contribute them. We would be very happy to receive them. Obviously we hope that this interaction will help us produce something that is not just interesting to Parliament but useful to the process.

John McArthur: If I may just offer one very quick idea to be tabled for consideration: we have talked about these three co-chairs, and the role they play. I believe this might be one of the first parliamentary discussions on these issues, and I congratulate the Committee for the leadership. It is extraordinary what this country is doing. At the same time, there is a need for balance between this country as a leader on the high-income side, Indonesia as a fast-growing, emerging middle-income country, Liberia as a fragile state. It is a pretty remarkable cross-section of the issues that are coming up here. It might even be interesting to collaborate with your fellow parliamentarians in the different countries to discuss their perspectives on these issues. One of the things we tried to stimulate, and on which the Millennium Campaign has worked a lot, is translating discussions from the Administrations to the Parliaments, and a lot of great ideas might come out of that at the constituency level.

Hugh Bayley: May I answer this point? You are absolutely right, but it is also essential that the process engages in its outreach with parliamentarians, not as an afterthought but as one of the building-blocks.

Q69 Chair: I would agree with that. All I was going to say was that, as far as this Committee is concerned, you are obviously speaking to the converted. We are parliamentarians, and we like to engage with parliamentarians wherever we can. I would also say that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the International Parliamentary Union are quite active in this area, and quite often organise some really quite useful meetings of parliamentarians. They often bring them here; people seem to like to come to London for seminars, and that gives us a chance to engage. It is a very good point.

We obviously do not have the capacity or the resources to travel around to all those places, but we can, in a variety of other ways, ensure that exchange. It is a very fair point, and it is one that we are very keen to try to explore. Maybe we should think about whether there is anything more we can do to encourage even online participation from other parliamentarians. Perhaps on the particular point you make, we should make a specific enquiry of the Parliaments of Liberia and Indonesia and invite them to submit something.

John McArthur: That is what I was suggesting, just to keep it manageable.

Chair: Thank you very much for that very useful suggestion. Thanks a lot.
Wednesday 31 October 2012

Members present:

Sir Malcolm Bruce (Chair)
Richard Burden
Pauline Latham
Jeremy Lefroy
Mr Michael McCann
Alison McGovern
Fiona O’Donnell
Chris White

Examination of Witnesses


Q70 Chair: Good morning, and thank you very much for coming in. I apologise for being slightly late, and I apologise in advance that we have not actually extended the time available, so we are slightly compressed. As you may appreciate, it is DFID Questions this morning, so the Committee has to finish in time for that. We will finish this session at half past 10. We will obviously try to cover as much ground as possible but, if we can keep the questions and answers brief, we will just finish at 10.30. For the record, welcome; thank you for coming in. Could you just formally introduce yourselves?

Lawrence Haddad: Lawrence Haddad, Director of the Institute of Development Studies.

Eveline Herfkens: Eveline Herfkens, former development minister in the Netherlands, former member of the Board of the World Bank, former UN ambassador in Geneva, but let me stop there—oh, 10 years parliamentarian.

Richard Morgan: Morning. Richard Morgan, a Senior Adviser at UNICEF.

Q71 Chair: Thanks again. This is the context of the question: we have had the MDGs; we are now looking for their successors. What were the achievements of the MDGs, in your view, and where do you think they should go from here? It is a big question, but could you summarise very crisply what your own take is.

Lawrence Haddad: The Millennium Development Goals did help to crystallise and to prioritise a focus on human development, as an essential foundation for sustained progress. They did help to guide governments in decision making in developing countries in particular, as to where to focus their efforts and to mobilise resources. It took two or three years after they were formally adopted, in the early 2000s, but we did see a coming together of public support, bilateral support and governmental focus in the developing world around these goals. To that extent, in terms of mobilising resources and efforts, particularly the focus on some neglected areas of human development, like child health, basic education and, to some extent, nutrition and clean water, they were effective.

The other thing I would say in terms of achievement, and again something to be built on and extended, is that they catalysed efforts to improve data availability, data collection and data analysis in developing countries, such that, although I would say we are only halfway there, there is a lot more available in terms of household-level data now than there was 10 years ago. This again is something to build on.

If we are talking about where we go from here, our feeling is very much that there is significant unfinished business. Many millions of people, including poor families and children, are not yet reached and need to be reached still. There are many areas without basic services. At the same time, the agenda needs to be broadened out to address new challenges that have emerged since 2000, which I think are quite well known to the Committee.

Eveline Herfkens: I very much agree. I really believe that the Millennium Development Goals galvanised attention on issues of global poverty more than anything else ever in the development business has. That has been an incredible achievement. It really created this emerging collective consciousness in rich countries that we cannot live in affluence the way we do and, in the meantime, have that kind of extreme poverty. That is morally unacceptable. I am personally absolutely convinced that, without the Millennium Development Goals and the campaigns that went with them in several countries in Europe, the 2005 EU commitments on the 0.7% would never have been made. Not everybody lives up to them, but it was really a breakthrough after decades. I also believe, and if you interview civil society leaders in developing countries they would confirm this, that it really helped developing countries to empower citizens to hold their governments to account, and it forced governments thus to focus more in developing countries on the issue of poverty and some of these neglected social issues. I think that has been incredible.

It was really unique. It took 12 years to build international consensus on these goals, but it had never happened before. Every Government in the world signed up to them, at the highest political level—the financial institutions, the UN system, civil society and local authorities. It has been an incredible help in focusing this agenda. The fact that they were simple, tangible and that they had deadlines you could measure was very helpful. The building of that brand name has been a huge capital investment. Whatever the flaws, and I do not know if you want me to talk about these now, it is really throwing out the baby with the bathwater if we now say, “Okay, let’s do something totally different.” Please do not destroy the huge capital that we have with that brand name. More
or less all of these goals, as you know, are reducing by half; reducing by two thirds, etc, so we still have a lot of unfinished business. That does not mean that we should not think about the flaws. I am not sure if you want me to develop that now.

**Chair:** There will be opportunity to do that as the questions proceed.

**Eveline Herfkens:** Now or later?

Q72 **Chair:** I think you will be able to do that later. Lawrence, before you answer, you have specifically said that you think that the MDGs had little impact on the politics of developing countries. If that is the case, you could perhaps explain why you take that view, but also how, as we move forward, we could ensure that they do.

**Lawrence Haddad:** Thanks, Malcolm. I think my comment was about the policies. I do not think they have changed the policies that much. This is based on evaluations that I have read—two or three evaluations, one by Richard Manning, one by Andy Summer and a couple of others—which basically say that the discourse has been changed quite a bit in developing countries and the poorer countries, but the policies themselves have not changed that much and it is really difficult to know whether the resource flows have changed a lot. I am going to get back to that in a second.

My reading of the evaluations of the MDGs is that it is difficult to be conclusive, because actually there was no monitoring and evaluation plan put in place at the beginning. There needs to be a monitoring and evaluation plan put in place in the next round of MDGs, so we can actually evaluate them. The evaluations say it has proved a rallying call and a rallying point for development across the world. It has probably led to increased ODA flows; it has probably skewed those flows more towards the poorer countries and sub-Saharan Africa; and it probably has directed those flows more towards the MDG sectors themselves, towards health and education. It has had an impact at that global level for sure. It has also had an impact in terms of a greater focus on outcomes rather than inputs just by themselves, so it has definitely had an impact on a lot of things, but it just has not had as big an impact at the national level for some countries. For some countries, it has. Some countries you will see have adapted and adopted the MDGs for their own national purposes and goals. The evaluations say that, for the majority, it has not had as big an effect as we would have hoped.

**Chair:** That actually leads on to Richard Burden’s line of questioning.

Q73 **Richard Burden:** Could I just get your views on how far the next round should look towards global goals? On the one hand, I think as you said, Eveline, the fact that they have been global has meant, to some extent, that they have been easy to understand. At a global level, you can design targets that go with the goals relatively easily, but the problem can be that it does not always address inequalities between countries and sometimes inequalities within countries as well. Looking forward towards new goals, how far should they be global? How far should they include “developed countries” as well as developing countries? How can we ensure that the targets that go with them are relevant in all situations? For example, you may be able to apply targets on transparency, accountability and governance issues across the board and they would be relevant across the board. Issues such as safe drinking water may be much more relevant in some countries than others. How do we square that circle, would you say?

**Richard Morgan:** I would definitely suggest that there are issues that are going to have to be addressed globally. There needs to be global partnerships around them and global monitoring mechanisms as well. These are primarily issues coming out of the Rio+20 environmental sustainability agenda, which we think should be integrated together with the unfinished business, taking forward the work on the MDGs in one coherent framework. There would be a global element that would be to do, primarily, with environmental stewardship of the planet, and trying to find a balance between the need for development progress, the need for continuing economic growth to generate resources for human progress and protection of planetary resources.

There may as well be certain thematic issues that all societies would need to address in common. One we are concerned about, for example, is child poverty, which is an issue both for developed countries and obviously developing countries. Issues around human security, violence, trafficking and migration potentially affect all parts of the world as well. Potentially, there is a universal element that could be the subject of a set of global goals. At the same time, we would not suggest rigidity—that all countries, rich and poor, have to adopt exactly the same agenda. There should be plenty of scope for tailoring and adaptation where countries individually focus on what are the most relevant goals to them. It would need to be a balance between the two.

If I could just pick up very briefly on another thing you mentioned, which was inequalities, again we think this is an issue that is essential for all societies to look at and to consider how to address, but the nature of challenges in inequalities will be different from one country to the next. It is very much an issue of gender inequalities; in others, it could be minority groups, geographical, persons with disabilities and so on. While inequalities might be a global theme for a new framework, they would need to be looked at country by country.

**Eveline Herfkens:** Let me first say that, originally, the goals were never meant to be cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all country by country. The fact that they have been adopted but then adapted at local level is great, because it is ridiculous to ask the same in 15 years’ time from Africa as from Brazil. That is why countries such as Vietnam said, “We are going to achieve that goal of halving poverty earlier,” and Latin America said, “We are not doing just primary education.” That has been great and we should continue to push that local adaptation.

In terms of global goals, one of the three flaws that I was going to mention was that the first seven goals basically all derived from UN conferences and summits 12 years before we actually agreed on the
Millennium Declaration, but Goal 8 came up in Monterrey. Whatever was said at the conference in Monterrey in 2002 on aid, aid effectiveness, trade, etc., was actually never decently codified in Goal 8. That is one of the things I think should be improved. What rich countries should do to put an end to global poverty should be part and parcel of the new compact to make it a fair compact, where both parties have to achieve such an agenda. I am very sceptical about the idea that there will ever be a situation in which rich countries let themselves be monitored or policed by the international community on what they do domestically, but I at least have the hope that they would agree to be evaluated on what they do internationally, although the UN system is scared as hell to do so. Let us be honest about that. The policing should be from sovereign countries by their own parliaments and their own civil societies, at least.

In terms of sustainability goals, as far as that is possible we should beef up Goal 7 with whatever we can. I think it is pretty much an illusion. I have lived through these 15 years when we had to build up that consensus to reach the year 2000, and I simply do not see from where the sustainability, anything, is coming out there that, within 10–15 years, could be signed on to by every government. I hope I am wrong, but let us not hold that hostage that, as long as we do not have this integration, let us forget about the Millennium Development Goals. This is exactly why developing countries are very suspicious about the intentions of rich countries to suddenly be so concerned about sustainability in terms of the environmental impact.

The inequality issue: one of the great things you mentioned is that the goals led to better data. I remember when we were agreeing about the goals. Where I come from politically, you do care about sustainability issues, emissions, resource use, peace, justice, transparency and corruption—are issues that, with—sustainability issues, emissions, resource use, peace, justice, transparency and corruption—are issues that,
as you have said, Malcolm, every country can and should monitor, because they affect everybody else. Some of the goals, $1 a day, $2 a day, are going to be very difficult to apply to every country but, as Richard said, not every goal has to apply to every country. We need to be sensible about that. The final reason for saying they have to apply to every country is there is a solidarity component to all of this. I felt the MDGs were really important of their time, but they did create an us-and-them dynamic. We need to get away from that us-and-them dynamic.

Eveline Herfkens: Let me react to this. I would like to agree with you, but the problem is political feasibility. I simply see it not happening that rich countries would allow the UN to force them to adopt certain policy goals domestically. It has been so important for the goals that they were signed on to by every head of state and head of government in every country in the world. The empowerment of civil society in developing countries comes from the fact that their own government, at the highest level, has signed on to it. If we do things, we maybe can agree in this room. I am not sure if we would but, if we did, it would not be dealing with a lot of the... the United Nations, all of them, you actually destroy one of the most important things about these goals, and that is the international consensus, commitment and signature of every head of state and head of government, which allowed people in countries that do not see government as their servant, but as their father, to actually hold governments to account. At the end of the day, development will only happen if people in developing countries hold their governments to account. The MDGs were a weapon for that, and I would be really afraid that, if we lose this international broad consensus about them, that might get lost.

Lawrence Haddad: It might. Politics is really what determines all of this. The whole process is hugely political and all the technical analysis is second tier really.

Chair: In front of us is this dilemma that we have to address.

Q74 Fiona O'Donnell: Good morning. My first question is in two parts. The first part is that it is generally recognised now that the majority of poor people live in middle-income countries, so how can new development goals reflect on that? The second part comes from a recent paper co-authored by Homi Kharas, which argues that, by 2025, we will again see large numbers of poor people in middle-income countries. Given that the new development goals are likely to span a period greater than 10 years, how can they shift from concentrating on tackling poverty in middle-income countries back to low-income?

Richard Morgan: Two quick points on this: the first is that, yes, most middle-income countries do have significant pockets of poverty and deprivation; un-reached populations, families and people still in poverty. That is for sure. Again, it comes back to the question of looking at inequalities, disaggregating national data, drilling down as far as possible to local situations to understand why people in middle-income countries are still poor and otherwise deprived, and finding what are the national policies or sub-national local approaches that can relieve that poverty and deprivation. Part of our work in the UN, having a presence in almost all middle-income countries, is to encourage and work with governments, to look at available data and information, to disaggregate and understand the barriers that people are still facing to coming out of poverty and addressing deprivation. That would be the one, looking at inequalities. The second is also very important: Homi Kharas’s paper and the projection suggest that, after a certain point, the balance of poverty and deprivation will shift again, in a sense back to fragile and conflict-affected states, states with very weak institutions, countries that are not able to deliver. We see already in the UN the focus of our spending is very much on a group of 20, 30 or 40 countries in the poorest parts of the world that are not able, at this point, to deliver basic services. Somehow, there has to be a provision or a recognition in the new framework that there will be a group of countries that will need support with institution building, with capacity for basic service delivery and for dealing with poverty and conflict in various ways. There needs to be some recognition of that, linked to support, I would say.

Eveline Herfkens: In terms of where the poor are, there are two different issues. One is the international policy discourse. We are talking about poverty; we are doing studies about it, etc. The second is where you spend your development pounds. In that second part, I am very clear, as a former development minister. Middle-income countries do not need external concessional resources to deal with their poverty. They can fix that themselves. It is not a money issue; it is an issue of political will. The good news is that many middle-income countries are actually doing the right thing. I am incredibly delighted by the fact that Latin America is the one continent where inequality actually goes down. All these beautiful examples-cash transfers and so on are home-grown programmes there. For me as a continental European, they are very interesting, after the failure of all the systems they have imported from us. There is a lot of good news from middle-income countries. Where there is political will, they can actually deal with that. They do not need external concessional resources.

For me, it is very clear. If I was a development minister today, I would continue to focus on sub-Saharan Africa, not only because that is the investment for 20 years from now, but also because middle-income countries really do not need our grants to take care of that. There are enough best practices now for how to deal with extreme poverty in middle-income countries, which they can share. The good news is that there is a lot of South-South cooperation going on about how cash transfers work and how electronic ID cards can help with targeting, reaching and giving basic insurance. They just have to have the political will and implement that. There is nothing that we foreigners can do or say that can help. Let us be realistic about that.

In sub-Saharan Africa, fragile states are an issue that we have always been struggling with. The inability to do something really useful there is the biggest failure
of the donor community. I still believe in whatever we can do to empower people to foster peace, but ultimately it is for Africa itself. I am quite optimistic about the fact that, in an increasing number of countries in Africa, people take charge. I just came from Accra; I flew overnight. Last night, I saw the presidential debate there. It is incredibly responsible democracy there. I was just thinking, “This is better quality debate, not only compared to the presidential debates that all of us have been following recently, but including the quality of debates in my own country, the Netherlands.” Governance and the discussion about issues, accountability to voters, are increasing incredibly, and they are increasingly African institutions that we should empower and allow.

If there is one thing that I have learned over 35 years—I am getting really old—my whole life in this business, it is that on governance issues, lectures of foreigners and conditionality simply do not work. What we should do as donors is not again create another think tank or another channel that is based in London, The Hague or Washington. Empower the African institutions. Empower the Africans. The biggies. I have been talking about the African Center for Economic Transformation, which gives advisory services. They are Africans advising Africans. That really works and is that what DFID should support. Why should we channel our money through the IDA if the client base is the same as the African Development Fund? They have their own institution. Empower what is there. I think that would help.

Q75 Fiona O’Donnell: Can I just check then, Eveline? Would you not give development aid to a middle-income like India? Is that what you are saying?

Eveline Herfkens: I would not. I definitely would not, absolutely not. It is not going to solve anything.

Lawrence Haddad: I will try to be brief, because I think that is not what you are saying. My colleague has read Homi’s paper but my colleague Andy Sumner has. His critique is that they have been very optimistic about growth rates and they have been very optimistic about the ability of those growth rates to translate into poverty reductions, from the paper that he has written on middle and low-income countries. Whatever your view on that particular paper, ODA is going to be focused on fewer and fewer countries, as we move forward, and that is good news. We are going to have to figure out how the MDGs apply to countries where, by and large, ODA is negligible or non-existent. I think the answer is around accountability, commitment and transparency, building civil society’s capacity to hold their own governments to account. That seems to me the big issue. The ‘golden thread’ components are very relevant to that particular agenda.

Q76 Fiona O’Donnell: Could I just ask for a brief answer to the second question? Since Gleneagles, the development landscape has changed from where it was mainly OECD countries giving aid. We now have large private foundations like the Gates Foundation and middle-income countries giving aid. How should the new development goals reflect that?

Richard Morgan: The new framework should not assume that the primary support in co-operation is going to be donor to developing country. It should take account of what you say is a very multi-polar world. There has been mention of South-South and learning from documented good practices, the knowledge transfer and the ‘how to’: how to deliver programmes, how to reach the poorest people in a sustainable way. This is possibly the most important resource that we have, which is under-utilised. I am not thinking so much, admittedly, of the financial transfer issue, but facilitating countries to talk to each other and share experience, from government to government, but also civil society organisations across countries as well, using best practices on things that work and have been proven to be successful.

Eveline Herfkens: I was very much involved in the run-up to Busan, which was basically an effort to get Africa and the new donors into the DAC Donor Support Agenda, the DAC agenda. I am not very optimistic about the degree by which we were successful in getting new donor support for this. It is really hard to tell countries that they should allow ownership, they should not tie aid and they should not do this or the other. We have only recently, as all donors, embarked on better manners on these issues, so what is actually our credibility? I do not think there is much we can do about that. It very much depends on the degree to which African countries themselves stand up and are tough with all their donors. One of the things that the African institution I just came from is doing is trying to create common negotiation discussions to empower African governments to deal with some of these new biggies.

What I am most concerned about is that, for a long time, the old good DAC donors are going to give the bulk of ODA. It is going to be a long time before the others catch up and become really relevant. Some of the old DAC donors have been using this bigger forum, where everybody is around, to forget about the old commitments, which some of them never implemented in the first place. If I were you, I really would be very concerned about the fact that the whole aid effectiveness agenda across Europe is actually going slightly out of the window. The fig leaf is that there is now a new debate with all these new donors, so nobody is going to notice that I still have my old very bad practices of tying aid, micro-managing, parallel structures, etc. That is my biggest concern, because that will still be the bulk of the money. I see the potential for a terrific division of labour. We were never that good at capacity building. If you look at all the information, capacity building is what we failed most at. For instance, on this wonderful subject of cash transfers, the experience is in Brazil and Mexico. These countries can, through South-South direct flow, which is happening, help build up experience in poorer countries and build up the capacity to do this. What these new donors do not do
Q74 Chris White: Thank you, Chair. I do appreciate that time is short. All I will say is that I think you have left some questions for me hanging in the air, and I would like to come back to that. I think we need to move that particular country in the right direction. On the data you refer to, I am aware that four countries have left some questions for me hanging in the air, and I would like to come back to that. I think we need to move that particular country in the right direction.

Q75 Alison McGovern: I have two brief questions, following on from Chris’s questions. One of my concerns about the MDG process is that, if we get to 2015 and we are trying to build for the future on an unstable platform, because we lack credibility because the MDGs were not met, how do we resolve that dilemma of having goals not met whilst we are looking for new goals? Secondly, Eveline, if I can ask you, you said there is nothing we can do as foreigners in relation to poverty in middle-income countries. Is that right? That means that I, as a parliamentarian in Britain, am not supposed to care about poverty in any other country. That does not feel quite right to me, and I just wondered if that was what you meant.

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Q81 Chris White: Thank you, Chair. I do appreciate that time is short. All I will say is that I think you have left some questions for me hanging in the air, and I would like to come back to that. I think we need to move that particular country in the right direction.
not the best way to use official development aid, if the impact is basically humanitarian. There is nothing wrong with saving lives and feeding kids that otherwise would not be fed, but it will not have any leverage or be up-scaleable unless the Government really wanted to do it in the first place, and it would have done it then, with or without your aid. I do not want to be cynical, but there is such a scarcity of ODA, I really think we should spend it where it is most needed and where it is most effective.

**Richard Morgan:** What countries like China say to us is they still want UNICEF and the UN to be there for policy, when they ask us for it, based on international standards—our advice on policy issues regarding children and other issues—and for good examples and sometimes for piloting. Things that are done in a few districts of China, new ways of teaching, education approaches, if they work, the Government will take and roll out nationally or more broadly. There is a role. Countries are saying, “We want you to have that role, but it is a role that is very different from the traditional resource transfers,” as Eveline was saying.

**Eveline Herfkens:** And it does not cost much money.

**Richard Morgan:** On the credibility issue, there is a very good story to be told about progress over the last 10 to 15 years, even if we go back 20 years. Numbers of children in school and rates of enrolment are unprecedented. Child deaths are at levels that are historically the lowest ever recorded. Poverty has been reduced with all the caveats. Clean water access is at unprecedentedly high access levels. Even if the specific targets have not been met, and in some areas they have been seriously under-achieved, there is enough of a story to tell there of success, of historically unprecedented progress, to be able to build on. It just needs the story to be told in a positive way.

**Eveline Herfkens:** Particularly in the LDCs; the rate of progress there has been the highest.

**Lawrence Haddad:** I would agree that you can either make it a glass half empty or a glass half full story. The glass half full is very compelling; you could make a very compelling story. On the middle-income countries, I am sorry; I just do not really consider India to be a middle-income country. The average GDP per person is $1,200. The World Bank says it is a middle-income country, but I do not consider that middle income. You cannot be too mechanistic about these things. China’s GDP per capita is four times India’s; Brazil’s is seven or eight times India’s. We tend to lump these three countries together all the time, but they are very different. I do not see how you can not try to spend some money doing something for the 400 million or 500 million people who are below the poverty line in India.

I would agree with Richard on the role that the UK Government can play in terms of piloting things, taking risks that the Government feels it cannot take and helping some states that are very poor—I have made these arguments to you before—and do not have the capacity to leverage federal funds, as is the case in Nigeria too, to help them access federal funds from the centre. There are lots of roles that ODA can play but, yes, it is a very small percentage of a small percentage, and that is fine, but it still has a very catalytic role to play.

**Chair:** I think you are in tune with us on that as well, Lawrence, from our report in India. We have five minutes and three colleagues.

**Q80 Jeremy Lefroy:** The middle-income definition is extremely broad, about $1,000 to $13,000, so it may be worth having a comment on whether you think that should be revisited. My specific question is: MDG 1 is a relative target and MDG 2 and others are universal targets. There has been an argument that universal targets are more effective. Would you agree with that?

**Lawrence Haddad:** I do not have a strong view on that, I am afraid.

**Eveline Herfkens:** Particularly because I believe these are targeted at a global level and it is very important that, country by country, people and their governments look at what would be both ambitious but still feasible enough in our particular situation, I am very much for global consensus. These are the issues that matter. The degree to which you can get progress on them really depends country by country.

**Richard Morgan:** For income poverty, there are two possibilities, the absolute and the relative, but I think virtually all the other targets we can think of in terms of human development, you can look at as universal targets—getting to zero on child deaths, on stunting as well. I wanted to mention stunting, because it is part of the MDG 1 current construct. It is one of the indicators. It is a very good composite measure of how well people are doing in their earliest years of life, which relates closely to household income, access to healthcare and so on. It is directly measurable and there is great potential for very good data on that, as a very powerful indicator. If we look at getting to zero on a lot of these human development indicators, it can be a very powerful thing for governments to embrace. Why would they not want to eradicate stunting and preventable child deaths, and have all children in school?

**Eveline Herfkens:** One thing, if you want to tinker with all this, that I think is really important to do is, one way or another, introduce the inequality issue. Again, the HDR methodology does that for all the goals. You can also for Goal 1 look at the Gini coefficient, etc. There are a lot of ways to introduce the inequality issue. What the Millennium Development Goals with all these averages basically do is put a premium on government action that lifts people who are just below that floor up, leaving behind those who are really the most vulnerable and weak. Looking at the methodology to see what you can do, there are a lot of ideas there. I thought your HDR thing of UNICEF was terrific. Very good work was done. That is the most important.

**Q81 Pauline Latham:** David Cameron believes a “golden thread” of governance-related issues is key to development. Do you agree and, if so, what role should governance play in the post-2015 framework?

**Eveline Herfkens:** On governance in poor countries?

**Pauline Latham:** Yes.

**Eveline Herfkens:** I said earlier that lectures from foreigners and conditionalities from the World Bank
have not achieved much at all. I strongly believe, in the case of Africa, that investing in African institutions that are credible and raise these issues is way more effective than us lecturing. I did a lot, but so did you, to strengthen parliamentary committees, to strengthen general accounting officers, which is the American word. What is the English word? I always forget that.

Jeremy Lefroy: Public accounts.

Eveline Herfkens: Yes, strengthening that. There is a lot you can do in terms of empowering civil society, the kind of civil society that does not build schools but that organises the citizens to demand that the Government lives up to its commitment to build a school. These are the ways to go. A development minister flying in and out is almost counterproductive, I sometimes think. World Bank conditionality is out of the window the moment the money is pocketed; forget it. The African Development Bank has a better record for being effective. Again, this African Center for Economic Transformation does advisory services on public financial management. Finally let me mention that those of us development ministers who started with budget support, a decade ago now, have been very happy to see how much that led to improved public financial management. For the first time, there was both a demand and a supply of serious support and discussions about the quality of financial management. That means that we who gave budget support not only saw that our taxpayers’ money was being spent better, but that the improved financial and public management was applied to all the public expenditures, which are always of course multiple, way more than the few pounds or euros that we give. That has actually improved that part of governance a lot. Public financial management is not everything but, if you spend taxpayers’ money, it is not an irrelevant part of it.

Lawrence Haddad: The “golden thread” narrative is an important one. I think it has been described as a set of building blocks. I have written about it and said, yes, it is one set of building blocks, but there many others that could be picked that are also equally important for development. Many of the “golden thread” components—transparency, the media, accountability, justice, the rule of law and all of those things—actually appear in the Millennium Declaration, so they are very consistent with what the MDGs are trying to do. They have to be woven into the MDGs in one way or another, but again the nuance is everything. The way in which you do this is everything. If the rich countries are not doing it, it seems to me it is a non-starter to be incorporated in the MDGs, so they also have to subject themselves to these kind of transparency dimensions, it seems to me. The main problem with the “golden thread”, however, is that it is all about the rules of the game. The rules of the game are that you have to be fair, transparent and blah, blah, blah. If they are not, there need to be recourse mechanisms. It assumes everyone has an equal capacity to play the game and they do not. That is the big problem with it.

Eveline Herfkens: Can I just add that the problem with these issues and why they are not a Millennium Development Goal is also because they are very hard to measure? There is no beginning of agreement of what actually the definition of democracy is, for instance. There are different definitions and ideas about what the essence of democracy is between the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and France. It is very hard. The great thing about the Millennium Goals was you could measure them; there was agreement about targets. That is the reason we did not do it 12 years ago. I have not seen a solution since.

Lawrence Haddad: We have had lots of governance indicators now, in the last 12 years.

Eveline Herfkens: The World Bank’s, yes.

Lawrence Haddad: There are lots of different sources.

Eveline Herfkens: But no agreement.

Chair: Do not know whether you have to go and catch a plane, Eveline. We have two quick questions so, if you do have to go, we will understand.

Q82 Mr McCann: This question would be premised on the belief that the Sustainable Development Goals should be incorporated in the post-2015 process. On that premise, do you believe that there should be one single sustainable goal or that each of the post-2015 components should have sustainability as part of them?

Lawrence Haddad: I think the latter; each of the goals should have sustainability built into them, in one way or another. The MDGs operated in an unconstrained world, if you know what I mean. We did not really care about how many resources were used to drive these numbers, because the numbers are so dire and something needed to happen, but we now also recognise that there are trade-offs between generations and we somehow have to deal with the inequality within generations, at the same time as we are dealing with it across generations. If you have two ways of reducing poverty that are equally effective and one uses less resources than the other one, you need to know which one is using less resources and do it. Resource use and emissions are absolutely vital to build into as many of the goals as you possibly can.

Q83 Chair: The final one is that I have actually had the opportunity of being briefed by your team, Lawrence, on your “Participate” initiative. I do not know whether other members of the Committee have.

Eveline Herfkens: Yes, it is.

Q83 Chair: Is it going to feed into the process? Is it going to be timely? What is DFID looking for? Given that some funding is coming from DFID, what are they expecting out of it?

Lawrence Haddad: No, you will have to ask DFID at DFID Questions. There are at least three processes informing the MDG/SDG debate, at least for the High-Level Panel. One of them is the UN process. The other ones are a process that I think Clare and others are involved in, which is using crowd sourcing technology to get a very broad take. The one that we are involved in is called “Participate” with “Beyond 2015”. That is more of a deep dive into a number of different communities, asking people about their aspirations, the barriers and the problems that they face.

The results will feed in directly as they emerge. We have agreed to share the raw material as it comes out, anonymised obviously, with Amina and her team, so
that is fine. The aspiration is that you are actually talking to people who do not normally get heard. Getting the MDGs in the first place was a huge accomplishment and I do not mean to diminish that at all, but it did not really engage many people who are actually suffering in poverty. We were determined, together with our “Beyond 2015” colleagues, that we would kick up a fuss about this, so that it was not the case this time around. Whether it will lead to anything new and generate any new insights, we do not know. We think it is really important to do it for the credibility of the process, and I suspect it will generate some new insights for some communities, in some places, with some issues. 

Chair: We will watch that with interest, because it is very important that this process is more inclusive. 

Lawrence Haddad: They are briefing the High-Level Panel tomorrow, I think. 

Richard Morgan: If I may, Chair, we would hope that this practice of consultation actually becomes routine over time. We will use new technology to give people at community and local levels the opportunity to continually feed back on what is happening in Government performance. That will be part of an emphasis on governance that people will continue to have a voice and channels and mechanisms to do that. 

Chair: That will be really worthwhile. I think you can see from the Committee that we have been constrained by time more than we would have wished to have been, but thank you for your co-operation. It has been really helpful. There are a lot of questions out there, but you are really helping us focus on some of the answers and some of the conflicts that have to be resolved. That is much appreciated. I say this to everybody but if, afterwards on reflection, there is anything that occurs to you that you feel you wanted to mention or draw to our attention, please get back in touch. We would be very happy to take it on board as supplementary evidence. Thank you all very much indeed. 

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Jamie Drummond, Executive Director, ONE, Brendan Cox, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Save the Children, and Dr Amy Pollard, Lead Analyst on Post-MDGs, CAFOD, gave evidence.

Q84 Chair: We know who you are, but just briefly introduce yourselves, please, so that we can move on. 

Dr Pollard: I am Dr Amy Pollard. I am the Lead Analyst at CAFOD on post-2015, and I am also co-Chair of the “Beyond 2015” campaign, which comprises over 420 organisations from around the world in over 80 countries. 

Brendan Cox: I am Brendan Cox. I am the Director of Policy, Advocacy and Campaigns at Save the Children. 

Chair: When he comes in, the third witness is Jamie Drummond, who is Executive Director from ONE. He will just join us. We are constrained for time and we have to finish before 11.30 for DFID Questions. Welcome, Jamie; I have introduced you. 

Jamie Drummond: Thanks very much. Sorry I’m late. 

Q85 Chair: In terms of how broad the successor to the MDGs should be, a lot of people say they should incorporate human rights into the framework. If that is the case, what human rights should it incorporate and, in particular, do you have a view about women’s rights and gender issues within that context, bearing in mind that the overarching declarations incorporate those anyway? 

Brendan Cox: The proviso to this, and there is a broad consensus amongst civil society, is that the replacement framework will only have power and purchase if the current framework retains a degree of political engagement and political prioritisation, right through to the end of 2015. If the current framework does not continue to get purchase and if there is no effort to reach the existing goals, the replacement framework will not have political credibility, no matter how bold or ambitious it is. That would be the slight precursor to that. In terms of how ambitious and broad, those are two slightly different questions. On ambition, we would say that these goals need to be in fact much more ambitious than the previous goals. There is an opportunity to reach a tipping point in human development where, for the first time in human history, no child dies from preventable diseases; no mother dies in childbirth in a way that could be prevented; everybody is lifted from absolute poverty. Those are things that we have strived for, for many generations, which for the first time are actually feasible. That ambition is one that should be absolutely at the heart of these goals. 

In order to have that ambition though, it will require focus. What we want to avoid is a framework that ends up being a long shopping list of every development priority that we could talk about, which tries to solve all of the world’s problems in one framework. This, from our point of view, needs to start with a really clear answer to the question of what the purpose of these goals is. In our view, the core purpose of these goals is to change the incentive structure for the world’s poorest people. The world’s poorest billion or so people around the world, the most marginalised people, do not have the political and economic power to make sure that governments and others respond to their needs. We think this framework can play a small but really important role in changing that incentive balance. Once you are clear on that purpose that gives a much better sense of how you prioritise goals. If you look at sustainability in that context, absolutely sustainability will be an important component part, but it will not be at the centre of this. The centre of this will be changing that political prioritisation and changing those incentives. In terms of human rights, to answer that very briefly, we think the best way of doing that is by moving from some of the aggregate targets that you have had in the current goals to global goals. When I say “global goals”, what I mean is that, instead of setting a
reduction of two thirds in child mortality or a reduction in half in the number of poverty, move those to absolute targets. You can have, as I said at the beginning, zero child deaths, zero maternal deaths and zero number of people out of school. Those are achievable and I think they are the best way of talking about these in a rights-based framework.

**Dr Pollard:** To look specifically at the human rights approach, for CAFOD, human rights are absolutely critical and very important. We want to stress that we are not starting from scratch with this agreement. There is obviously a huge range of conventions and accepted agreements on human rights that any future framework would need to be consistent with. In terms of what Brendan was saying about purpose, we would also stress that getting the purpose right around this process, and being very clear about what the rationale for a framework is, is the critical question at this juncture. Before we start getting into the detail of how specific issues need to be incorporated into the framework, it is critical that we get that purpose agreed to as to what the framework is going to achieve. I will talk about that a bit more in a minute, I hope.

For us, the key way that the framework can be delivering process is to be securing political action and accountability. Human rights is obviously something that is particularly sensitive and a challenging issue to get through a complex inter-governmental process. We think that that is going to require very careful handling. From the “Beyond 2015” side, I would say that, of all the issues that we have to discipline ourselves not to start thinking that “The Millennium Development Goals were about deciding what was most important. My idea or this particular issue is

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very important. Therefore, this issue should be in the framework.” We require a much more sophisticated analysis of the different types of inequality and make a differentiation with a goal. For all of us who have particular issues that are close to our hearts, we need to think through in great detail how exactly incorporating our issue is going to deliver change.

Q87 Alison McGovern: I want to slightly change the subject to inequality. I would expect all three of you to be able to give me a comprehensive argument on why inequality matters and why it is a threat to global development, but what I would like is a response to two audiences. If inequality matters for global development, what do we say to so-called “developed countries” that display a persistent level of inequality, and what do we say to developing countries that say that their own domestic inequality is a matter for them and no one else?

Brendan Cox: They are very good questions, I think. We are publishing a report tomorrow, as Save the Children, looking at inequality, which I will send to the Committee following this session. What that looks at is case studies, both across developing countries and developed countries, and looks at the levels of inequality in both. It finds two things: one is that, particularly from Save the Children’s perspective, the gap between the top decile of children and the bottom decile of children is at the highest level since the early 1990s, and is now 35 times. The poorest children in each of those societies have, on average, 35 times less income than the richest 10% of children. That gap is very considerable. Particularly for many of the goals we are talking about, it is going to be a real block to achieving, whether it is every child in school or every child protected from some of the causes of parental safety. It is particularly concentrated in some of the causes of parental death.

In terms of the specifics of how we argue around that, there is a growing acceptance and we heard from some of the previous panel about that, whether those are the arguments that The Economist is talking about, in terms of the impact of inequality on global growth; whether it is about the impact of inequality on human security. There is a growing acceptance, in fact, that inequality is something that is a shared challenge across all societies. It is particularly concentrated in some, but it is a shared and growing challenge, both for developing countries and for developed countries. Overall, we at Save the Children would argue that, in fact, in this goal framework, we should have inequality within each of the individual goals, but we should also have an overarching goal that looks at inequality, which should cover both developing and developed countries. We know particularly for children that inequality is a key driver of poverty, and it is a key thing that limits their ability to access equality of opportunity. For those reasons, we would engage in that and say that this is a global problem and that we need to take on those people who say that it is either limited to developed countries or not an issue at a global level.

Jamie Drummond: I agree with what Brendan has said. We would all agree that inequality is central. We have to find good measures for it and we look forward to Save’s paper, because measurability of this is difficult in some ways. What is key to the success of the goals so far has been their measurability, therefore how they have been manageable. What we think about a lot at our organisation is what the political strategy is that will get countries to agree that the UN should tell them this. That is something we are thinking about a lot. For example, the United States would need to own this idea, along with a set of emerging economies, which would not normally want to be told what their domestic policy should be. There is a policy argument to this. There is a very interesting political strategy argument as well, which we are thinking about a lot.

Dr Pollard: This is a question that really demonstrates how critical it is to be clear on the purpose of the framework. What CAFOD is arguing is that the purpose needs to be to keep the issues that matter most to people living in acute poverty on the international agenda to secure the highest level of political action and accountability around those issues, and incentivise action that drives progress in the real world. We think that people in acute poverty, wherever they live, need to be the target beneficiaries for this framework. We do not think that people who live in poverty or in difficult circumstances in richer countries necessarily are the people who we need to be targeting through this. We would say that it does need to be a global framework, in the sense that all countries need to take action, because the problems around acute poverty are systemic, and that means everybody needs to be part of the solution to delivering change for those people. However, the impact of the framework needs to be assessed, wherever those poor people live, and it needs to be the poorest who we aim to tackle.

In terms of your question of what we say to developed countries that are displaying inequalities and what we say if developing countries are saying this is just a domestic issue that does not matter to them, we say it does matter. What rich countries and what others internationally do does impact on the levels of inequality and poverty in the poorest countries and in middle-income countries where the poorest live. We need to get those developed countries to be taking action to address those structural causes, so that we deliver a long-term difference to them, but what we should not be trying to do is to tackle all the important problems in the world, because there has never been an international intervention of any kind that has managed to do something like that, and it is simply not realistic.

Jamie Drummond: The great thing about pushing all the way to zero is that it forces addressing the rights and also the issues of inequality in the hardest-to-reach communities. It is again an oblique way of getting at that.

Q88 Pauline Latham: David Cameron believes that a “golden thread”, in terms of governance-related issues, is fundamental to development. Do you agree with that and what role do you think governance should play in the post-2015 framework?

Dr Pollard: David Cameron still has not articulated with great clarity exactly what he means by the
“golden thread”. It is something that is being interpreted and discussed in different ways.

**Q89 Pauline Latham:** Maybe I could enlighten you: “absence of war; presence of good governance; property rights; rule of law; effective public services; strong civil institutions; free and fair trade; open markets”.

**Dr Pollard:** That is a list rather than a thread, is it not? That is just stringing lots of important issues together. One of the issues that he has listed there is the private sector, and we do believe that that is an extremely important part of the puzzle, in terms of tackling the key development challenges going forward.

**Pauline Latham:** Rather than a list, it is more building blocks.

**Dr Pollard:** Sure, but the key issue is how you frame them collectively and how you see the difference between them. In terms of the private sector one, which would be one we are particularly interested in, you have to bear in mind that 90% of those private sector jobs are found in small and micro businesses, predominantly run by women in the developing world, but the interventions that are typically discussed around the private sector tend to still be coming from a big-business mindset. We would be urging Cameron, when he is developing that “golden thread” idea in more detail, to be really looking from the perspective of small businesses run by poor people and women, rather than assuming that it is simply a question of removing the barriers to large-scale industry already and just ensuring growth that way.

**Jamie Drummond:** The “golden thread” is a useful list of things. There is not a lot new there, but it is a useful list. It could also inform some fantastic leadership if it is further spelled out through the G8 Summit that will be hosted next year, not just this Millennium Goal High-Level Panel process, but also the Open Government Partnership that the UK is co-chairing as well. The fact that the UK is going to 0.7%, just a note about that: when our organisation was founded, along with the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals, over a decade ago, aid to sub-Saharan Africa was $17 billion a year. It has since increased to about $43 billion. Sorry for using dollars; they are applicable in this context. Domestic resource mobilisation in those same countries has gone from $60 billion to $330 billion. That is where the real money to finance development is today and every year it goes up by another $25 billion domestic resources in these countries.

How the citizens of those countries demand better use of the resources they are giving their governments through taxes and how that relationship is articulated are the most important things in development going forward, in our view, in terms of how development outcomes will be financed. The “golden thread” could be a very helpful way to arm and inform a set of policies and interventions that the international community can offer those citizens in those countries to help make sure their governments are using that money better to deliver the best kinds of results for development. We think, if we harness the potential power of the “golden thread”, through that transparency, accountability and open data, for those citizens to really demand the best performance of their governments, it will do something really fantastic and useful. It has yet to be fully harnessed for that outcome.

**Q90 Pauline Latham:** You have said nothing is new; well, nothing is new. We all know what the issues are and we all know where we would like it to get to. It is about how you move it forward and get there. That is what this is talking about.

**Jamie Drummond:** Exactly, and if it finds fruition in a set of policies that get at the sorts of things I was just talking about, we think it could be a really fantastic contribution. If it does depends on the kinds of things we put forward at the G8, the kinds of things that are agreed to at the Open Government Partnership, as well as the kinds of things that will be agreed through this process and the kinds of things that will be financed by the 0.7% commitment. Another note on that: when we push for value for money and it focuses on an antiretroviral, a bednet or so on, that is great, but we would like to make sure that some of that money is also going towards things like building up boring stuff, like data systems, accountable public management systems and so on, because that is the real stuff that will help finance development in the future, and that is the smartest way to spend a lot of our aid.

**Brendan Cox:** Just to add to that, with the ‘golden thread’ there is great opportunity, as we have talked about. It does need to be further defined. They are working on that at the moment, actually, in the context of the upcoming meetings. I have heard it variously defined partly as that list, but also more broadly as a golden thread that enables the reduction of poverty to be sustainable, rather than a response to the symptoms. It is addressing the causes of poverty. I think that is a really important approach. What we need to avoid is the “golden thread” being set against the broader human development approach, which is being encapsulated in the MDGs and there is no reason it should be. For example, if you look at nutrition, it is one of the biggest constraints to making poverty reduction sustainable. It impacts on the cognition of children; it changes the capacity of that child growing into an adult to earn money to be a productive part of an economy and to make sure that that country can build its way out of poverty. We must not counterpose the “golden thread” with human development. It is about how we make some of the key things sustainable and address the causes of poverty, not just the symptoms. There is a great opportunity there.

The difficulty in the process, talking about the role of the High-Level Panel and the eventual replacement framework, is that what the MDGs did was to talk about the ends; they did not talk about the means. There was a reason that they did that, which was that they felt they could get agreement around the ends, so the whole series of things that the world did not want in the world, like child mortality and a whole series of other things, but how you get there was, certainly at the time, felt to be the preserve of national
The world has moved on, to an extent. There are some elements, for example around transparency, accountability and some of the things that Jamie talked about—I would also broaden that to social protection and universal health coverage—where there is more of a consensus around the means, not just the ends, but I do not think it is clear. We will have to test that consensus and see whether it is feasible to include a mixture of ends goals, which need to be at the core of this, with the additional one or two means goals, which would take this argument forward.

Dr Pollard: I would just add to that. We are quite keen on the idea of having some means goals as well as some ends goals. The particular value of that is around things like governance and the kinds of issues that are spelt out in that “golden thread” list. The risk is, of course, that they become a series of things that are only within the purview of developing country governments to work on and deliver when, actually, if you talk a broader view—not just in terms of the individual goals, but in terms of the enabling environment within which these kinds of issues need to be solved—it is rich countries that need to be setting targets for themselves and to be held accountable for whether they are making the changes that allow people to flourish, in this context.

Jamie Drummond: I was just going to add that there may be another way of looking at it. It would be great to see the “golden thread” mixed up with something like agriculture. It is an issue that everyone knows is central to the development of most of these economies; investments in agriculture are the most effective investments for lifting people out of poverty, and yet so little is actually done by DFID and others in the area of agriculture. There has been a historic failure of investment in agriculture over the last couple of decades, which has been addressed over the last couple of years. It would be great to see how investing in agriculture could be spurred by “golden thread” approaches as it mixes up. Sustainable energy or energy poverty might be another one, where there is great opportunity for significant private sector investment, but with the right framework so that the private sector does not misbehave, and some public sector investment that can help the agenda of the private sector. It could transform these economies, lift huge numbers of people out of poverty and change the face of development and development partnership. We look forward to seeing how the “golden thread” could really be applied to something like agriculture. We would love to see that happen in the next year.

Q91 Jeremy Lefroy: I am glad you have mentioned agriculture, because that is something that I think all of us on this panel feel is incredibly important. In your written evidence—I am talking to Mr Drummond here—you talk about job creation as being absolutely essential, which I wholeheartedly agree with, but how do you think that can be incorporated into the framework, or is it something that has to be addressed almost in the context of each or most of the individual goals?

Jamie Drummond: If there was a magic set of policies to create jobs, everyone here would be very interested in that, and in the United States and around the world. We cannot offer that exactly, but it is plain that, as I mentioned, investing in agriculture consistently shows good returns in terms of lifting poor people out of poverty and essentially by providing jobs and better livelihoods. We would see that as one obvious area. I mentioned energy poverty. Take sub-Saharan Africa; it has a tremendous comparative advantage in renewables, especially in rural, remoter areas, where you would expect advantages there that could be taken care of, if the investments were there.

Dr Pollard: Absolutely. There is a huge amount of work that is developing and becoming increasingly sophisticated around social protection and how to get at those basic minimum-guarantee-type issues in a way that does fit well with goal-shaped solutions. The innovations that have happened in terms of data, indicators and target setting, over the last 10 years or so, will put us in a much stronger position to put those issues at the heart of the agenda with clarity and in a way that communicates well.

Brendan Cox: Just to add to that, it should absolutely be central to the framework for the reasons that you say. We need to keep remembering, particularly as people at work in the policy world, that this framework also needs to inspire. On a political level,
there needs to be a certain degree of magic around it, if it is going to get traction. Therefore, it needs to resonate with people’s core priorities. Absolutely employment is very high on the list. In terms of what the impact of having employment on the list can be—so it is not just there because it is important, but it is there because it can change things—one element is who it is who is currently excluded from the labour market. There are significant sections of society and, in some societies, broader swathes of women who are excluded from the labour market. In others, it is minority groups; in others, it is the youth bulge. There are incentive structures that you could change within a goal and the detail of a goal that would help you target those particular groups that are often excluded. To Amy’s point, there are opportunities to make policies to enable both growth and particularly employment-intensive growth, whether they are around education or around social protection, so that people can keep in contact with the labour market, even if they are outside it. Those are ways that you can make sure employment is incentivised in this framework.

Q93 Richard Burden: I am going to ask you two questions, and there is a danger that one question will ask you to contradict your answer to the other one. If it does that, apologies. The first is: whether it be through “golden threads”, lists and the rest of it, is there a danger that we are going to end up making this framework so complicated to the point where it is actually not going to be easy to focus it down to specific programmes of action? If there is that danger, how do we deal with that? As time is pressing, you know what the second question is that is coming; are there other areas that we have not really focused on so much, so far, which need to be added to lists within the framework? You have talked about universal health coverage as being one issue that somehow needs to be incorporated. How would you do that? What about specific things that a number of groups have urged, which are that, somewhere in the new framework, disability should feature?

Dr Pollard: The way that we envision this process working is something like a bell curve, so that you have an increasing number of ideas, issues and proposals for candidate goals on the table, rising up to September 2013 and the special event that the UN is planning. After that, the inter-governmental process needs to take on a whittling-down function, whereby you come down the other side of the bell curve and end up with a very concise and punchy list of goals, targets and indicators, which does not overcomplicate and create this long shopping list that we deeply appreciate is a danger.

There is a very great risk that we end up without a focused framework, because it is so clear that a large number of issues were left out of the MDGs, of which disability is a very important part. That is the reason why we are very clear about the purpose of the framework and the core rationale for it is the most important thing you can do. The UK has a very key role in the High-Level Panel, with David Cameron’s chairmanship, but we do not know exactly what is going to happen in the inter-governmental process going forward after that, and the UK will be one of many voices that are trying to compete to get heard, as that goes forward. The opportunity that the UK has, through David Cameron, is to set out the rationale and set the narrative tone, which will create a structure that guides the inter-governmental process going forward and mitigates that risk that you end up with a massive long shopping list of goals. If you can get to a position by the special summit in September, whereby you are clear on the purpose, you are clear about how this framework is going to achieve change and you know why it is more important to have one kind of goal than another kind of goal, then that will put you in a strong position to make a considered judgment about which issues need to be included and which can be dealt with in other forums. In terms of your findings when you come to write up your inquiry, I would say that there is nothing more important at this stage in the debate than being clear about that rationale and purpose, and giving us some kind of strong basis, when the very difficult decisions need to be made about one issue rather than another, so that we can choose between them.

Brendan Cox: On the risk side, there are three risks. The first is that we do not agree anything at all. The current trajectory suggests that is probably the most likely. The second is that we agree everything, so we all come and lobby you on a specific goal, the High-Level Panel puts it in and the UN General Assembly does the same; so we have a very long shopping list, which is fantastically holistic, with a very great analysis of everything we should do in development, but it has no political purchase as a result. The third is that, in order to get a framework agreed, we keep it relatively focused, but we make everything so abstract and so broad and so vague that it does not mean anything. We say, “The world should be a better place and people should be nice to each other,” but it does not have any of the specificity. Those risks are all very real and they are all very pressing. It will take a political Houdini act to get out of that cul-de-sac. Where we are at the moment, particularly having to negotiate this potentially through three processes—through the High-Level Panel first, then the Open Working Group, then potentially a broader inter-governmental UN General Assembly process—means that those risks are magnified. At each stage, there is a danger that this will open up and we will end up in a dilemma, where the incentives for each state to make trade-offs are less than what they think they will lose by making those trade-offs. Therefore, we will not get that agreement. That is massive. Therefore, hammering home at every single opportunity the need for this framework to retain that focus and to make really difficult trade-off decisions is absolutely key. We in civil society also have a responsibility to do that. One of the things we are trying to avoid is coming to you and saying, “This is the one goal that we wanted added in and it must absolutely be there,” because that potentially leads to some of those problems.
Then in terms of areas we would like added in, I would only suggest them if there were also areas where we were suggesting consolidation. There are opportunities for that. For example, we have three health goals at the moment; you could consolidate those into one health goal. There are opportunities for consolidation as well as expansion. Some of the key things that are missing are certainly inequality, which we have talked about. That could be in a separate goal; it could be inbuilt within each of the indicators in each of the targets, in the same way that disability could be built within each goal, rather than necessarily as a separate goal. There are ways that you can include key issues without expanding the goal framework. The areas that are probably most missing are governance, conflict and broader violence and protection, and universal health coverage. Underlying that is a debate about quality, as opposed to quantity. A lot of these goals were about basic access to things, for example education, and did not get enough on to the quality agenda. I do not think that is a separate goal, but again it needs to be built into the new framework.

Jamie Drummond: There is a way of trying to make our lives relatively easier, which is to go after the blindingly obvious point, which is what people who live in poverty want us to do and think we can most help to do. What are their priorities? There is quite a lot of evidence about what that is and there are also fantastic investments now being made, through “Participate”, “My World” and polling, to ask the poor what they want and answer that question. It will probably deliver quite consistent answers around extreme poverty and hunger. There is a sense that, if I can take care of some basic things, access basic services and needs, I know I will need a government that is not too bad to be able to consistently access that and have an opportunity to progress myself, my family and so on.

Going after that collection of issues seems like route one to get right, because it is what we are being asked to help do. It is also completely consistent with building on the current Millennium Goals, which is not unhelpful. Getting to those results through transparent and accountable resources and governance seems like a very sensible way to do it. To do that in the most sustainable fashion again seems very sensible. You can see a package being put together that should be manageable, but there is a great danger that what Brendan said is right: that so many things will be put on top of this that have not been achievable in other processes; why would they be achievable here? There are some win-wins, even in some of those difficult areas, for example around energy poverty and access to sustainable energy. There are a few things like that that could be achieved.

Q94 Chair: You mentioned the “My World” survey and you, in your own evidence, have said we need more consultation; we need to ask poor people what they want and deliver it. What is your view of the processes that are in hand, namely the “My World” process? Amy, we did discuss “Participate” and “Beyond 2015”. You might want to comment as well.

Jamie Drummond: I have been a bit involved in “My World”, so I think it is a good initiative. I would say that what both “Participate” and “My World” would support, but neither individually delivers, is a comprehensive global poll, through Gallup and Afrobarometer, which is quantitative, to which anyone is able to respond, but at least 1,001 in every one of these countries. That is something that could be done. It is currently not being planned, because the finance has not been found to fund it. I would say there are great things with “Participate” and “My World”, and they both deserve and should get full support. We are part of that but, in addition, we think there is a possible missed opportunity to just do a poll. Talk to Gallup about it, talk to Afrobarometer about it and have an assurance policy there that we have really done that.

Dr Pollard: I would add to that. We entirely agree that these are complementary efforts, which are equipped to ask slightly different questions using different methodologies, and therefore have a different value-add each from the other, which collectively could be telling us what we need to know about what matters most to people in poverty and what matters most to those who stand to benefit most from this process. Stepping back and looking at where we are now compared to where we were this time last year, overall, there have been huge strides forward in terms of the UN process as a whole, the consultations, etc. We are hugely pleased to have been able to get “Participate” off the ground and ensure that there will be some kind of major process to engage people in poverty directly in this debate.

One thing that I think would be really helpful for the IDC to do, if it were possible, would be to require the UK Government to read the “Participate” report and products when they come out and also to ask them to respond and think about how those findings impact on the UK Government’s policies. I do not know if that is something you might be able to consider asking of them. What we are concerned about is that, in order to deliver these kinds of research products to quality, it takes time and the debate moves on. Questions need to be answered when they can. We are expecting to deliver this major and unprecedented piece of work in summer next year and we are really concerned that it has space to land. I think you could play a key role in helping it to do so.

Q95 Chair: I take that point. On the specific point of the poll, at what point would that need to be done?

Brendan Cox: The process is not going to finalise until the end of September 2015, so we do have time to get different inputs. The High-Level Panel obviously has a much tighter framework. I do not think it is likely, unless they make up their mind very quickly, that the poll or a broader voice-of-the-poor exercise—similar to what the World Bank did in the year 2000, when it interviewed 60,000 people, which got quite a lot of qualitative data as well as quantitative data—will be done in time for the High-Level Panel report. The core window therefore is, if possible, pre-September 2013, when these negotiations start but, if not, shortly after that. That would be the ideal time.
Chair: On that point, we will have the Secretary of State in front of us on this particular inquiry, so those are the sorts of questions we can ask. We are also hoping that the Prime Minister will answer questions when he next appears in front of the Liaison Committee, so we have a couple of opportunities to question the Government on how they are tackling this. Those are obviously helpful suggestions, which we will of course consider. We need to finish now, because we have DFID Questions this morning. Thank you very much, both for your written submissions and also for your oral evidence today. I know you said, Brendan, you were going to send us a paper, but if there are any further thoughts or comments you want to make, please feed them into us. Thank you.
Tuesday 20 November 2012

Members present:
Sir Malcolm Bruce (Chair)
Fiona Bruce
Pauline Latham
Jeremy Lefroy
Fiona O’Donnell

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for International Development, and Michael Anderson, Special Envoy to the Prime Minister on the UN Development Goals, gave evidence.

Q96 Chair: Thank you very much indeed for coming in again. I will not ask you to introduce yourselves, but I say for the record that this is the final evidence session on the post-2015 development goals, with the Secretary of State and Michael Anderson in his capacity as Special Envoy to the Prime Minister on the Development Goals. That is the context. I appreciate that you had a Cabinet meeting this morning. I think you will appreciate that with the new sitting hours of the House, there is a clash with business in the House, which means you do not have as good attendance in this Committee as you normally would. It is not a discourtesy; it is just a clash.

Justine Greening: I understand.

Q97 Chair: I wondered, just to set the context, whether you could say how you see the value and indeed the purpose of having a new set of goals post-2015. Obviously you have been confronted with this as an ongoing process, but what do you think on a personal basis is the value of having an updated set of goals?

Justine Greening: If you look at what we have been able to achieve by having the first set of Millennium Development Goals, they have achieved a number of things. First of all, they have achieved an unprecedented degree of political consensus around the world on tackling global poverty and focusing people’s minds on doing that. Secondly, the focus has meant that we have accelerated progress, particularly on poverty alleviation. I think there is a lot more left to do, but as we look ahead to the post-2015 development goals, the key challenges are, in a sense, to understand what it will take to finish off the job in these final few years and beyond, to the extent that we need to, but then also to ensure that this new set of challenges and goals reflect the world as it is now and will be over the next 15 years, and are actionable.

There is clearly a lot of work to be done between now and 2015. We have processes in place, not least the High-level Panel that the Prime Minister is involved in, which are hopefully the right processes to get us through to some appropriate, powerful and actionable development goals post-2015.

Q98 Chair: We have not obviously achieved the MDGs and are unlikely to achieve them by 2015. The argument is that we need to finish the job, as you put it, but presumably we also need to refresh the priorities.

Justine Greening: Yes. We have three years left. We can see that there are some Millennium Development Goals that have been achieved, some that we think are on track, and others where we have not made as much progress, and I was actually quite alarmed on that. We need a twofold discussion, firstly to the extent that there are goals left to meet, carrying them forward, and debating how we do that, and secondly being clear on what we feel are additional areas and goals for this new framework that need to be in place.

Q99 Chair: The High-level Panel, as you rightly say, which includes our Prime Minister and the Presidents of Liberia and Indonesia, met in London recently. What were the outcomes of that meeting in London?

Justine Greening: That was actually the second meeting.

Q100 Chair: Yes, I appreciate that the first meeting was kind of an introductory meeting, but this was the first time it was a lengthy meeting.

Justine Greening: It is interesting. The first meeting, I think, was around understanding what sort of a narrative the High Level Panel would come out with. The decision was that it would be poverty-focused but also evidence-based, and critically that it would be something that was actionable but also accountable. That would be a key strand of it. The second meeting in London lasted over three days, and it achieved a number of things. First of all it was an opportunity for the Panel to meet over a period of time, whereas the UN General Assembly meeting was clearly a shorter meeting. It was the first time the Panel really got to work together as a team.

The first day allowed them to be briefed by experts on a range of development issues that are relevant to the next lot of development goals. On the second day the Panel was able to have a substantive meeting and to, in a sense, set out its work plan and the sorts of questions it will need to answer as a group if it is to come up with some good conclusions and recommendations. On the third day the main objective was outreach: to civil society, to business and indeed to young people, about what the consideration of the Panel should be on other people’s views as well as their own.

Q101 Chair: I suppose the question is: how successful was that in terms of gaining useful information, and how will the meetings proceed from there? For example, have the Panel decided what each meeting is designed to do and what the agenda will be? Are you able to tell us now, or will you be able to tell us later, what the agenda will be for each meeting?
**Justine Greening:** The meeting in London I think was very successful, and the Panel members felt that they achieved an awful lot in terms of the briefings they had, but also in terms of being able to hear directly from one another and from external stakeholders. The next meeting will be held in the New Year in Monrovia: obviously President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is one of the co-chairs alongside our own Prime Minister. That will discuss national development. The third series of meetings is likely to be in March, in Bali in Indonesia, and that will primarily focus on global partnerships. There is quite a structured process to then have the High-level Panel go through in order that it can then come up with a series of recommendations to feed through to the Secretary-General.

Q102 Chair: I suppose the best comparison we have had for this kind of event was the Commission for Africa. That had a much longer timescale to operate, and a larger secretariat, so how do you think this process compares? Is the fact that it is a shorter timescale and a smaller secretariat a problem? I do not think it needs to be, but it does mean that there needs to be some pace and momentum and structure to the work plan, in order that we can achieve what we would like to see the High Level Panel achieve. I think there is that momentum there. There is a clear drive amongst the Panel members to produce a high-quality Report with recommendations, and I think the terms of reference clearly set out what the Panel is there to do. You are right that it is a short timeframe. I also suspect, though, that however long we had had for the High Level Panel, there would have been an argument, and there could have been an argument, to take longer. The benefit of the Panel is that it is an early piece of work that can feed in to a more general deliberation at the UN about what the next series of development goals should be.

Q103 Chair: My final point—and Mr Anderson might have something to say about this—is how the UK Government works, given that it is co-ordinated between your own Department, DFID, and the Cabinet Office, and also how the three co-Chairs work with each other, given that they are literally scattered around the globe.

**Michael Anderson:** In terms of the UK Government’s working, there is a cross-Whitehall committee, which involves not only DFID and DEFRA but also the Foreign Office and DECC: Treasury is invited and there are Cabinet Office representatives. I chair that committee of senior officials, and there is constant checking to ensure that the departments are joined up. This is unusual. There has emerged around the world a separation between environment ministries leading on the Sustainable Development Goals, and foreign ministries leading on the follow-on to the MDGs. We think that ultimately there will have to be one set of goals, so it makes sense to join up now, and we have been encouraging other governments to do that. In terms of the co-Chairs working, we have regular meetings and a regular email exchange. After the last London meeting, we spent most of the Saturday meeting together and planning out what we will be doing next, the topics to prioritise and how to take things forward. There is regular communication between the co-chairs.

Q104 Chair: Is there somebody who is your equivalent in the office of each of the other heads of government?

**Michael Anderson:** Yes, yes.

Q105 Jeremy Lefroy: Leading on from what Mr Anderson was saying, there has obviously been a lot of discussion about whether the post-Rio process should be separate from the post-2015 MDG process. You have indicated there that the Government’s position is that they should be integrated. Why?

**Justine Greening:** If we want to make a difference on the ground, we want to have one set of development goals. The process of making sure it is one set of development goals is quite an important one, because it enables us to discuss what the priorities need to be, and there are different groups of countries pulling in different directions. You have the African countries, who are possibly more focused on the continued push on poverty eradication. That is certainly something this Government thinks is incredibly important. Then there are other countries for whom the sustainable development aspect of this agenda is something they believe is absolutely critical to be able to then go on and achieve long-term successful poverty eradication. I do not believe it has to be an either/or. I think the first set of Millennium Development Goals had one that was focused on the environment. The key to success is how we can fuse those two pieces of work together successfully. What I do not think would be sensible would be to end up with two competing frameworks, because the danger would be that you would make progress on neither. However, it is no doubt one of the discussions or debates that will happen over the coming two years.

Q106 Jeremy Lefroy: Do you think that means there should be a single sustainability goal within the framework, or that sustainability should be incorporated into each individual goal?

**Justine Greening:** It has to be a central plank of the post-2015 framework. That could take the form of an individual single goal, or, yes, it could see the UN look at how you can have sustainability running as a thread through the other goals. Those are the debates, whether you are on the High-level Panel or the Rio+20 process, that people are having now. I am not going to prejudge where we will end up on them, because there is quite a long way to go. However, they are important debates, and getting the balance right between having goals that everyone can buy into, and that are critically actionable, is what we are looking for at the end of the day.

Q107 Jeremy Lefroy: How would you counter the fears that some have expressed that somehow this will dilute the emphasis on tackling poverty?

**Justine Greening:** I think they go hand in hand at the end of the day. We want to see a continued push towards eradicating extreme poverty, but similarly, we
cannot do that if we do not do it in a sustainable way. When the Panel met, one of the discussions they had was around this growing consensus that continuing to end extreme poverty in our time was a key part of what the Panel was interested in, but to do it in a way that sat alongside sustained growth. One of the things we have learned in the last 15 years is that it is economic growth that can pull people out of poverty in a sustained fashion, but that growth has to be happening in a sustainable way itself, which is why the post-Rio process is really important.

Q108 Jeremy Lefroy: Would you not therefore see some problems coming down the road? For instance, for sustained economic growth, there is no doubt that having increased and reliable power supplies is absolutely vital, and yet in order to do so, most of the time probably the cheapest way to get it done in a developing country is one which might perhaps be considered not sustainable, for instance using coal-fired propulsion. We have seen the conflict over whether the IMF supports the development of such facilities in the past. Do you not think that will mean this kind of conflict will come even more to the fore?

Justine Greening: It will be one of the debates that people have. You set out very clearly a debate that happens in developing countries but also happens in our own country. It is the debate about how we can have affordable energy for households and for business, and at the same time transition to energy sources that are sustainable in the future, because we know that if we do not do that, we will be paying even more for our energy. There are no easy answers to that question. It is one of the debates that will happen over the next two years, and we need to try to find some sort of overall approach to it that everybody can hopefully buy into. I think different countries will have different places where they emphasise their interests, and that is completely understandable, because many of them are facing different challenges in relation to the sustainability agenda.

Q109 Jeremy Lefroy: Thank you. Finally, the Rio+20 outcome document states that an Open Working Group of 30 members is to be set up. Could you perhaps give us some news on the progress of that? We understand that there has been a little delay. You other point is that one of the...
it is tempting to do so, but the danger is that you will see efforts dispersed over too broad an area. As challenging as it will be, one of the things the Panel can do is try to put some life into the debate about where the priorities are and where we see some of the sustainability agenda fitting into this, and how things like gender matter, for example. They are really important, but I think that is one of the things the Panel can bring to this process.

Q113 Pauline Latham: Obviously we know that the life of a government, not just here but around the world, can be quite short—I hope not in our case at the moment, but sometimes governments cannot look too far ahead. If the post-2015 framework has, say, a 25-year timescale, do you think there is a risk governments will ignore it? Do you think there should be interim targets maybe every five years, which would fit in better if governments are likely to change over the time? Or do you think that 25 years is a way of making governments focus and try to work no matter what party is in power? I have to say that happens here, but it will not happen everywhere. There is not much between the political parties here on the will to move forward.

Justine Greening: The debate on the timeline is a really important one. If it is too long, then it becomes something that people never really quite feel they are going to be held accountable for. If it is too short, it misses the fact that development does not happen overnight and is innately quite a long-term process. Certainly listening to the civil society panel session that I sat in, which was the very last session on day three of the London meeting, there seemed to be a general sense that probably another period of 15 years might be appropriate. That might fit more with the political cycles that governments have, as you say, but certainly the UK is open-minded to having a discussion about what the right timeframe is.

Q114 Pauline Latham: Thank you. What about interim targets? Do you think that is a good idea?

Justine Greening: I think we should look where we can at whether, for some of the MDGs, interim targets will be a helpful way of telling us whether we are on track or off track. Whenever you do this, you need to be clear about whether you can collect data, and how burdensome that will be on all the countries concerned, but this underlying point is that we need to be checking progress. Even if you go for 15 years, it is a long time, and you need to be checking progress in the meantime. The sense is that somehow that has to be part of what we end up with. “How do we check on the way?” is quite an important question, but it needs to be done in a proportionate manner.

Q115 Pauline Latham: Yes. Once Member States reach agreement on the goals, who do you think will be tasked with developing the underlying targets? Do you think DFID will have a role in this? Which other organisations might be involved?

Justine Greening: I will allow Michael to come in on this question as well.

Pauline Latham: It is key.

Justine Greening: Our sense is that ultimately this is a UN-led process, and the High-level Panel that the PM is co-chairing will feed in to that process at a pretty early stage in many respects. Following on from that there will be a lot of technical work and political discussion around what those overarching goals might be, but then what individual aims we might have within the goals and the form they could take. I expect that to be predominantly led by the UN, but ultimately of course the UK and DFID will want to play a key role in that. We are recognised across the world as having a leadership role on this agenda, and we will certainly want to bring our experience into that process.

Michael Anderson: That is right. I would add that the UN specialised agencies will want to play a role and will have a view. One thing that is very important for the UK is that a lot of the other countries, and even specialised agencies, look to some UK institutions—ODI, International Institute for Environment and Development, IDS. They are seen as intellectual powerhouses in this area. I think the UK will play an important role not only through the Government but through a range of the think tanks that we have.

Q116 Fiona O’Donnell: Good morning, Secretary of State. Some of the MDGs were relative, and that was the case in terms of income poverty, which was supposed to halve. This has meant that the poorest and most marginalised have been left behind. The Prime Minister has said he wants to see a goal of zero absolute poverty. Do you think that can be agreed?

Justine Greening: It all comes down to language, in a way, but we have made a lot of progress over the last 15 years. It may be that we are the first generation or group of political leaders that can say, “We want to eradicate extreme poverty over a particular time period.” That would be an incredibly powerful goal to have, and one of the powers of the MDGs we have is that they were ones that people could understand across the world. They were very, very clear. Having a continued clarity of our goals, so that people can understand exactly what they mean and why they matter, is quite important. It would be powerful if we could say that.

Can we get agreement for it? We will have to wait and see, but to my mind the Panel meeting that we had a couple of weeks ago showed some emerging consensus that people do think eradication of poverty should be the fundamental aim of what we want the next set of development goals to do, so that we do not leave people behind and so that we are looking at what the minimum standards we think people should be able to expect should be.

Q117 Fiona O’Donnell: Some of the people who are most at risk of being left behind are the third of the world’s poor who live in fragile states. What other areas do you think the new framework needs to address to ensure that poverty reduction or eradication is effective in those fragile states?

Justine Greening: It may mean that we need to look at whether there are some additional elements of any development framework that focuses on conflict, and there is this aspect of development that the Prime
Minister has called the “Golden Thread”, where we talk about rule of law, human rights and the role of conflict and violence, which we know is one of the things that holds back development. There may be an element of the new development framework that needs to reflect some of those things too, and going back to the fact that we want the new set of development goals to be measurable and actionable, there may be some aspects of it that are harder to measure. That may well be one part of it. Does it mean that we should not recognise that it is probably a precursor for successful long-term development? It is, and therefore we may well want to see whether we can have some inclusion of that in a framework going forward.

Q118 Fiona O’Donnell: As you said, there are lessons to be learned from the MDG for primary education. In setting targets for secondary education, do you think we should be going for universal, again, or do you think that is unlikely to be achieved and we should be more realistic?

Justine Greening: The MDG we had on primary education was the most powerful. As we have all recognised, it had some shortcomings in terms of what it specifically measured, but I think if you are going to have a long-term impact on people and their education, then that does need to follow through. In a sense, for those people we have seen going through the primary education system, we need to make sure that there is a secondary school system for them to go into, particularly for girls. We know that if girls go on to secondary education, they are likely to get married later, start a family later, have a better chance of having a job, and fundamentally their life prospects on a whole range of indicators improve.

Those are precisely the discussions that the Panel was having last week, and I think they are really important in terms of, in a sense, conveying a sense of continuity. We had the first set of development goals, and people need to see how they feed in to the next set. That is probably not a bad example of where you could show that continuity working well, and where I believe it is particularly important if we are to make progress on the women and girls agenda anyway.

Q119 Fiona O’Donnell: I was pleased to hear you saying that the Panel had reached out to young people. I wonder, across the whole range of issues that the new framework will address, how you see the voices of children and young people being heard in that process.

Justine Greening: Interestingly, quite a big part of what the UN wants to do, and indeed the High Level Panel, and I think just generally, is to reach out to a whole load of people, whether that is reaching out to people who are in poverty and asking them what they think the priorities should be, or also including young people. One of the ways that is happening is that there are a number of internet-based consultations going on at the moment. As you saw in London, when we had the chance to host our bit of the High Level Panel, we took the opportunity to particularly reach out to young people. I had a chance to talk to young people who had come from all over the world to be part of that and to have their say. It was a fantastic experience to see this next generation of people being involved. Ultimately we are trying to do our best to build a better world for them, which is why it is so important that they are involved, and as the Panel itself continues its work, hopefully that process of involving and engaging young people will continue. I think it needs to continue happening at a UN level too.

Q120 Chair: On that point, if the worthy objective is to make poverty history in a very literal sense, is a 15-year timescale realistic to achieve that? As a supplementary to that, we discussed this last week, but given that half the people in poverty are living in middle-income countries, will the UK have a clear strategy as to how we engage with those countries in a way that will still help to deliver that objective?

Justine Greening: On your first point, that is a debate to be had: how do we have a target that is achievable but one that feels like we are reaching an end point that we want to see—the eradication of extreme poverty? In terms of your point that the evidence base shows that increasingly many of those people in extreme poverty are living in countries that are developing and have got to the stage where they are middle-income countries, that is something I have asked my Department to look at. I think it is symptomatic of how the development agenda is changing, and therefore how departments and organisations like DFID need themselves to continue to change in order to keep up with that.

There is no doubt that the key to this in my mind is ensuring that we broaden out our discussion from one that perhaps was more traditionally around aid co-operation to one that is broader than that and is around development co-operation. That does not just include the traditional aid programmes we might be doing with countries, but it more broadly says, “What is the rest of the agenda, particularly economic growth, that we can help you pursue, which we know will then get some of those people who to date have not seen progress out of extreme poverty?”

Inevitably when any country is developing, it will happen in parts of the country first rather than other places. It is possibly to be expected, but I think you are right that we as a Department need to be clear about how we continue to work with those middle-income countries, to influence them and help them reach out, and to make sure that people are not left behind.

Q121 Chair: I think you will find that will be a significant part of the debate between us and your Department over the next year or two. Very specifically, however—and it is relevant to that—the Prime Minister, before he became Prime Minister, talked about his “Golden Thread”, focusing on the importance of governance for delivery. I have to say that even the last week, where we have had the situation in Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC and then an ICAI Report on Nigeria, tells you how difficult these issues are. If I am frank with you, the only people in evidence who have referred to the “Golden Thread” have been your own Department and the Overseas Development Institute. Nobody else has
mentioned it. Is it something that is likely to be a feature of the Prime Minister’s engagement on the High-level Panel? I do not know whether that is one for you or Mr Anderson.

**Justine Greening:** I think there is broader international support for this Golden Thread concept. Maybe other countries may term it slightly differently, but the Panel did discuss these critical elements or building blocks that we think are important for development—whether it is the rule of law, women’s and minorities’ rights, having a free media, or good governance. There is general buy-in for that Golden Thread agenda, and I think that you will see the Panel look at how we can potentially weave that into our recommendations.

If I had to sum it all up, I think there is a sense that the first set of MDGs were brilliant at focusing attention on, if you like, the end point of poverty and the symptoms. What we needed to do was see whether we could fuse into the new development goals more of the tackling of the root causes of poverty, and often that is around the lack of good institutions, and some of these issues I have talked about around the Golden Thread.

**Q122 Chair:** Development ministries, development agencies and NGOs are very focused on talking about governance, but defining and measuring it is something else. Is that a degree of a problem, and indeed is it not the case that in some cases, governance may be questionable but outcomes are quite good? Are we talking about democracy or are we talking about effective delivery? Governments in Vietnam, in a one-party state, have certainly reduced poverty, as has been the case with Rwanda, but they have not necessarily delivered other aspects of government that people might value. How do you measure them, and indeed how do you capture public imagination when you are talking in those terms?

**Justine Greening:** That is one of the questions many people will be debating over the next two years. There is a question about whether you have an element of the new development framework that talks about people having the right of access to law and justice, and minorities’ rights, having a free media, or good governance. There is general buy-in for that Golden Thread agenda, and I think that you will see the Panel look at how we can potentially weave that into our recommendations.

**Q123 Jeremy Lefroy:** If I may, very quickly, I think the Golden Thread is an excellent way of looking at this. The one thing that strikes me is that missing from it is jobs and work, which is what I hear time and time again—in this country, but in any country, and particularly, obviously, from young people, who are most likely to not have jobs or paid work. How would you see a stress on jobs and work and the importance of that coming into the post-2015 MDGs?

**Justine Greening:** It could be one of the new elements of a post-2015 development framework. It is a really good example of going back to asking people on the ground what they want. They will say they want a job, and it is because they want to have some personal independence for themselves and their family. What it shows is that we want to move towards tackling and getting rid of extreme poverty, but we do that through sustained growth and prosperity in the countries we are trying to help. You are then left with a question about how you generate sustained growth and prosperity. That is the nature of the development debate we are in.

I would also say that perhaps the words we use are of interest. “Job” implies you have been given a job by somebody else; for a lot of people in developing countries it is about employment, and that may be something that they generate for themselves. But the point you make is absolutely right; it is about people having some form of paid employment, whether it is their own job or whether it is one they have because the economy around them is growing and there are companies they can work for.

**Jeremy Lefroy:** Thank you.

**Justine Greening:** Michael, would you like to add to that?

**Michael Anderson:** On the Golden Thread, for many African countries, part of the criticism of the first set of MDGs was that there were not enough enablers for growth, and that is what they want. There is a very big push on this, and certainly at the High Level Panel there was a lot of discussion of the enablers, which is identical to the Golden Thread. The one thing I would point out is that the existing MDGs’ target 1(b) is “to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”.

One of the points the Prime Minister has made is that goal has probably not captured the collective imagination. Part of the task is to get the goals right, but also to get a narrative so that the world mobilises around that with the same passion that they mobilise around maternal mortality and infant mortality.

**Q124 Fiona Bruce:** You touched on human rights. I wonder whether you could comment on whether the inclusion of specific human rights issues, such as political participation or freedom of speech, might jeopardise chances of agreement on the post-2015 framework, or whether you think it is now politically feasible.

**Justine Greening:** I think it will be difficult. Certainly the UK would like to support this whole agenda of human rights, and we have been very clear-cut about that. We would also like to see whether it can be incorporated into a 2015 agenda, but there is no doubt that for other countries that will be a challenging discussion to have, and for some other countries there may be some aspects of this that are simply a red line that they are not willing to go beyond. That is the process that we have to now get involved in, to see how far we can make progress on this human rights
issue. Again, it is part of the Golden Thread agenda the Prime Minister has talked about.

Q125 Fiona Bruce: Is it something you are committed to do?

Justine Greening: Yes.

Q126 Pauline Latham: We already see the abuse of human rights in many places, and I understand that in Uganda this week they will bring into Parliament the anti-gay Bill, which is very dangerous. I was wondering if there was any pressure that you or any others could put upon the Government there to stop it, and other African countries who might want to stop it. I know that is not the subject of today’s meeting, but I did want to raise it with you because it is very important.

Justine Greening: It is important. From a DFID perspective, whenever we are engaged with budget support through governments to help deliver our programmes, as we talked about last week, we set out partnership principles and they critically include human rights. I think equally, though, the Foreign Office, obviously, from a day-to-day perspective on the ground, are also significantly engaged in pushing this agenda, where they feel they can influence governments. I think it is important, and it is one of the reasons why we think that it should be incorporated into any post-2015 development framework. As your example points out, however, that for many countries will be a very difficult debate to have.

Pauline Latham: Yes.

Q127 Fiona O’Donnell: People with disabilities were completely missing from the MDGs, and we heard that, Michael, from what you read out just now about employment. Would you like to see targets that were standalone, or do you think the issue of rights and access and equality for people with disabilities should be incorporated into every area?

Justine Greening: I am open-minded about how we frame any development goals so that we achieve the right things on the ground. What is interesting to me is that some of the progress that we have seen, particularly around vaccination, helps to avoid disability, and yet that would not be one of the key targets you would see alongside any immunisation and vaccination programme. It may be that we want to have a clearer lens through any new development framework about how it will affect disability, not just in terms of improved rights and access to being involved in society for people who are disabled, but actually the work that will prevent people from being disabled in the first place.

Chair: For the record, this Committee is still minded to do a Report on disability some time in the next 12 months or so. There are an awful lot of disabled people—more, proportionally—in developing countries and they are less well served by definition, because they are in poor countries. We think that is something we want to focus attention on, but no doubt we will engage later on that.

Q128 Jeremy Lefroy: One matter that comes up a lot is the issue of inequality: not only inequality between countries but within individual countries. Clearly this is of major concern across the world, including the Western world, as we see widening gaps between the wealthy and the poor. What do you think, Secretary of State, could be done within the post-2015 goals to express this real concern that there is? It is not just a concern about income distribution, but also about political stability and other matters.

Justine Greening: You are right that this issue is not particularly developing in a country-specific way. You can come at it from two or three ways. One is to make sure that the outcomes that are being achieved are disaggregated to such an extent that you can see, and you can bring transparency to bear that way. Another is to decide which aspects of unequal treatment or inequality you particularly want to focus in on, and then simply decide to track that. Finally, you can come at it from a different route, which is the one we talked about, which is more around this zero base, so everybody has the right to a particular access to something, and you tackle inequality that way, through lifting people before they get left behind. There are different ways we can come at it, and depending on what particular objective we have post-2015, you might take a different approach, but I think it is a reasonable debate to be had. My main priority is around this issue of people not being left behind. That is the key for me. I think it is about understanding that we need to see progress for people across countries, but also within countries, and how we make sure we strike the right balance there.

Q129 Jeremy Lefroy: Do you think it would be sensible to have a specific goal to reduce inequality, or is that too vague and all-encompassing?

Justine Greening: I am sure lots of people, as we debate what the new framework should be, will have lots of different views. As I said, to my mind, it may be that it is too broad-brush. I think the main thing, from my perspective, that I have had a concern around is how we can make sure that people are not left behind. Here in the UK obviously we are having a debate on child poverty, and you see our child poverty numbers technically falling—not because any child in any of our constituencies is better off, but because other people have seen their incomes fall. The most important aspect of this, and what I think was so powerful about the first set of development goals, was how actionable they were for individuals, and I would not want to see us lose that.

Q130 Fiona O’Donnell: The UK is committed to achieving 0.7% of our GDP in aid. Where would you like to see that sitting? Should it be in the new post-2015 framework that all major donors would have to make that commitment?

Justine Greening: My sense is that we will probably have a big debate about what the development goals should be, and in a sense there is an argument to say, “Let us have a separate debate on countries financing that development agenda.” The Government has been very clear about our commitment to meeting our 0.7% of GNI going into international development, and we
will, alongside this agenda of discussing and debating what we think that new development framework needs to look like, use that as a catalyst to have a fresh debate on other countries matching our commitment. The progress we have seen over the last 15 years shows that we can really make a difference when we work together, but the more countries that are prepared to be part of that the better, frankly, and the more progress we will make, faster. You are right that it is a relevant question, but I see it as one that is probably set apart from this core debate that we will hopefully see, and into which the High Level Panel’s recommendations will feed, on the broader development framework.

Q131 Fiona O’Donnell: The other thing that developed countries like the UK can do is to ensure that companies that are making profits in developing countries are paying tax and declaring that. I know we have domestic problems with that. I wonder if you would be in favour of all companies listed on our Stock Exchange having to declare what tax they are paying in developing countries?

Justine Greening: Transparency is important. We also need to be proportionate with companies, but you are right: there is a debate around people and companies paying their fair share of tax in the countries in which they operate. It is one that the Government is right to be looking at, and I have no doubt that when we host the G8 next year, it will be one of the things that this Government wants to engage other countries in debate on. There is no doubt in my mind that there is an ongoing debate we have here in the UK and internationally that will need some kind of global solution if we are to tackle it in a smart way. Therefore it is something, I am sure, that this Government will want to pursue in its G8 Presidency.

Q132 Fiona O’Donnell: We are alone in achieving the 0.7%, so do you not think we could also give a lead, perhaps, in terms of companies declaring what tax they are paying?

Justine Greening: I have no doubt that that debate will rage. We want to have an approach that will be proportionate for companies. Transparency is part of that, and of course there is nothing stopping companies at the moment from being more transparent. Consumers are increasingly street-smart about understanding which companies they feel are behaving in a responsible way, just generally—but I think increasingly that involves how they manage their tax affairs too.

Q133 Jeremy Lefroy: Could I ask a slightly mischievous question? Do you find it slightly depressing that at the moment the UK is taking the lead among major donors with the 0.7%, which does not appear to be gaining too much traction with other major donors, and yet is being fiercely criticised for a quite understandable reluctance to increase contributions to the European Union budget, which goes to people who are not particularly poor compared with those whom the 0.7% is helping?

Fiona O’Donnell: Very mischievous.

Justine Greening: Having been a Treasury Minister in the past, leading those on-the-ground EU-budget negotiations, I absolutely support what our Government is trying to achieve, which is not just getting better value for money but having a laser-like focus on affordability and the fact that the European Union budget needs to be affordable, and it needs to be a budget that reflects that we all have to live within our means. We do not think that the current proposal on the EU budget meets that, and that is why the Prime Minister is quite right to push for a far better settlement.

I think that the UK Government does provide leadership worldwide on our investment in international development. I also think that in the long term it is not just the right thing to do, but as I have said on many an occasion, it is also the smart thing to do. That will be shown to be the case in the coming years, as our economic relationships with many of these developing countries grow.

Q134 Chair: Can I ask you a specific question following from that? Depending, obviously, on what the outcome of the budget settlement is, as you will know, the Committee has criticised the fact that a proportion of the core budget goes to Neighbourhood Policy, and is then classed as development assistance, but the biggest share of it goes to Turkey. We were not very keen about that, whereas the Development Fund does deliver our objectives. What is the Department’s or the Government’s current position in relation to that aspect of the budget? In other words, when you are talking about wanting to freeze the budget, cap it or cut it, does that include budgetisation or non-budgetisation of development, and does it include maintaining the same level of commitment on development?

Justine Greening: When the European Development Fund went through the Multilateral Aid Review, as the Committee will know, it came out with a good rating as being an effective tool. We are pressing, and in fact I have been to Luxembourg to press, for improvements in the other instruments that you mentioned, to make sure that they similarly improve their effectiveness. In terms of the Government’s strategy, we have been very clear that we want to see a limit to the EU budget. Our main priority is actually around the size of the EU budget. Within that, though, we have also been clear that we see areas such as Heading IV as one of our priorities—but that can only come after we have achieved a size of budget that we think is acceptable.

Q135 Chair: So our position on whether or not the Development Fund should be incorporated in the budget or maintained as a separate fund will depend on the outcome of negotiations, or the process of negotiations?

Justine Greening: Our position is that we understand we need to go through a negotiation within the EU, and that budgetisation of the European Development Fund is going to be part of that negotiation, because of the countries proposing it. The UK position is that we do not want to see long-term budgetisation of the
Fund. We are happy with it being outside the budget as it stands now.

Q136 Chair: And you would not want it to receive the main burden of any cuts?

Justine Greening: In a nutshell, no, but the main priority for our Government is to get an overall size of EU budget that we believe is affordable. Within that, then, yes, we have priorities, and one of them is Heading IV, but the overriding priority is to achieve an outcome in the EU budget and Multannual Financial Framework that is acceptable to the UK and is affordable.

Michael Anderson: Chairman, the critical thing with the EDF is that it remain effective, and we think that is possible either as a budgetised or a non-budgetised instrument. The key thing is not diluting that effectiveness.

Q137 Chair: Yes. So we would resist anything that we felt was going to dilute it. It is just because the Government’s position changed from wanting to keep it out to allowing it to be budgetised, but only on the condition that it is called consultation. A final point on consultation: slightly unfairly, perhaps, the MDGs are often regarded as something that was hatched up in a room in New York and presented to the world, and it took a little while for the world to catch on. This is a much more open and engaging process, but do you think there is adequate consultation? Your own Department is funding two processes, and indeed do you think there is enough time to glean that information, analyse it and feed it in to the process to be effective?

Justine Greening: You are right that there needs to be a huge amount of consultation. We cannot have a top-down approach to setting the next post-2015 development framework. It needs to be something that can be bought into more broadly across the world. You are also right that we believe we need to have consultation at a very grassroots level, not just at the national level, although the UN is engaged in 50 national consultations at the moment, and I think I am right in saying nine thematic global consultations. Beyond that you are right: DFID has been part of funding some internet-based consultations that will give people wherever they are in the world, but particularly in the places that we want to see develop, their individual chance to participate through those routes too.

Will we be able to do enough to inform the process? I think we can. When you combine what the High Level Panel process is doing in terms of its outreach, what is happening in many national governments, the kinds of discussions we are having here today, for example, and the work that is happening more broadly to allow individuals to participate and say what they think the next framework should look like, there is a huge amount of consultation going on. As you say, Chair, the key to success will be ensuring that we can synthesise all of that and understand what it adds up to, because there will be a lot of it.

Q138 Chair: In terms of the institutions, clearly it is a more wide-ranging process than was the case last time. The truth is the World Bank was not really involved; it bought in later, whereas this time the World Bank is clearly involved. But what about the people? ONE have specifically said—and we did raise this with the UN representatives—“Why does the UN not commission a representative poll, taken from amongst the poorest people on the planet, to ask them what makes them poor and what they think would actually materially improve their quality of life?” Otherwise, is there not a danger that this is a handed-down process from the supposed development experts on what we think they want, rather than what they actually want?

Justine Greening: There is a lot of work going on in this area, and I will write to the Committee with a much fuller briefing on this. There are several strands of work being led. For example, the UN is leading an initiative called worldwewant2015.org, which is hosting a series of online consultations. You talked about some of the other initiatives. There is the My World initiative, launched by the UN Millennium Campaign, which is all about allowing citizens to vote online, through their smartphones, through text messaging. There is also a really big initiative called Participate, which sees a coalition of NGOs and the IDS going out directly to talk to those sorts of communities you just mentioned about what their priorities are.

It sits alongside all the other work I talked about that the UN is also pushing. There is an awful lot of work going on, and it is probably worth me setting that out in a bit more of a detailed fashion for the Committee, if that is helpful. I would be quite happy to do that.

Michael Anderson: Chairman, we looked closely at the possibility of funding polling, particularly Afrobarometer and the like, and we concluded that the Participate Initiative, which is based on face-to-face interviews with poor people, and My World, which will penetrate deeply through SMS technology, are likely to reach a broader group than the more limited group of polling. We chose those deliberately because they would be better tools for getting the voices of the poor into the conversation.

Q139 Chair: Are the DFID country offices charged with any particular requirement to try to feed in to this process? When the Committee visits a country to talk to people, I suppose we try to ask them basic questions: “How good, bad or indifferent is it for you? What goes right? What goes wrong? What would make a difference to you?” Have they been given a specific steer to try to gather some of that together in the countries in which we operate, and feed it in to the process?

Justine Greening: They are naturally doing that as part of the work that they do anyhow. Obviously for DFID this debate, and where we end up on it, is massively important, because it will determine an awful lot of where our Department focuses its own energies over the coming timeframe, however long the development timeframe lasts. DFID is centre stage in this work, and we do reach out to our country programmes in order to get their views. In fact, I am just kicking off a listening exercise, or whatever you want to call it, across DFID at the moment, which I
launched last week, precisely to ask them about what their views are on how we need to structure DFID in the long term, and also where we need to focus our efforts and what we will have to do to be successful. There is also a good opportunity there for people, wherever they are in the DFID organisation, to feed in to this kind of process too.

Q140 Fiona O’Donnell: I wonder if I could just put in a plea for the people who have missed out on the MDGs—often the most marginalised indigenous people and untouchables. Are you sending a message to DFID offices that they must engage with those groups?

Justine Greening: We try our best to make sure we are doing that. Why do I not take an action, after this meeting, to send a communiqué out with the results of the discussion we have had here today? That can sit alongside the questions I am already asking people in DFID about what they think we need to do to be outstanding and even how we can make sure we are delivering on the ground for the people we want to help. I am quite happy to do that, and that might be quite a good way of knitting in what DFID staff think to the work that we are all doing.

Q141 Chair: That would be very helpful and a very worthwhile initiative. As you rightly say, the UK is a major player on this issue, and clearly, at least in the countries in which we operate bilaterally, we perhaps have a particular take that is worth feeding in to it. I think that is an excellent suggestion, so thank you for that. Can I thank both of you, Secretary of State and Mr Anderson, for coming along this morning? Clearly this is an exercise that is beginning to generate a great deal of public interest. I think we have been told that we are a little bit ahead of the game in looking at it in the way we are doing, and certainly the intention is that our Report will be published in time to have an impact on the process, rather than just being a comment on it from the touchlines.

Justine Greening: Yes.

Q142 Chair: That is our intention. Thank you very much indeed, and can I say to you, Mr Anderson, that I wish you well over the next few months? I guess we might hear from you down the line.

Michael Anderson: Thank you.
Written evidence submitted by the Department for International Development

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1. The global development landscape has evolved significantly since the MDGs were agreed in 2000. As Robert Zoellick noted in his address at the RAND Graduate School in June 2012, the balance of power in the world economy has shifted, with developing countries now the engines of global growth and desiring to be the stewards of their own futures. Beyond this, new sources of development finance have mushroomed as have the number of development actors, instruments and delivery mechanisms.

2. It is in this context that the international community must come together to consider the framework that should replace the MDGs. The challenge is significant. A new framework will need to reflect a changing world with new challenges and priorities. It will need to stay simple and focused on the needs of poor people across the world. It will need to be agreed by countries in very different stages of their development processes. Non-state actors, like the private sector and civil society organisations, will need to be involved in its development. And, above all, it must reflect the priorities of poor people themselves.

3. HMG is committed to playing a leadership role in this process.

2. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MDGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

4. There has been good progress against many of the MDGs. Extreme poverty ($1.25/day) has fallen globally from 43% in 1990 to 23% in 2008 and is projected to fall to 16% in 2015. The global targets for halving the proportion of people living on less than $1.25 a day (MDG1a) and halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water (MDG7c) were both met in 2010. Progress has also been good for primary completion (MDG2a) and gender equality in primary and secondary education (MDG 3.a), with developing countries being close to “on-track”. However, progress has been less positive for the health MDGs. Infant and maternal mortality (MDGs 4.a and 5.a), and access to basic sanitation (MDG 7.c) are significantly “off-track”.

5. MDG7 has not been successful in focussing attention and action on environmental sustainability. With the exception of that on ozone, all10 MDG7 targets are off-track, six severely so. All have implications for development because the poorest people in the poorest countries (the “bottom billion”) are heavily dependent on natural resources—forests, fisheries, agriculture—for their livelihoods and poor people will suffer most from the impacts of climate change.

6. Progress has also varied across regions. It has been strongest in East Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean. It has been less positive in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa is lagging significantly compared to other regions on most MDGs. Non-fragile, middle income countries have achieved, or are on track to achieve, six MDGs whilst non-fragile low income countries are on track to achieve three. Not a single low income fragile or conflict-affected country has yet achieved any of the MDGs.

7. Within regions and countries too, progress has varied. UNDP notes that, “The reality is that most countries may achieve progress on some goals and face a unique set of challenges in achieving others; there is a wide variation of progress.”

8. It is difficult to establish with complete certainty the link between the adoption of the MDGs and improved development outcomes. What evidence exists suggests that:

   — The MDGs have generated an unprecedented degree of global political consensus on development, and put poverty reduction at the heart of international development policy. They have created a common strategic language and increased the focus and coherence of international development efforts. The World Bank has on its website, “The World Bank is committed to helping achieve the MDGs because, simply put, these goals are our goals.”

   — The MDGs have been a strong communications and advocacy tool. They have been much more visible than previous goals or measurement frameworks. A search of publications on Google database reveals that since 2000 the term MDGs has overtaken Human Development Index in terms of number of references and is gaining on GDP per capita.

1 Zoellick, Robert (2012), “Getting Stuff Done: Commencement of the Pardee RAND Graduate School”, Santa Monica, California
7 http://www.worldbank.org/mdgs/
— The MDG framework supported the scaling up of debt relief initiatives for low income countries. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, launched in 1996 by the membership of the IMF and World Bank, was scaled up in 2005 with the introduction of the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). The aim was to free up additional resources for the poorest countries in order to help them reach the MDGs.

— There is evidence that the MDGs have informed how ODA has been spent. For example a much higher share of increased spending on education has gone on basic education than on secondary. There has also been an increase in the share of ODA spent on reproductive health and water and sanitation.

— The MDG framework has had some influence on policy and spending at the national level in developing countries. A recent survey by UNDP found that 85% of developing countries had incorporated one or more of the MDG goals, targets or indicators into national-level policy. Some countries, such as Thailand and Cambodia integrated the MDGs into domestic policy-making to a much greater extent. For countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, government spending on social sectors (health and education) as a percentage of GDP has increased from around 5.6% in 2002 to around 7.5% in 2010.

— With its focused set of targets and indicators, the framework has encouraged better availability and quality of data in developing countries. It has also enabled a focus on results rather than inputs and spending. 85% of DFID’s focus countries have improved their performance against the World Bank’s statistical capacity indicator, and, with the exception of Yemen, all of them have increased the number of MDG indicators that they have data for since 2000. This focus on measurement and results is increasingly critical in sustaining support for development assistance in developed countries.

9. But there are lessons to be learned on the MDGs as a framework and on the process for agreeing them.

— The process for agreeing the MDGs has been criticised as donor-driven, with low ownership at the national level in developing countries themselves.

— Aid dependent governments in particular have felt under pressure to show progress against the MDGs, due to the importance that donors have placed on them. This may at time, have distorted their national priorities.

— The MDGs were intended as global targets, and the targets for 2015 were calculated on the basis of global trends. However they have been applied and used to evaluate progress at country level. Some argue that this has drawn attention away from good progress in some countries, particularly in Africa, that might be off track on MDGs, but have made significant gains from a low base.

— The goals focus on averages and can mask significant inequalities, when they are applied both nationally and globally. Research by UNICEF has found that in some cases progress on child mortality was achieved nationally even though the poorest saw no change. Some argue that the goals have created perverse incentives that focus on those groups that are easiest to pull above the poverty line, neglecting those that are hardest to reach.

— The MDGs have been criticised for having goals that are quantitatively oriented and that pay little attention to the quality of the outcomes. This is a criticism that has often been useful with reference to the education sector—where the focus on enrolment has often been considered to be at the expense of the quality of the learning outcomes.

— There have also been suggestions that some of the indicators lacked ambition—leading to criticism that they represented business as usual trends rather than transformative change.

— The MDGs are sometimes considered to present an over-simplified understanding of development and what drives poverty reduction. The past decades of development have demonstrated that there is no simple formula for development. It is not just a technical, engineering problem, or a question of good economic management. And it is not just about human development or well-being. The centrality of politics and political incentives has become much better understood—as has the difficulty of capturing this in a framework.

3. PURPOSE AND COVERAGE OF A NEW SET OF GOALS

10. There was no explicit stated purpose for the original MDG framework—though it was widely understood to be a mechanism to enable implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Richard Manning offered a retrospective purpose as being "to encourage sustainable pro-poor development progress and donor support of..."
domestic efforts in this direction”.

11. There is a debate about whether a future set of global goals should be focused on (i) poverty reduction/ eradication, (ii) development, growth and prosperity, or (iii) “sustainable development”. While these overlap, they are somewhat distinct.

12. HMG’s view is that a new framework should maintain an explicit focus on reducing absolute poverty, achieved through inclusive economic growth and development. 1.3 billion people still live in extreme poverty, living on less than $1.25/day. At the current rate of progress, around 1 billion people will still be living below $1.25 a day in 2015. Internal DFID projections suggest that, even under an optimistic scenario of global growth rates similar to those in the 2000s, poverty (defined as people living below $1.25 p/day, in 2005 PPP term) would stand at around 824 million by 2030, or 9.9% of the global population. In a more pessimistic scenario of growth reverting to the level of the 1990s, poverty in 2030 could remain as high as 1.154 billion by 2030, or 13.9% of the population. It is therefore right that a new post-2015 framework should maintain a focus on poverty and on improving the lives of the poorest.

13. For the world to eradicate poverty forever, we need a global effort to improve the lives of the poorest people wherever they live, recognising that the biggest challenges face the poorest people in the poorest countries. Today, around 41% of the world’s poor live in fragile states, compared to around 20% in 2005. If this trend continues, it is likely that the majority of poor people will be living in fragile environments in the coming decades. The majority of the world’s poorest people already live in Middle Income Countries (MICs) and this proportion is also likely to rise over the coming decades as countries continue to grow and transition out of Low Income Country (LIC) status. Internal DFID projections suggest that, under optimistic growth forecasts, the share of poor in MICs will increase from 68% now to 74% by 2030.

14. A new framework will thus need to be relevant for low income countries such as Benin, middle income countries such as Indonesia, and fragile countries, such as Somalia. In the past, many Middle Income Countries, with development strategies extending well beyond poverty reduction, have not always seen the MDGs as an overarching framework guiding their policy-making. A challenge will be to ensure that they see it as a useful policy-making tool. This will require their playing a full role in the design of a new framework.

15. The focus on poverty eradication will have further implications for the coverage of the new framework. Many themes and indicators—such as maternal mortality or access to safe drinking water—may apply more readily to developing countries. Others may be relevant and important in all countries—this may be the case in particular for issues around accountability, transparency, or the environment.

4. PRINCIPLES FOR A NEW SET OF GOALS

16. It is generally agreed that a new set of goals should maintain the simplicity, measurability and focus of the MDGs. It is also useful to envisage it as being made up of three types of elements:

(1) Successful elements from the current MDGs to secure the gains made and “finish the job” on the MDGs that have not been met.

(2) Important elements that were missing in the MDGs and lessons learned.

(3) Elements reflecting new challenges in a changing world—to ensure the agenda remains relevant and useful in the future.

17. Beyond that a new framework will need to:

— Be ambitious.
— Reflect the diverse conditions of Low Income Countries, Middle Income Countries, and fragile and conflict affected states.
— Propose lasting, durable solutions.
— Be actionable and owned at the country level.
— Be simple, easy to understand and prioritised to ensure that there are between six to 10 compelling headline goals.

18. The world will need to adopt a pragmatic approach to the post-2015 framework. The process to agree a new framework will not be the place to tackle complex international negotiations which have their own processes. A new framework will not be compelling if it attempts to be an over-arching theory of development.

5. THE CONTENT OF FUTURE GOALS

19. It is generally agreed that a new framework should “build on the MDGs”: deepen the reach of the current MDGs and reach people that do not yet have decent living standards and access to quality services. In some cases new indicators and targets will be needed to deepen reach and impact. For example, an education goal

could emphasise learning as well as enrolment. In some instances, existing indicators will remain relevant—for example child and maternal mortality—and here the challenge maybe to adopt new, ambitious targets.

20. But a focus on human development outcomes alone will not be enough in a new framework. There is strong evidence that economic growth is the principal enabler of long-term poverty reduction17 and growth must be a central part of any new framework. We need to find ways to promote a more inclusive and sustainable growth pattern —by focusing on generating productive employment and improving access to marginalised groups, and enhancing productive capacity in developing countries.

21. To eradicate poverty, the foundations that enable people to improve their lives need to be established: good government, the rule of law, tackling corruption, transparency and accountability, free markets—these help create the conditions for the economic empowerment of the poor and remove the conditions that hold prosperity back. This is what the Prime Minister calls the “Golden Thread of development”. It is not a prescriptive agenda about the necessary steps to growth. Rather, it is a people-centred understanding of development, which has national transparency and domestic accountability at its heart, and which is based on the understanding that societies and economies are more likely to develop when they are more accountable and open. It is a proposition supportive of “country ownership” and nationally-defined priorities.

22. Managing environmental risks and our ability to use natural resources sustainably will heavily influence our ability to achieve lasting poverty reduction. Energy, natural resource management, and the need to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change are among key development challenges in many countries. A new framework will need to address these.

23. Conflict-affected and fragile states face particular challenges, and these were not explicitly addressed in the MDGs. Yet there are strong correlations between conflict and poverty. On average, for example, poverty rates are 21% higher in countries affected by repeated cycles of violence than in stable countries.18 The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States agreed at Busan promotes five Peace and State-building Goals intended to create a conducive environment for delivering on the MDGs in fragile states. These goals include fostering more inclusive political processes, addressing injustices and strengthening people’s security, generating employment and improving livelihoods and greater accountability. The post-2015 framework could build on this, and build in the need for conflict prevention and institution building.

24. The UN Task Team report on the post-2015 development agenda19 suggests that the post-2015 agenda needs to be shaped around four dimensions—inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmental sustainability, peace and security. This model can provide a useful starting point for discussions.

25. Beyond these dimensions, the new framework will need to maintain an important focus on women’s rights and gender equality. Despite progress on women’s rights over the past 15 years, gender inequality remains a major driver of poverty. The Prime Minister has noted that “where the potential and the perspective of women are locked out of the decisions that shape a society, that society remains stunted and underachieving. So enabling women to have a voice is a vital part of improving governance and achieving sustainable and equitable growth.”20 There is a case for a global development agenda which addresses and monitors the elimination of specific gender gaps, and seeks to transform the structural factors that underpin gender inequality.

6. THE LINK BETWEEN THE “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS” AND THE AGENDA BEING CONSIDERED BY THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL

26. The proposal for Sustainable Development Goals is timely and welcome. It has helpfully drawn attention to the importance of integrating environmental sustainability issues with a new development framework. The process to agree SDGs will be important in bringing environment and development objectives together in a post-2015 development framework to begin a dialogue on lessons learned from MDG7 and how to better reflect environment in a post-MDG framework.

27. At Rio it was agreed that an Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs would be established. The OWG will play a major role in the post-2015 process. The UK Government will support, and contribute to, the work of this group once its membership is agreed, including by encouraging members of the private sector and civil society to engage with any consultation exercises. At the same time, HMG is clear that there should be one single framework of global goals from 2015 and that different processes should be integrated into one single track at an appropriate point in the near future.

28. The terms of reference for the High Level Panel call upon it to consider environmental sustainability as a core dimension and to consider how the SDGs relate to the broader Post-2015 development agenda. It is likely, therefore, that the Open Working Group and the High Level Panel will be overlapping in their scope but each will be able to add value by bringing different perspectives to the debate through its different membership. The two processes must be coordinated and coherent—as agreed at Rio+20—and both should contribute to Member States’ consideration of one single post-2015 development framework.

19 UN Task Team on post-MDGs (2012), Realizing the Future We Want for All: Report to the Secretary General, New-York: UN.
7. Engagement and Outreach

29. The politics of development have changed significantly since the MDGs were designed in the late 1990s: the geopolitical balance of power has shifted, poverty is taking on new dimensions and the actors tackling—and creating—development challenges have changed.

30. Extensive outreach and engagement of all of these stakeholders will be indispensable if a new framework is to be seen as credible and legitimate, if it is to have buy-in and support, and if it is to be a useful tool at the country level. The process must be open, transparent and inclusive. It will need to reflect the new geopolitical context: emerging powers should play an active leadership role, as should civil society and business.

31. Above all, the process should find ways to hear the voices of poor people themselves. They have firsthand experience of poverty. An initiative is needed that will reach the most vulnerable and marginalised people, to learn from their experiences of poverty, and to allow them to engage in the formation of new framework.

32. The perspective of non-state actors will be critical. Business, for example, will be able to contribute unique perspectives on the barriers that prevent investments and pro-poor growth in developing countries, and to offer insights on how a new framework could incentivise them to do more, for example, to make their supply chains more sustainable, or to better measure and demonstrate their impact on development. Civil society will play an important role in bringing the voices of poor people and different constituencies and interest groups to the table.

33. The High Level Panel on the post-2015 development agenda will need to undertake extensive outreach to inform its deliberations and conclusions. There are at least five main opportunities for outreach:

   (1) The extensive national and thematic consultations planned by the UN Development Group.
   (2) Global outreach to citizens through a dedicated website, and through new technology based communications (eg SMS).
   (3) Face to face interaction between the panellists and a range of actors from different constituencies.
   (4) Individual consultations by the panellists themselves, in particular with those constituencies with which they are most familiar (this might be regional, or by sector/constituency).
   (5) “Piggy-backing” on appropriate opportunities to engage with existing processes (including through AU, Commonwealth or ASEAN meetings).

8. Measuring Progress

34. Time-bound targets are at the heart of the current MDG model. Many commentators have argued that it is precisely time-bound nature of the MDGs that gives them influence. Indeed, those targets which are specific and measurable (eg “reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day”) have had significant more traction than those that were not quantified (eg “make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications”). In the case of MDG7, the absence of agreed numerical targets for 7a and 7b has meant that the headline reporting on MDG7 has focused on the water and sanitation target,21 drawing attention away from the broader environmental sustainability thrust of this Goal.

35. Targets are a useful political tool to incentivise focus and action. They allow for benchmarking. They generate a sense of momentum and jeopardy, and they can be helpful in directing resources to particular ends. They are a use advocacy tool. Targets can also incentivise a focus on measurement, data and results.

36. But targets can also skew resource allocations, and create perverse incentives. The MDGs were criticised for the way that global goals and targets were translated top down into national targets. A different approach is needed that fosters real country level ownership and accountability, while enabling benchmarking and incentivising action and results.

37. One model for doing this would be though agreeing global goals, global metrics and nationally defined targets. Such a model puts governments in the driving seat for developing their commitments, based on their level of development and national circumstances. It links the targets to national planning, allows for much better ownership, and still allows for benchmarking. The global goals could either be framed in terms of targets (eg “eradicate poverty by 2030”) or in general terms (eg “health and well-being for all”).

9. Timescale: The Period a New Framework could Cover

38. The issue of the timescale of post-2015 framework will an important consideration of the High Level Panel on the post-2015 development agenda. It will be important for the Panel to carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option. In doing so, it may be useful to think about questions such as: (i) what time period is most likely to incentivise action and change, and (ii) what reliable projections for different poverty metrics are available for the years ahead.

39. A longer timeline—perhaps 2050—could recognise that development is a long term process, and that national plans and monitoring capacity take time to establish and deliver results. It would provide some stability and long term vision. It will allow the international community not to have to “re-invent” the wheel regularly.

40. A shorter timeframe—2025 or 2030—would fit better with political cycles, and as such could be more likely to incentivise action than goals which are perceived to expire in a distant future. It is easier to maintain pace and attention over a shorter period of time, potentially allowing for greater and sustained momentum. The argument for a shorter time frame is supported by the difficulty of projecting poverty measures beyond 2030, given all of the assumptions underpinning projections. A shorter timeframe also allows for flexibility to adapt a framework to emerging realities. The effects of climate change, for example, were not factored into the MDGs, but have since been recognised as being central to poverty reduction.

10. FINANCING GLOBAL GOALS

41. National revenues will be the main source of revenue for financing a new set of global goals, as they were for the MDGs.

42. International flows contributing to development have increased significantly—both in number and in scale—since the MDGs were agreed. Private sector investments, new philanthropies, remittances, new donors such as China have changed the landscape of development financing. According to the IMF, portfolio equity flows, Foreign Direct Investments and workers’ remittances have all overtaken Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) as flows to developing countries.\(^2\) HMG has been at the forefront of developing innovative development finance mechanisms such as the International Finance Facility for Immunization (IFFIm), Advanced Market Commitments, and more recently the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG).

43. ODA will remain important, and HMG has committed to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on international development from 2013, making it the first country in the G20 to keep its promise to do so.

44. In this context, it is right for discussions on development finance to be wide-ranging in scope. The UN Financing for Development (UNFFFD) process and the work of the Rio+20-established-UN Intergovernmental Committee on financing for sustainable development will be important for discussions on development finance. The High Level Panel on the post-2015 development agenda may wish to consider how MDG 8 could be built upon in a new post-2015 framework and discuss how accountability, transparency and global partnerships, including and beyond aid, can support development.

45. It will be important for discussions in the High Level Panel to focus on the substance of what will constitute a new framework, and not to be dominated by financing considerations. In the medium term, it would be useful for discussions on the post-2015 development agenda to link in with that on financing. The UN Financing for Development (UNFFFD) process and the work of the Rio+20-established-UN Intergovernmental Committee on financing for sustainable development, will be important fora for this.

Annex A

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE INQUIRY ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will expire in 2015, and the Secretary General of the UN has appointed a High-Level Panel to assess what should replace them. Co-chairs of the High-Level Panel are the British Prime Minister David Cameron, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia.

At Rio +20 it was agreed to set up a process to establish Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The United Nations General Assembly will appoint a group of representatives from 30 countries by September to develop the goals.

The Committee has decided to launch an inquiry on the post-2015 agenda. We therefore invite organisations and interested individuals to submit written evidence on the following:

— Lessons learned from the adoption of the International Development Targets and the Millennium Development Goals: in particular how effective has the MDG process been to date.
— How should the “Sustainable Development Goals” be established following Rio +20 relate to the “Development Goals” being considered by the High-Level Panel?
— The coverage of future goals: should they be for developing countries only or should progress be monitored in all countries?
— The process: are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?
— Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?
— Financing global goals: are new mechanisms needed?

\(^2\) IMF (2009), World Economic Outlook.Washington DC; IMF.
— The role of the private sector and other non-state organisations.
— Timescale: what period should the new framework cover? Was the 15-year timescale for the MDGs right?
— The content of future goals: what would be a good set of global goals? What continuity should there be with the MDGs, and how should the unfulfilled MDGs be taken forward?

30 October 2012

Written evidence submitted by Andrew Dorward (Professor of Development Economics, SOAS, University of London), Elaine Unterhalter (Professor of Education and International Development, IoE, University of London) and Jeff Waage (OBE, Director of the LIDC and Professor, SOAS, University of London)

This submission focuses on four questions posed by the enquiry, regarding the effectiveness of the MDG process and of the target based approach, the process and voices heard, and the content of future goals. The MDGs have been effective, albeit patchily, in concentrating attention and resources on major global problems identified at the turn of the century, but have faced difficulties from a lack of emphasis on holism, equity and local ownership across and within goals. Any successors to the MDGs should both take account of changing international conditions and address these shortcomings. This will require processes for the development and ownership of goals with more participation that includes both people whom the goals most directly concern and middle ranking professionals most involved with implementing initiatives needed for goal achievement. The content of such goals, while being determined in more inclusive processes, should embody core principles of holism, sustainability and equity. This may be achieved with a hierarchy of overarching goals focussing on wellbeing supported by secondary goals integrating core elements of human, social and environmental development. Illustrative examples are provided.

Contributors
This contribution comes from collaborative research conducted over four years by a team of academics from different specialist sectors represented by MDGs 1–7 (poverty and hunger, environment, education, gender, maternal and child health, HIV) who were convened under the leadership of Jeff Waage at the London International Development Centre (LIDC) to undertake cross-sectoral analysis of the performance and future direction of the MDGs. Participants in the team come from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the School of Oriental and African Studies, the Institute of Education, the Karolinska Institute in Sweden and research partners at institutions in China, Thailand, South Africa, Malawi and Chile.

The submission has been co-ordinated by LIDC and written by Andrew Dorward (Professor of Development Economics, SOAS, University of London), Elaine Unterhalter (Professor of Education and International Development, IoE, University of London) and Jeff Waage (OBE, Director of the LIDC and Professor, SOAS, University of London).

Submission
1. This submission focuses on four of the questions posed by the enquiry:
   (1) Lessons learned—how effective has the MDG process been?
   (2) The target based approach.
   (3) The process and voices heard.
   (4) Content of future goals.

Lessons learned: How effective has the MDG process been to date?

2. Analysis by the team indicates the MDGs have had success, albeit patchily, across goals and countries. However, they could have been more successful. Three general lessons have been learned from experience across MDGs:
   (a) Goals and targets were defined narrowly and implemented by specialized interest groups operating in silos with little interaction. This created important gaps in coverage (eg agricultural development) and missed opportunities for synergy between interventions (eg education and health). A more holistic, integrated approach was needed.
   (b) The ownership of goals was problematic at the international, national and sub-national levels. At the international level, MDGs which did not have powerful champions or constituencies, such as well positioned UN agencies, performed less well (eg gender, environment), while goals that fell across such constituencies experienced competition over ownership that reduced impact (eg maternal health). At a national level, goals were not well aligned to national priorities and were therefore either (eg by China) or forced countries to change national targets to take advantage of funding flowing for the MDGs. A process of development led from the national level might have been more effective.
(c) There was little attempt to build ownership at sub-national level, where results based management sometimes exacerbated social exclusion and relationships predicated on blaming the poor for their poverty. Most importantly, the goals as they were implemented, while improving average levels for particular targets (eg of survival, income or access to ecosystem services) were also associated at times with greater inequities. This exacerbated the general trend over the MDG period for poverty and disadvantage to be increasingly situated in emerging economies, hidden by improving average development scores, but where the gap between rich and poor is growing. For example larger numbers of children in school masked differences in what was learned, gender inequalities in outcomes, and different experience of education for children according to income quintile, ethnicity or location.

Was the MDG target-based approach a success?

3. Having relatively simple targets was good, although it did undervalue progress by those countries whose starting point was further from the desired level than others and which may have achieved larger absolute changes (for example much of sub-Saharan Africa). However, the design of many targets was flawed. Across goals and sectors, targets of proportionate reductions/improvements in some property tended in practice to focus attention on people and communities who could be easily “brought over the line”, eg of $1.25/day income, or maternal survival, or access to water. While moving towards the average national value desired, this increased the distance between those who were better and worse off. This increasing inequality was seen across goals in terms of progress relative to income quintile, but certainly went beyond that, to further disadvantage women, ethnic minorities and remote communities. A pro-poverty approach should have been taken, with targets designed to reach those most disadvantaged, not those most easily helped.

4. A second problem with the target-based approach is the confusion in existing goals between ends and means. Some goals and their targets focused on the achievement of impact (eg poverty and health goals) whereas others focused on the achievement of inputs, that is they were implementation goals (eg completing primary school and access to water). Many of the impact goals (eg. MDG3, 4 & 5) had both impact and implementation targets. Under different goals different emphasis was given to impact and implementation targets and indicators—and while impact indicators could be criticised for failing to specify investments and actions for their achievements, implementation indicators could lead to emphasis on achievement of these targets without consideration of their wider impact (a process known as “goal displacement”). The confused relationships between impact goals, targets and indicators on the one hand and implementation goals, targets and indicators on the other, and the difficulties of the relationship of the latter with subsidiarity and the principle of ownership contributed to the target based approach not fulfilling its potential.

The process: are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?

5. A persistent critique of the MDGs was that the idea originated in the DAC, was pushed forward by the UN Secretary General to give substance to the Millennium Declaration, and, despite heads of state signing up to the MDGs, there was very little national consultation. Although, over the period of the MDGs, a wide range of organisations came on board (largely national governments, multilateral organisations, and some large international NGOs), there was very little attempt to popularise or expand ownership of the goals. The problem of having no mechanism to attend to voices from below meant that many important voices of those who had the closest experience of the areas identified by the goals were not heard.

6. In addition, inadequate attention was given to a middle level of practitioners, knowledge makers and brokers, who research showed were crucial to delivery of social development. Detailed case study research into implementation of MDG 1, 2 and 3 in Kenya and South Africa by a DFID/ESRC funded project indicated a culture of blaming the poor, evidenced in the talk of government officials, teachers and some NGO workers, who are very publicly accountable for MDG linked targets. With limited insight into how and why change may be slow, their professional practice, has been documented as often coloured by hostility to the people they work with, widening social distance. This contributes to and sometimes amplifies difficulties in expanding education and health provision, and lessens opportunities to engage with poor communities. Furthermore, because of particular MDGs’ association with certain distinct government departments or NGOs, and limited experience in most countries of working in multi-disciplinary teams, the work of linking MDGs together is pushed downwards to district officers or teachers. These generally have limited resources of money or time to work cross-sectorally. Often they have a very limited knowledge base, because hardly any research has been done on linking various MDGs together. In addition they have little support with strategic planning or practice to make these links: understandably, they are unable to develop the kind of joined-up practice the MDGs required.

7. Projects like Beyond 2015 are working to build a global multi-stakeholder process for a legitimate post-2015 process, drawing on civil society networks. Their focus has been on influencing and mobilising work with constituencies, linked either to the World Social Forum or to UN institutions. Consultations in particular countries, if they are to be guided by the UNDG plan of August 2012, suggest that views should be taken from “academia, media, private sector, employers and trade unions, civil society, and decision makers”. What is
missing from this list—possibly loosely covered as civil society—are the professional organisations, middle-ranking knowledge makers who translate ideas from top to bottom (not necessarily senior academics or leaders of media organisations), government officers working at sub-national levels, and teams who can work across sectors. This “absent middle” seems a crucial gap both to appreciate thinking for a post 2015 agenda, and to build buy-in about how it might be delivered.

8. There is a need, in nationally-led goal setting, to maintain a global perspective. The LIDC team, working with Karolinska Institute and partner institutions in Asia, Africa and Latin America, developed an approach to link together and support professionals in low and middle income countries, helping them to better support national goal development and share ideas and processes between countries and regions. The SIDA-funded EPI-4 project based in China, Vietnam, India and Indonesia is an ongoing example of such an integrated approach to support national goal development, albeit focused more narrowly on the different health goals and their development across Asian countries.

9. Optimism about reaching global consensus in 2000, building on the success of the conferences convened in the 1990s, has been battered by a number of shocks (eg, turmoil and wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, difficulties in ending the global financial crisis, failures in reaching consensus on climate change) each of which, in addition to local contextual features, entail failures of regulation of global structural power, inadequate processes for democratic deliberation that takes account of marginalised interests, and limited and often hostile connection between pressures for top-down regulation and bottom-up consultation. While opportunities for more consultation and engagement with “bottom-up” processes have increased, with more knowledge to support forms of “top-down” regulation more in tune with need, insufficient attention has been given to opportunities for connecting these levels.

The content of future goals. What would be a good set of global goals?

10. Examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the MDGs does not immediately identify a specific content for future goals, but we believe it does clearly identify a set of principles that should guide development of future goals. These can be used to evaluate new goals content proposed by different development constituencies. These principles are: holism (with synergies and an absence of gaps between goals), equity (equality that is fair both within and across generations), sustainability (the capacity to persist and to resist or recover from shocks or stresses), ownership (representation, participation, accountability, transparency for all), and global obligation (commitment to address inequities in relations between countries). All of these are relevant to discussion of content and to the choice of goals (and targets and indicators) and should determine:

- the selection of topics to be addressed in goals (for example to promote holism by ensuring synergies and avoiding gaps across goals);
- the definition of goals and targets (for example to promote equity and sustainability within goals); and
- the hierarchy of relations between and across goals and targets.

11. In the light of this we suggest that

- goals should be hierarchically structured with:
  (i) “highest level goals” focussing on core elements of well-being and recognising the integral importance of human, social and environmental development; and
  (ii) “second level goals” focussing on achievement of core elements needed for and part of wider human, social and environmental development.
12. In the development of new goals and associated targets and indicators there should be an analysis of how each goal interacts, positively or negatively with other possible goals, targets and indicators. We have found this useful in examining a stunting target, as examination of the links between stunting and existing targets (for example poverty, education, gender and health) reveals strong, but often asymmetric relationships.

13. To illustrate possibilities in content, we present candidate targets with regard to stunting and agricultural development, livelihoods and food security, targets which members of our team have been examining from an inter-sectoral perspective. These are associated with higher level goals, and linked, intentionally, to a number of second level goals. The examples are intended to show the possibilities of this approach, rather than to pre-empt design and choice of particular targets.

14. A maximum incidence of stunting could be set as part of a global goal for well-being. Stunting is affected by mothers’ and children’s access to health services, food, livelihoods and nutrition, as well as by maternal education, gender relations, and a wide range of livelihood (economic), service and infrastructural conditions. It also has strong impacts on future wellbeing and economic opportunities for individuals and communities and on equity within and across communities. Within this global goal different countries could commit to achievement of particular intermediate targets and rates of progress to achieve them. However, addressing this goal does not mean that all aspects of inequality, limited education or infrastructural needs would be addressed; the overall principle of holism would require attention to interlocking goals and targets to deliver fully on the connected areas of human, social and environmental development.

15. With regard to agricultural development, livelihoods and food security, Dorward (2012) proposes two indicators which inter-relate human, social and environmental development:

(i) *Productivity of Agricultural Labour* (measured in cereal equivalents) provides a measure of the price of food relative to incomes and employment in economies with significant agricultural sectors—most of which are poorer countries. This is a critical driver of real income growth in most poorer economies. It could be combined and presented with, for example other indicators of productivity measured in cereal equivalents (yields of land, fertiliser and water) to show the sustainability of agricultural production.

(ii) *Food Expenditure Ratios*, are a theoretically sound and practicable measure of food prices relative to incomes of households in different income deciles. When evaluated for the lowest income decile this measure meets the holism and equity principles, in its linking of food prices to real incomes, its focus on the poor, and in the links between real incomes, economic growth,
and households’ expenditures on and achievements in, for example, education, housing, and nutrition.

16. A radar diagram approach can be used to present integrated information on a large number of indicators, with a single central circle to show the target and achievement of a core wellbeing goal and with individual rays showing targets and achievements of different secondary targets. Such an approach might, for example, combine information on a goal such as “eliminating stunting” with information on aspects of agricultural development as outlined above. These indicators need to be linked with others on gender and on other elements in figure 1 to ensure holism, sustainability and equity across and within goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. There should be successors to the MDGs that build on the MDG’s strengths but address their shortcomings while taking account of changing international conditions. Processes for the development and ownership of goals are needed, and these should involve more participation of both people whom the goals concern and middle ranking professionals most closely involved with implementing initiatives needed for goal achievement. The content of such goals, while being determined in more inclusive processes, should embody core principles of holism, sustainability and equity and should be hierarchically structured with “highest level goals” (focussing on core elements of well-being and integrating human, social and environmental development) supplemented by “second level goals” that focus on the achievement of core elements needed to achieve improved wellbeing. These should embody core principles of holism, sustainability and equity.

October 2012

REFERENCES


Supplementary written evidence submitted by Andrew Dorward, Professor of Development Economics, School of Oriental and Africa Studies (SOAS)

As I mentioned immediately after the session, my comment that I needed three months to think about a livelihoods indicator was not correct. I am not sure what I was thinking of. As I said in answer to your initial question, a goal and indicator on livelihoods and income is in my view the best way to address “employment” as I think employment is really about the achievement of secure incomes. In our original submission to the Committee we suggested (in paragraph 15(ii)) a “food expenditure ratio” as a theoretically sound and practicable measure of food prices relative to incomes of households in different income deciles. It could also be described as a theoretically sound and practicable measure of real incomes, and for the first income decile would focus specifically on the incomes of the poorest 10% of households, allowing for their vulnerability to food price changes. It meets the holism and equity principles in its focus on the poor, its consideration of vulnerability to food price changes, and in its linking of real incomes to economic growth and to households’ potential expenditures on, for example, education, housing, and nutrition. Measurement and estimation could be improved, but rudimentary estimation is possible with current data sets. The measure is introduced in section 3 towards the end of the attached briefing paper (although it is introduced more as a measure of food prices than of incomes). (For the record, further details on the derivation of the measure and examples of estimates are available in annexes B and C of a working paper available at http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/13483.)

There were two other comments that I wished to make to the committee and did not manage to fit in during yesterday’s session.

1. Subsidiarity

This would/could allow some flexibility in opting in/out of particular goals. This might be seen as a disadvantage in letting governments “off the hook” on controversial but critical goals (like human rights or climate change). Alternatively, however, it could offer advantages in allowing flexibility in negotiating, and
while it might appear to let governments “off the hook”, their (formal) wanting to be “off the hook” on any particular goal/target would itself be a major public statement with political and accountability implications.

2. Implementation targets

There was a final question regarding impact and implementation targets. My understanding of John McArthur’s response was that he was suggesting that there should not be implementation targets. I think that this needs to be unpacked a little, as it depends on what one means by implementation targets. In my view his answer was appropriate for a narrow definition of “implementation goals” and “implementation targets”.

In our submission, however, we used the terms “implementation goals” and “implementation targets” a little more loosely to distinguish between goals about fundamental objectives (such as improved literacy, knowledge and skills from education) and goals about service delivery and access as means for achieving impact (for example the goals for universal primary education with enrolment and completion targets). We argued that these different types of goals and targets had sometimes been rather mixed up in the MDGs. I would suggest the need for a distinction between impacts (desired changes in achievement of fundamental objectives), outcomes (results of actions), outputs of actions, and inputs (resources into activities).

These distinctions and the flow from resource inputs to activities to outputs to outcomes to impacts are standard parts of development policy and intervention planning and management (eg, inputs of finance and human resources etc. for school development activities to generate outputs of increased school places leading to outcomes of greater school enrolment leading to impacts of increased literacy and life skills). According to this way of looking at things, post 2015 goals should all be concerned with impacts (eg poverty, incomes, nutrition security, communication, health status, life skills, sustainable resource use and maintenance, population growth rates, etc). For many of these there will be useful “outcome” targets (eg school enrolment, km of roads per person, health service access and utilisation, etc). Such outcome targets should be measurable and there must be clear understanding of the requirements for their actually contributing to impact achievement (for example the need for quality, complementary resources and activities).

How these outcomes (and other outcomes) will be achieved and the resources required for their achievement should not be part of the international goals and targets (but they will be important in national and sub-national planning and in resource mobilisation and acquisition).

October 2012

Written evidence submitted by Professor Lawrence Haddad, Director, Institute of Development Studies

1. Lessons learned from the adoption of the International Development Targets and the Millennium Development Goals: in particular how effective has the MDG process been to date?

The current MDG framework has provided a basis around which a broad international consensus has been built and that has concentrated global attention and resources on addressing some of the most pressing development outcomes, outcomes that if dealt with will save and improve people’s lives. The MDG process is thought to have had the following effects on donors and recipient countries:

— It has strengthened the view that if support for aid is to be sustained, measurable progress must be shown in areas that the public in donor countries view as desirable. Recognition of the MDG framework within traditional donor countries has been highly variable. It has been good in the Nordic countries, yet much less visible elsewhere.

— It is thought to have (a) increased Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and (b) directed a greater share of it to Sub Saharan Africa.

— There has been more of an impact on the aid discourse than on resource allocation and there is little evidence of the impact on national policies in developing countries.

2. The coverage of future goals: should they be for developing countries only or should progress be monitored in all countries?

All countries should be bound by at least some of the goals. A new framework needs to recognise the changes that have taken place in the world since the inception of the existing MDGs in 2000. Notions of “developed” and “developing” nations are now outmoded and aid is no longer the main source of development finance. Remittances, taxes, foreign direct investment (FDI) and private foundations all play an increasingly significant role. A more integrated approach to development is required, with more cross cutting policy responses and improved cooperation across all development actors.

Some of the goals would not make sense in the richer countries (eg $1.25 or $2 a day poverty rates) and some would be very difficult politically (eg halving of relative poverty or a target for declines in income inequality). However there need to be some around climate, resource use and energy efficiency that are applied to all. When the goals apply to all countries, there should be a compensation mechanism or differentiated target for the poorer countries who are signing up to reduce global “bads” such as pollution, global warming, unfair trade, unregulated financial flows, unregulated arms and drug trade.
3. Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?

The “target-based” approach should be retained within a new framework as without targets the goals are devalued. A new framework should include some indicators and targets on inputs such as spending, policies and charters as well as outcomes. This would strengthen the accountability framework. It is difficult to hold governments solely accountable for outcomes that can have multiple and international causes. It will be easier to hold them to account to commitments on spending, policy reform and signing up to charters and rights (for one example, see the IDS work on the hunger reduction commitment index at www.hrcindex.org).

4. Timescale: what period should the new framework cover? Was the 15-year timescale for the MDGs right?

The timescale for the existing MDGs of 15 years, with measurements on 25 years, was probably too short. It took at least two to three years to build awareness of the MDGs and discussions around what succeeds the MDGs have been underway since 2010. This has left less time to focus attention on accelerating progress towards meeting the existing goals. Bearing this in mind, a new framework should adopt a longer timescale of 20–25 years.

5. The content of future goals: what would be a good set of global goals? What continuity should there be with the MDGs, and how should the unfulfilled MDGs be taken forward?

A balance between continuity, learning and the changing world needs to be struck in a new post 2015 framework. A new framework needs to be underpinned by a theory of change—see figure below for a rough example. It should set out the human well being outcomes the framework is seeking to achieve ie freedom from hunger, good health, peace and security. The values of freedom, dignity, equality, solidarity, tolerance and respect for nature described in the original Millennium Declaration could serve as a good starting point. It should outline the enablers necessary to realise these values ie secure employment, education; the connectors such as access to energy, water, sanitation, infrastructure, ICTs and the sustainers including resource intensity and pollution targets. The commitments to these elements should be tracked and the gender dimensions monitored. Any model should be have a small number of goals but be more expansive on indicators.

The breadth of policies that drive a focused set of goals should be broadened to go beyond aid. A focused set of goals does not mean a limited set of policies. A more integrated approach and set of policy responses is required that incorporates climate, energy, trade, security, immigration, finance and intellectual property.

Global Development Dashboard: based on a theory of change

Haddad, 2012

October 2012
Written evidence submitted by Andy Sumner, Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies/Kings College London

WHERE WILL THE WORLD’S POOR LIVE?

GLOBAL POVERTY PROJECTIONS FOR 2020 AND 2030 AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR POST-2015

Summary

There’s a “double bottom billion” or 80% of the world’s $2 poor (2 billion people) who live in middle-income countries (MICs). In contrast there are 500 million $2 poor in low-income countries (LICs). Even with growth, world poverty is projected to remain split 50/50 between LICs and MICs until 2030. Given that some of today’s LICs will be MICs by then, it is possible that as little as a third of the world’s poor will be living in LICs in 2030. The changing distribution of global poverty away from the poorest countries to MICs suggests that a new approach to understanding and tackling extreme poverty is required in the post-2015 discussion.

Figure 1

ESTIMATES OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF WORLD POVERTY, $2/DAY, 2008, 2020 AND 2030

Note: Based on moderate economic growth scenario. See Sumner (2012b) for high/low economic growth scenarios.
Where do the world’s poor live?

Updated estimates of global poverty based on the World Bank’s 2012 Povcal Net dataset show that the majority of the world’s poor live in MICs (see Figure 1). Half of the world’s poor live in India and China (mainly in India); a quarter of the world’s poor live in populous lower middle-income countries (LMICs) such as Pakistan, Nigeria and Indonesia and a quarter (or less) of the world’s poor live in the remaining LICs.

Most of the world’s poor live in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. In contrast, in 1990, half of the world’s poor lived in East Asia and the Pacific, mostly in China. The proportion of the world’s $1.25 poor in China fell to an estimated 14% in 2008, while India’s proportion of world poverty rose to 35%, and sub-Saharan Africa’s to 31%.

The new estimates for global poverty in 2008 suggest that even more of the world’s poor, by both $1.25 and $2 international poverty lines, live in middle-income countries. Similar patterns are evident by multidimensional poverty, malnutrition and ill-health (Sumner, 2010).

The proportion of the world’s $1.25 and $2 poor accounted for by MICs is respectively 74% and 79%.

Indeed, closer analysis suggests a “double bottom billion” of poor people in MICs—this means a “bottom billion” living on under $1.25/day and a further billion poor people living on between $1.25 and $2/day per capita. This compares with about 300 million poor people living on under $1.25 and a further 200 million living on between $1.25 and $2/day in LICs.

Is middle-income poverty transitory?

Some argue that there is no need to be concerned with poverty in MICs because economic growth is likely to bring an end to middle-income poverty in the near future. The ODI-Brookings (2012) Horizon 2025 report suggests that by 2025, poverty will be concentrated in low-income fragile states and that middle-income poverty is transitory. This is based on an optimistic projection that $2 poverty in many MICs will be largely eliminated due to economic growth in those countries. For example, they argue that all $2/day poverty will be eradicated by 2015–16 in India, Pakistan and Indonesia. Some LICs will also be MICs by 2025 and fragility has been little barrier to economic growth in a number of countries.

Yet growth may not be enough. This will be particularly likely if the poor in MICs are disconnected from a country’s economic prosperity due to spatial inequality or remoteness or live in fragile provinces of otherwise stable countries—half of India’s poor live in states with a significant number of deaths from Naxalite-related
conflict (Sumner, 2012a). The world’s poor may also remain relatively voiceless in domestic governance structures and discriminated against in public services and public spending allocations regionally and may also suffer as a result of intra-country migration being hindered or constrained by cost and administrative regulations.

**Where will the world’s poor live in 2020 and 2030?**

One way to explore the question of whether middle-income poverty will be easily addressed in the future by economic growth is to generate not just one optimistic scenario but a range of economic growth scenarios using the IMF World Economic Outlook growth projections at various levels (optimistic, moderate and pessimistic growth scenarios). This approach is likely to overstate poverty reduction in fast-growing economies such as MICs by assuming static inequality over time as inequality often rises during fast economic growth. However, the data suggest that the remaining $1.25 and $2 poverty in those countries that are currently MICs will still equate to about half of all world poverty in 2020 and in 2030.

Furthermore, given that some countries that are currently LICs will move into the MIC category by 2020 or by 2030, this suggests the structure of world poverty will remain split between LICs and MICs for some time yet. It is also possible that only one-third of the world’s poor will be in the remaining 20 or so LICs in 2030 (on the moderate growth scenario). And if inequality does rise these projections may underestimate the proportion of world poverty in MICs in 2020 and 2030.

**How much will it cost to end poverty?**

The good news is that as countries get richer the cost of poverty as a proportion of GDP should fall. In fact the cost to end poverty as a percentage of GDP in the foreseeable future will be minimal for those countries that are already MICs (see Figure 2). In those countries that are currently LMICs the average cost of ending $1.25 poverty is estimated to be in the range of 0.2–0.6% of GDP in 2020 and at a similar level to end $2 poverty by 2030. However, the estimated cost of ending $1.25 poverty in those countries that are currently LICs may remain high even in 2020 and 2030. This suggests that for a relatively small number of countries (20 or so on the moderate growth scenario), external support for poverty reduction will remain absolutely essential. However, the cost of ending poverty in those countries that are currently upper MICs is already negligible. One take on this is that global poverty is increasingly becoming about a matter of domestic inequality, and thus governance and taxation rather than a matter of aid.

**Why does it matter if the world’s poor live in middle-income countries?**

Such patterns matter beyond the thresholds for LICs and MICs set by the World Bank because they reflect a pattern of rising average incomes. Although the thresholds do not mean a sudden change in countries when a line is crossed in per capita income, substantially higher levels of average per capita income imply increased domestic resources available for poverty reduction. Further, the changing distribution of global poverty away from the poorest countries, suggests a “poverty paradox”—that most of the world’s extreme poor do not live in the world’s poorest countries. One interpretation of this shift in global poverty is that extreme poverty is gradually changing from a question of poor people in absolute poor countries to questions about domestic inequality. This implies a reframing of the global poverty “problem” that policy seeks to address so that the responses to poverty are increasingly recognised as related to national inequality in terms of geography, class and ethnicity and who pays tax and who benefits from public spending and the opportunities arising from economic growth.

**Policy recommendations for post-2015 discussion**

The changing distribution of global poverty away from the poorest countries to MICs suggests that a new approach to understanding and tackling extreme poverty is required in the post-2015 discussion. MICs will need and want “traditional aid” less and less as domestic resources expand. However, concessional loans will still be useful even if grants are less appropriate given expanding resources. Policymakers in donor countries and MICs could work together by doing five things:

1. Developing a new joint focus on the chronic, long-term poor wherever they live and a new joint priority of ensuring the benefits of growth and public spending are equitably distributed.

2. Focusing new joint resources to support the building of domestic taxation systems, and the regulation of tax havens and untaxed capital flight from MICs.

3. Supporting inclusive policy processes with the poor by donor-government joint working with civil society in MICs.

4. Co-financing global public goods including knowledge transfer on public policy between MICs and LICs.

5. Ensuring coherence across donors development policies in trade, migration and so forth.

October 2012
1. Financing global goals: are new mechanisms needed?

Discussions at the recent 2012 United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) highlighted the need for greater coordination, rather than competition, between different aid mechanisms and donors. The desire amongst recipients of aid is that Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), trade, debt, climate change, technology transfer, business environment and aid agency procurement policies should all be aligned to promote better development.

Many believe that the setting of development cooperation norms should be moved away from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Regional development banks such as the Islamic Development Bank and networks such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been successful in this and the potential new BRICS bank may represent another way in which this shift can be achieved.

Much of the funding from development finance institutions currently goes to Western multinationals and private equity companies. This funding needs to be refocused on sectors or projects that would not usually qualify to receive conventional funding and developing country enterprises. Energy, water and agriculture subsidies currently appear to benefit the rich more than the poor and developing countries need greater leverage to renegotiate natural resource deals and effectively tax extractive industries.

2. The role of the private sector and other non-state organisations

Three main challenges to engaging the private sector in establishing a new post 2015 development framework and that need to be addressed are coordination, cooperation costs and performance measurement.

Coordination

— Private foundations and businesses need to be included in global policy forums and decision-making processes.

— Different stakeholders have different strengths (financial, cultural, expertise or social) and strategies for participating. Stakeholders need to be organised into categories where they have enough in common so they can act collectively in that category’s interest within the cooperation framework.

— A new development framework needs to recognise that private foundations and businesses may be more receptive to cooperation on individual goals as opposed to across the entire post-2015 framework.

Costs of cooperation

— There is a trade-off between coordinating development efforts and maintaining room for experimentation. Aligning ends in terms of improved wellbeing and a more sustainable and equitable future is probably more important and realistic than aligning the means of achieving these outcomes.

— There is a need for better information sharing systems that include data on aid flows, how aid has and should be targeted and past project learning.

Measuring performance

— Common performance standards, universal measurement techniques and a global sharing platform must be agreed and underpin a new development framework.

— Performance standards need to include financial, wellbeing, social and environmental measures.
2. With the rapidly approaching deadline for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), private sector actors should be encouraged to strengthen national government systems by helping to build administrative and budgeting capacities rather than bypass them.

October 2012

Written evidence submitted by Richard Jolly, Institute of Development Studies

1. We should not lose sight of the fact that the MDGs are historically a great achievement, with widespread commitment from developing and donor countries and public awareness far beyond any earlier development pledges or goals of the UN. It is difficult to think of any specific human goals which have ever gained comparable global support, comparable only to the UDHR and other Human Rights Instruments. Public awareness is itself remarkable and we must make sure this is not lost after 2015.

2. This said, before the MDGs the UN has set some 50 goals in the years since 1960. Each of these goals and their outcomes are listed in detail in one of the volumes of the UN Intellectual history—Richard Jolly et al, UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice (Bloomington, Indiana University Press) 2004 pages 259–267. Most of these goals had a fair record of achievement. The eradication of smallpox is the only example of a goal fully achieved (though one year late) but most goals were considerably achieved by a considerable number of countries. Only three have largely been recorded as failures—the reduction of Maternal Mortality, the accelerated reduction of literacy and the 0.7 goal for ODA. I am attaching a paper I wrote which sets out the UN record and related issues more fully.

3. As regards the future, the incorporation of human rights in both the post 2015 goals and in the process of fulfilling them has strong support among many staff members within the UN and, of course, among many NGOs. It is worth emphasising that the UK government is in a good position to help work towards incorporating human rights in the post 2015 agenda, both because there is considerable all party support for such an approach and because it fits with many past UK international positions. If the government is willing to be strategic, it could team up with other governments in Europe in pursuing this approach as well as with some countries from the South such as India, Brazil, Chile and Costa Rica and hopefully Ghana, Egypt and some countries from Southern Africa.

4. As brought out in the discussion on Monday, there is a major need to adapt post 2015 goals to the regional context and move away from formulas such as halving the distance between a country’s present level and long run universal access or achievement. This seemed a good universal formula at the time to adopt global goals while avoiding the need for country specifics but as we can now see more clearly, it shifted the emphasis from rates of progress and meant that the poorest countries had furthest to go to be on track. This time, more attention should be given to starting points and to equity and narrowing gaps both within countries, within regions and globally.

5. The special needs of the Least Developed Countries and the small island states also deserve some mention. Note that the UN’s category of LDCs is different from the Less Developed Countries as defined by the World Bank and the IMF which focus only on low incomes as opposed to the UN’s emphasis on the economic and human vulnerabilities of the LDCs. Since many of the LDCs are Commonwealth countries, the UK government has a natural reason to be allies for attention to their needs.

6. Finally, and most important, the post 2015 objectives must shift from the over-emphasis on accelerating economic growth as the single most important action for the reduction of poverty, and for the achievement of other goals, towards broader recognition of the other national and local actions required, many of which are possible with little or no growth. I am not suggesting that economic growth has no part to play, nor that at a time of recession and economic slippage in many countries, there is not a need to emphasise economic recovery. But too often in the past, an increase in economic growth rates has been treated as the single most important action required, nationally and internationally, when what is needed is a shift in the structure and composition of growth, with more emphasis on many sectoral specifics. For the reduction of poverty, inequality, malnutrition and a host of other human advances in health and education, this broader approach will be even strongly needed in the future.

October 2012

Written evidence submitted by ONE

1. ONE is a global grassroots advocacy and campaigning organization committed to the fight against extreme poverty and preventable disease, particularly in Africa. Co-founded by Bono and other campaigners, and backed by 3 million members, ONE is nonpartisan and works closely with African activists and policy makers.

2. With the rapidly approaching deadline for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), discussions on the post-2015 international development agenda have commenced. However in submitting to this enquiry ONE is keen to stress that discussion on the post-2015 framework should not distract from the need for focus on continued and renewed efforts to achieve the existing globally agreed goals over the next
three years. This is important to ensure that we consolidate achievements and lay the ground work for a transition to a post-2015 agenda.

3. In determining the post-2015 framework ONE is advocating an open, inclusive, evidence based process which puts the views of the poorest at the centre. As such ONE is advocating for the following:

   (a) A What the World Wants Poll for quantitative data responses from every income strata including the very poorest and marginalized.

   (b) The inclusion of existing methodologically-robust household survey results, analysed by independent parties, as the basis for the UN consultations.

   (c) An independent selection of in-country representatives for the UN-led consultations, which will seek to ensure that ordinary citizens’ priorities and views are solicited and heard.

   (d) Better use of the technological breakthroughs and increased global connectivity to enable a much more inclusive approach to designing the post 2015 framework than was possible in 2000. The UN process must benefit from this—enabling a higher quality set of goals and targets to be agreed, as well as helping build a bigger constituency to validate and support the agreed goals.

   (e) Investment in open data systems. The original goals have suffered from not having good baseline data and then on-going up to date available transparent data on progress with which citizens and policymakers can monitor developments and assess what is working and what is not.

4. The following submission, in line with the enquiry questions, expands upon ONE’s position drawing on ONE’s research of existing survey data as presented in the report: What Does the World Really Want From The Next Development Goals—Ensuring the World Poor Define the Post-2015 Framework.

Lessons learned from the adoption of the International Development Targets and the Millennium Development Goals: in particular how effective has the MDG process been to date

5. The MDGs have provided both a purpose to the process of development, as well as a basis for measuring how far we have come and how far we still have to go. The adoption of the MDGs have served as a rallying point to mobilize resources, providing focus and energizing practitioners and beyond.

6. While occasionally criticised for it, it is actually the simplicity, clarity, and measurability of these goals that were the important qualities that have buttressed the popularity of the MDGs in the aid community and with governments. It is because of this clear agenda that remarkable results have been achieved.

7. The MDGs purpose has resulted in an improvement of social conditions in the world’s poorest countries. Consequently, today more than 6 million Africans are receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS, where only 50,000 received them a decade ago. Malaria deaths have been reduced by a third over this period. And over 5.5 million lives have been saved because of vaccines. An additional 50.7 million children were enrolled in primary schools across Africa between 1999 and 2010. Substantial health and education gains over the last decade are indicative of the direction the MDGs have presented. This is our shared achievement and together we must consolidate it by sprinting to the 2015 finish line.

8. However, in spite of these encouraging advances, there remains a lot of work to be done. Success remains uneven both across and within nations. As seen in ONE’s report “What Does the World Really Want From The Next Development Goals” a substantial share of African households still raise health- and education-related issues as their second or third most important concerns; thereby illustrating that the impressive progress to date remains either fragile or incomplete. By further accelerating progress in these areas, including enhancements to educational and health service access and quality, millions of additional people will gain the tools needed to thrive in the 21st century.

9. The original goals have suffered from not having good baseline data and then on-going up to date available transparent data on progress with which citizens and policymakers can monitor developments and assess what is working and what is not. Thus impeding the ability of groups to learn from, and respond effectively to, success and failures in efforts to achieve the MDGs.

10. While the focus on measurable deliverables has driven MDG success, there has not been a commensurate focus on structural issues related to poverty such as the provision of infrastructure services, governance and economic management or conflict and security. Indeed ONE’s report finds that these structural issues are actually key priorities for the poorest. Responses show that: in African citizens prioritize access to infrastructure services; in Latin America security & crime concerns are ominously high; in East Asia economic management & governance issues are main concerns; and in all regions access to jobs and higher incomes is the overarching priority.

11. The MDGs also failed to emphasize the importance of a built in sustainability approach as it relates to for instance: access to productive employment opportunities, economic management and governance, political instability and security, and other areas that impact availability of resources which is key to sustained poverty.

23 What Does the World Really Want From The Next Development Goals
reduction efforts. While the quantifiable measurement of the sustainability of practices and actions is recognised as complex, ONE believes that a new development agenda for addressing the concerns of the world’s poorest must recognize that poverty and sustainability concerns cannot be discordant.

12. In creating possible new goals and metrics, recognition of these failings in the existing goals must be taken into consideration and wherever possible addressed.

**How should the “Sustainable Development Goals” be established following Rio +20 relate to the “Development Goals” being considered by the High-Level Panel?**

13. Following the Rio+20 decision to set up a process to establish Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is imperative to investigate the interaction with the “Development Goals” being considered by the High-Level Panel appointed by the Secretary General of the UN. ONE calls for an integrated and coordinated approach to tackle the problems afflicting the world’s poor. Subsequently, it is critical to avoid the emergence of two separate and potentially irreconcilable development objectives. Rather, keeping in mind the environmental limitations and importance of fostering global action, the post-2015 agenda has to emphasize the priorities of the poor as well as the responsibilities of the rich.

**The coverage of future goals: should they be for developing countries only or should progress be monitored in all countries?**

14. Given the increasing interconnectedness of people around the planet, development goals and their impacts reverberate throughout the global community. As demonstrated by the recent worldwide economic downturn, isolation is a phenomenon of the past. An important takeaway is that in times of such turmoil the rich and developed countries are not immune to setbacks and the poor all over the world suffer. Therefore, goals informed and shaped by global interdependence have to constitute the post-2015 development framework.

15. In light of this, progress has to be monitored throughout the world regardless of the level of development of a given country.

**The process: are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?**

16. For all their success the MDGs failed to include the voices of the world’s poorest and marginalised in their design, the primary group the MDGs were meant to help. Addressing this is of utmost importance for the development of a future framework. The UN led consultation process for the post-2015 agenda is unprecedented in its breadth and depth. That said, more can be done. The key to unlocking the transformational impact of a new global development agenda is to ensure that those who are designed to benefit from the new agenda have a central role in its design.

17. Thus, ONE and like-minded groups are pushing for a radical, yet simple, idea of a What the World Wants Poll, a standardized set of questions that would be answered globally, repeated on a regular basis, covering both developing and developed countries. The objective is that the resulting data would influence the new development framework to be reflective of the daily realities of the principal targets. By providing the world’s poor with a stage, as well as listening intently to their responses, a truly inclusive, bottom driven, and credible process can be cultivated. Consequently, this addresses the critique of a top-down approach aimed at the existing MDGs. More importantly, the trap of prescribing a one-size fits all policy will be circumvented.

18. DFID and other groups have expressed interest in a bottom up guidance of the post-2015 agenda. It is crucial that this interest is turned into a clear commitment to carry out initiatives that drive transparent inclusion of the poorest.

19. In developing the post-2015 framework in order to ensure legitimacy and broad based buy in which will be crucial for success, popular mobilisation and social media tools should play a critical role in the framework development. On the one hand, media can be used to encourage the involvement and call on the contribution of people through a global poll. Conversely, it can be used to make information on development financing available and accessible. In turn, broad-based participation creates a sense of ownership and (equally important) establishes room for accountability.

20. A powerful implication of a quantifiable global poll, which is repeated at regular intervals throughout the post-2015 timeline, is that it will ensure continued relevance of the goals and allow for revisions from lessons learned. Building a mechanism that gauges the concerns of the poor and marginalized will also encourage decentralized targets and prescriptions within overarching goal contexts.

**Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?**

21. The target based approach of the MDGs was a crucial component to its success. Targets are able to focus limited resources where needed and provide a basis for measuring success. There are valid concerns about what those targets should be post-2015 but efforts should be made to ensure that targets align with holistic
objectives that take into consideration measurable quantitative as well as qualitative considerations. In the post-2015 agenda well-defined and straightforward recording and monitoring procedures need to be established. A mechanism that encourages a quantitative as well as qualitative build into the framework the voices of the poorest will ensure an evidence based approach for evaluation of interventions and improvements of effectiveness.

22. Additionally, the post-2015 agenda has to promote transparency and accountability through the incorporation of stand-alone goals and/or "openness" indicators across all of the new global development goals. Providing open and transparent information on progress will allow for critical analysis and public pressure, to ensure leaders, and those responsible in implementing the post-2015 agenda and framework, are held to account in achieving the global goals. To improve the effectiveness with which citizens and policymakers can monitor and respond to progress it is crucial that there is on-going, and timely measuring of all new targets or goals. The UK government and DFID should work closely with other leaders the UN and the multilateral organisations to ensure this is a key component of the post 2015 framework.

Financing global goals: are new mechanisms needed?

23. Since the launching of the MDGs, the world has seen a plethora of financing mechanisms align behind the MDG objectives. Global initiatives such as the multilateral Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and former United States President George W. Bush’s President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) have recorded tremendous success. Regional efforts such as the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa have been set in motion. Official Development Assistance has increased dramatically, more than doubling from $50 billion to $130 billion since the inception of the MDGs in 2000. It is clear that having both the goals and political will to achieve them has helped mobilise the needed resources.

24. However many of these some goals remain underfunded. The UN Special Envoy for Education, Gordon Brown, has noted the chronic underfunding of the education sector where special attention to quality issues is critical to continued progress. In a sector not currently included in the current MDG frameworks, infrastructure in Africa—recognised as critical to poverty alleviation—is estimated to require an additional $30 billion a year in investments in Africa to address the current deficits. While education is captured in the current MDGs with many pledges of support from the international community counted, there remains a problem with the translation of commitments to actual resources for addressing these problems. In sectors like infrastructure, there will need to be a concerted effort to ensure new resources can be mobilized to address the huge deficits. Donors must be held to account for the promises they have made and all efforts must be made to translate these commitments into resources. The UK’s commitment to 0.7 is thus greatly welcomed and should be supported as too should a fully funded £1 billion EU aid budget (2014–20) for the world’s poorest.

25. In determining how to ensure sufficient funding within the post-2015 framework it is also important to be mindful of the evolution of development financing that is underway. Namely, the development context in which the original MDGs were designed, emphasized donor finance investment in the provision of public goods to the millions of the world’s poor. However, improvements in financial and economic management systems have resulted in the growth of domestic government finances and corporate investment in developing countries is also growing. In 2010, for the 20 most resource-intensive African countries, government revenues from oil, gas and minerals totalled roughly $78 billion, this was approximately five times more than received in aid flows in that year ($15.9 billion). Since 2000 total domestic government revenue from taxes and other resources have increased from $60 billion to nearly $300 billion. The new development agenda must maintain a focus on the translation of donor commitment to resources for development while also encouraging the best use of the growing funding sources, ensuring they are spent effectively.

26. Attention should be placed on encouraging the transparent and accountable use of these growing financial sources to limit corruption and promote effective use of resources. As the host of the Open Government Partnership in 2013, the UK should promote transparent and accountable practice in order to ensure public scrutiny of government resources for increased effectiveness.

27. Further, transparency in the extractives sector is an important area for consideration in ensuring effective use of existing resources. Pushing for a strong EU extractives transparency legislation that requires companies to publish both country and project level payments to governments as currently being negotiated as part of the EU Accounting and Transparency Directive will be essential for this. The UK must promote the adoption of this EU legislation and then work with other countries to multilateralise it.

The role of the private sector and other non-state organisations;

28. In the recently launched UN-led process, politicians, technocrats, and bureaucrats are engaging in consultations to determine the post-2015 framework. As the primary provider of employment, the private sector needs to be included as an equal partner in consultations to ensure a more holistic development paradigm that focuses on meeting the needs of the poorest. In ONE’s report “What Does the World Really Want From The Next Development Goals” our analysis of existing surveys suggest strongly that what the poor values above all is an improvement in their household incomes therefore the post-2015 agenda, if it is to effectively respond to the needs of the poor it will need to consider job creation for household income improvements as a major
priority. As the private sector is crucial for job creation their engagement and inclusion in the post 2015-framework discussions and implementation of it is also crucial.

29. Nevertheless, in broadening the discussion to include the poor and other actors, clear and measurable commitments must remain a priority focus.

Timescale: what period should the new framework cover? Was the 15-year timescale for the MDGs right?

30. Addressing poverty and its causes requires sustained and predictable investment and continued political will. The timeframe of future goals must be of a significant enough period to support this. The 15 year timeframe has been useful but required amore annual and biannual accountability mechanisms to chart progress along the way. Additionally an unlimited timeframe will fail to respond to changing global dynamics nor the changing wants and needs of the world’s poor. There must also annual and other regular reviews mechanisms to ensure progress is on track within a longer term timeframe and to enable iteration and updating of goals and targets where appropriate and justified by new data and feedback.

The content of future goals: what would be a good set of global goals? What continuity should there be with the MDGs, and how should the unfulfilled MDGs be taken forward?

31. With three years left before the expiration of the existing MDGs, there needs to be a focused effort to consolidate achievements and continue ongoing work. Otherwise, we face the danger of skipping a crucial phase, which is vital for a smooth transition to ensure that the current projects feed into the post-2015 agenda.

32. Looking at trend data to 2030, with continued efforts building on recent progress, it may be possible to drive a number of the target indicators towards zero. ONE supports an in depth examination of zero-targets for feasibility and what it would take to achieve them by 2030 (maybe by before in some cases—2025—or just after in others 2035) noting that in context of possible zero-targets, serious attention must be given to division of labour, responsibility, and effort between all countries and stakeholders. These zero targets where appropriate would substantially build upon but also round out current MDGs.

33. Looking ahead, efforts to define the new framework should seek to address the shortcomings of the existing MDGs, as touched on in section 1 of this submission, so that mistakes of the past are not repeated.

34. As part of this it is critical to emphasize the need to define global goals that are informed by the world’s poorest and marginalized citizens. A global poll of the world poorest will be useful in determining this.

October 2012

References


Written evidence submitted by Save the Children UK

A. Summary

1. Save the Children is the world’s independent children’s rights organisation. Save the Children works in more than 120 countries. We save children’s lives. We fight for their rights. We help them fulfil their potential.

2. We have consulted widely across Save the Children’s international membership in order to bring as complete a response as possible to this consultation. As an organisation with children’s rights, values and principles at the core, we believe that a post-2015 development framework must be based on universal and equitable development, with the human rights principles of universality, equality and inalienability underpinning it. Furthermore, unlike with the MDGs, these principles must be visible in the objectives established. It is also important to note that Save the Children as a global organisation is in the process of formulating its official position on the most appropriate post-2015 framework. The views expressed in this answer reflect the current consensus among Save the Children members, and may evolve as we develop our official positions. Save the Children is a participating organisation in the Beyond 2015 campaign and as such this submission complements that of the campaign.
B. Lessons learned from the adoption of the International Development Targets and the Millennium Development Goals: in particular how effective has the MDG process been to date?

3. By focusing political energies and development resources, the MDGs have contributed to considerable reductions in income poverty and child mortality, increased primary school enrolment, and improved female attendance at school. Within the space of a decade, the number of out-of-school children has dropped by more than 38 million;24 meanwhile the number of children under five dying has dropped from 12.5 million to 6.9 million per year.25 MDG 6 on reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS and MDG 1 on halving extreme poverty are on track to meet their 2015 targets.26

4. Academics tend to attribute the success of the MDGs to their ability to focus political attention upon a few key development areas, like universal primary education or child mortality.27 As a result of this simplicity the MDGs have also demonstrated remarkable longevity. Ten years old, the MDGs are still on the global agenda, actively pursued by governments and a substantial part of the development dialogue. In a range of countries, the MDGs are the biggest point of reference that we use in our advocacy work and, in comparison to the past, probably the most effective framework.28

5. In spite of their achievements the MDGs have been criticised. The way in which many of the targets have been pursued has been contrary to human rights eg providing services and opportunities to the easy to reach (the “low hanging fruit”), rather than those most in need.29

6. Save the Children’s report, A Fair Chance At Life, argued that failing to consider equity within development approaches was hampering progress. If the 42 developing countries that account for over 90% of child deaths all took an equal approach to cutting under-five mortality, and made progress across all income groups at the same rate as for the fastest-improving income group, an additional 4 million child deaths could be averted over a ten-year period. In addition working to achieve aggregate targets, like a two thirds reduction in child mortality (MDG 4), whilst leaving the poorest children behind “violates the spirit, if not the letter, of the goal.”30

7. Broader critiques of the MDGs have been expertly summarised by Jan Vandemoortele:

_The basic criticism against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is that they represent a reductionist view of development. They are too limited in scope; their definition is too narrowly focused on the social sectors; their sectoral fragmentation leads to vertical silos; their emphasis on quantification is excessive; and that they omit fundamental objectives contained in the Millennium Declaration, such as peace and security, human rights, democracy and good governance, and the protection of the most vulnerable._31

8. Many human rights advocates not only point out the absence of human rights language but the fact that the highly selective goals and targets fall short of states’ pre-existing obligations under international human rights standards.32

9. Save the Children has expressed its concern about the absence of child protection in the current MDGs.33 There is evidence that the widespread violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation that children face is hindering progress against the current MDGs, and the sustainable social and economic development of countries.34 The continued prevalence of child labour for example is a significant obstacle to achieving universal basic education.

10. The MDGs have also been critiqued for failing to consider and monitor the unique challenge of poverty alleviation in conflict-affected and fragile states. Taking the definition of a fragile state used by the Department for International Development (DFID), fragile states account for only one-fifth of the population of developing countries, but they contain a third of those living in extreme poverty, half of children who are not in primary school, and half of children who die before their fifth birthday.

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31 Vandemoortele, Jan, (2011) “If not the MDGs, then what?” p. 1.
C. How should the “Sustainable Development Goals” being established following Rio+20 relate to the development goals being considered by the High-Level Panel?

11. Sustainability, of natural and financial resources, presents critical challenges to development progress and poverty eradication for the current and next generations and must be central to the post-2015 development framework.

12. As the HLP are expected to present their recommendations in advance of the Open Working Group process established following Rio+20, the HLP should consider sustainability issues in their report, which should form the basis of subsequent OWG recommendations on specific sustainable development goals. These two processes should feed into the single intergovernmental decision-making process within the UN to deliver a unified, comprehensive post-2015 development agenda, covering all issues of critical importance to development and poverty eradication beyond 2015, including sustainability.

D. The coverage of future goals: should they be for developing countries only or should progress be monitored in all countries?

13. First and foremost, the post-2015 framework must focus on the needs of the poorest people, wherever they live. In this regard, high and middle income countries have obligations towards low income countries in their trade relations, their financial, energy, agricultural policies and so on, to “do no harm” to the development prospects of other countries. And all governments have similar obligations towards their own populations to ensure equitable progress between income quintiles, population groups, gender etc.

14. The scope of the new framework must therefore be global if it is to truly address the global challenges faced by the poorest people in the world, wherever they are. It should be guided by the principle of common-but-differentiated responsibility whereby every country has obligations, but those obligations may differ to reflect the country context and the nature of what is being achieved.

15. A global framework will enjoy greater legitimacy and acceptance than one which is not. It would ensure global recognition of global responsibilities, and contribute to ending the antiquated “North-South dichotomy”. Mechanisms will need to be established to this end including a monitoring mechanism and a means for redress.

E. The process: are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?

16. To ensure legitimacy, the development of the post-2015 framework must be completely open and transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive to voices and expertise of those directly affected by poverty and injustice. While we welcome the different strands of consultation planned by UN agencies, including national level consultations, we are concerned that the current process may fail to adequately seek out and respond to the voices of the poorest and most marginalised people and those that will be most affected by a next generation development framework, including today’s children. As detailed in the Beyond 2015 submission, Save the Children is working within Beyond 2015 on a research initiative called Participate.

17. Achieving global consensus will be a complex political task and will, we believe, require commitments from all global players to deliver a truly cooperative effort to advance development and the eradication of poverty after 2015. The HLP must establish its global legitimacy by seeking out the voices of those in poverty and truly represent the views they receive, including from developing country governments and the vocal G77 +China group.

F. Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?

18. The specificity of the goals, targets and indicators of the MDG framework was one of the strengths of the MDG framework and has facilitated focused and coordinated effort and greater accountability of governments and development actors. While the positive aspects of the concrete, measurable and time-bound goals, targets and indicators of the current MDG framework need to be retained, a future framework must reflect our greater understanding of the complexities involved in achieving development objectives, including the risk of increasing inequalities.

19. In line with the principle of common-but-differentiated responsibility, the more detailed layers of the framework—such as targets and indicators—should be differentiated according to country context and needs (and further differentiation as appropriate). In this regard, attention also needs to be paid to increasing disaggregation according to vertical inequalities (eg, income deciles) and horizontal ones (eg, age, gender, geographic location etc).

20. To ensure accountability for progress and suitable commitments from governments, interim targets should be set (eg, every 2–5 years).
G. Financing global goals: are new mechanisms needed?

21. International aid has been vital in delivering the progress achieved against the current MDGs to date, and will continue to play an important role in achieving development objectives in the post-2015 period, particularly for low-income and fragile states.

22. International aid is, however, only one part of a balanced approach to development. A combination of different types of financing, depending on the country context, will be the most appropriate solution. A comprehensive financing strategy which considers the role of the various forms of financing—domestic tax revenues, ODA, south-south cooperation, private sector investment, innovative financing and so on—will be crucial to the success of the future framework.

23. The development impact of aid allocation should be improved by adequate rules for procurement, untying development assistance, etc. It should recognise that, looking to the future, domestic resource mobilisation should be strengthened in developing countries, as well as addressing illicit capital flight from countries and the mispricing practices of large multi-national companies.

24. Adequate funding for a comprehensive sustainable development framework also implies a reallocation of resources and rebalancing of economic and social policies to address disparities, inequalities and specific challenges such as environmental sustainability.

H. The role of the private sector and other non-state organisations

25. It is critical that a future development agenda engage and involve the private sector. But the private sector is not a monolithic bloc and ranges from micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through to large multinational corporations (MNCs).

26. While many MNCs are beginning to accept that producing in a sustainable manner, using local producers and relying on responsibly sourced raw materials is in their longer-term interest, sustainability is yet to be embedded in all core business operations. There is currently no coherent framework to steer private sector efforts towards agreed goals. Businesses can also have negative impacts on development.

27. Standards and principles tend to be voluntary and fail to capture broader economic and social impacts and issues, such as tax avoidance and evasion, which are best addressed through legislation on transparency. The new framework should help to focus private sector energies towards the contribution they can make as well incentivise legislation to limit the negative impacts of business activity.

I. Timescale: what period should the new framework cover? Was the 15-year timescale for the MDGs right?

28. Many of the current challenges to global development, particularly environmental challenges, will take many years and decades to adequately address, while political cycles dictate short timeframes in which governments can deliver commitments. To account for both factors, we propose the framework set goals to be achieved “within a generation”—by 2030–35. To ensure accountability for progress and suitable commitments from governments, milestones for every 2–5 years or so should be considered for each target.

J. The content of future goals: what would be a good set of global goals? What continuity should there be with the MDGs, and how should the unfulfilled MDGs be taken forward?

29. Save the Children is currently working across its international membership to develop a detailed post-2015 proposal. There is a clear view across the organisation that, in designing a global framework which will necessarily focus on issues of global concern, it will be important to retain a focus on human development via the social sectors, such as health, education, food security and nutrition, with clear, measurable targets. A clear focus on livelihoods, including decent work and supportive measures such as social protection, should be included in the future framework.

30. The post-2015 framework should build on the successes of the MDGs on human development, but extend the goals to ensure that we not only alleviate poverty, child mortality, poor educational enrolment and so on, but actually eradicate these unacceptable conditions. Critical will be ensuring an equitable approach that specifically addresses the vulnerability and deprivation of marginalised and excluded groups. Some proponents are referring to this approach as “getting to zero”.

31. Our detailed proposal is currently being developed. An indication of our preliminary thinking is included in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal cluster</th>
<th>Some example goals and targets (all tbc)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Development, with sensitivity to environmental sustainability</td>
<td>- Poverty reduction through inclusive growth and decent work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reduction of income inequalities (and commitment to monitoring of equitable progress throughout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eradication of preventable child deaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Quality education learning target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Food and water security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal cluster</td>
<td>Some example goals and targets (all tbc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Governance & Peace Building | - Targets related to child protection from conflict and sexual violence  
- Disaster resilience  
- Sustainable energy for all  
- Transparency (eg, global transparency initiatives, such as EITI, IATI, and budgetary transparency)  
- Accountability, including for implementation of human rights obligations  
- Participation targets—population able to and participating in electoral and budgetary processes  
- Peace building (eg, conflict resolution, access to justice)  
- Transparency (eg, global transparency initiatives, such as EITI, IATI, and budgetary transparency)  
- Accountability, including for implementation of human rights obligations  
- Participation targets—population able to and participating in electoral and budgetary processes  
- Peace building (eg, conflict resolution, access to justice)  
- Policy coherence for development  
- Migration  |
| Global Partnership for Development | - Commitments related to sustainable and responsible global financial system, including ODA targets  
- Policy coherence for development  
- Migration |

32. Save the Children believes that a number of *overarching principles* should guide the development of a meaningful, global framework:

(a) Putting *human rights principles* at the heart of the framework, to deliver *equitable results*, focusing particularly on the most marginalised communities and groups of people. An “unequal distribution of development outcomes is neither inevitable nor acceptable.”35 In addition to being more subject to inequality, children are also more vulnerable to inequality than adults owing to their unique life stage: even short-term deprivations can have lifelong consequences (such as a poor diet).36

(b) Improving *security and protection*—violence and abuse, insecurity and conflict blight the lives of hundreds of millions of children every year. To be meaningful, a future framework must address the interlinked challenges of conflict, insecurity and poverty.

(c) Increasing *sustainability*—the future development agenda must ensure the sustainable management of scarce resources, sustainable consumption and production patterns, promote domestic resource mobilisation and tailor the allocation of resources and economic and social policies to address inequalities and people’s well-being and quality of life.

(d) Ensuring the *participation* of all stakeholders, including children, in decision-making processes as well as in the monitoring of the implementation of the future framework will be fundamental for improving governance and accountability and transparency.

(e) Ensuring *accountability and transparency*. The future framework must include accountability mechanisms which hold governments and all other actors (such as the private sector) to account for the full range of commitments and for their future actions, as we have outlined in response to Question H.

October 2012

Written evidence submitted by UNICEF UK

UNICEF UK WELCOMES THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE TO THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE’S INQUIRY INTO POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

1. Key lessons learnt from the MDGs and recommendations for the post-2015 framework

Focus

1.1 The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have focused unprecedented attention and resources on human development and poverty reduction and helped to shift the development agenda beyond economic growth.37

1.2 Evidence shows that sustained investments in people, especially in children and the most disadvantaged, yield the greatest returns for poverty reduction and can be very cost-effective.38 Countries cannot achieve sustained growth and shared prosperity without investing effectively in their people, above all their children.


35 After the Millennium Development Goals: setting out the options and must haves for a new development framework in 2015, Save the Children, April 2012.
36 Growing gaps, narrowing opportunities: Tackling inequality to give our children a better future, Save the Children, forthcoming 2012.
38 UNICEF Working Paper 2012 “Right in Principle and in Practice: A review of the social and economic returns to investing in children”; Copenhagen Consensus
Values and principles

1.3 Although the MDGs were aimed at realising and promoting the values outlined in the Millennium Declaration, the Goals became too detached from the Declaration and the principles of equity, social justice and human rights.

1.4 The Millennium Declaration defined seven key objectives: peace, security and disarmament; development and poverty eradication; protecting our common environment; human rights; democracy and good government; protecting the vulnerable; and meeting the special needs of Africa. However, the MDGs focused primarily on “development and poverty eradication”. The post-2015 framework must account for the importance of all these dimensions for truly sustainable development.

1.5 The post-2015 process provides an important opportunity to reconnect human rights, equality and sustainability with development. These principles should underpin the post-2015 framework.

1.6 The Millennium Declaration, A World Fit for Children (adopted by the UN General in 2002) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have already been endorsed by most governments and should be reaffirmed as guidelines for the pursuit of future, inclusive progress. The human rights principles of accountability, participation, universality and non-discrimination should be explicitly recognised for their central relevance to the practical policies and strategies by which development goals are pursued.

Recommendation: The post-2015 framework should reaffirm the Millennium Declaration, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and A World Fit for Children and be underpinned by human rights, equity and sustainability.

Participation

1.7 The lack of an inclusive process in developing the MDGs has been widely criticised. The post-2015 framework must be broadly understood and owned at both the national and local levels. To achieve this, participation should be central to the post-2015 agenda—in the process for agreeing the new framework, in its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

1.8 The post-2015 agenda should strongly encourage countries to use participatory research and community-based monitoring to identify who the most marginalised and deprived are, and the reasons why their rights are not being met. Understanding who the most vulnerable populations are and where they reside is critical to being able to more effectively reach these populations with programming and policy instruments.

Recommendation: Participation should be a central principle in the design, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 framework.

Format

1.9 One of the key successes of the MDGs stems from their simple, concise, multidimensional, time-bound, measurable format, which has helped to focus and set development priorities and provided a common, shared agenda. This format has enabled progress to be monitored by robust indicators, which also result in an increased focus on strengthening data quantity and quality.

Recommendations: The post-2015 framework should:

— Emulate the simple, time-bound, multidimensional, measurable format of the MDGs.
— Include a small core set of global goals which will be able to command widespread popular support. The goals should be outcome-focused.
— Include a “menu” of targets, which can be adapted according to varying national context.
— Incorporate a range of feasible, tested and cost-effective standard indicators in each goal area, for which data can be readily collected and compared across all countries.
— Include guidance on the “means” to achieving the goals, based on global standards and international best practice.

Inequalities

1.10 The MDGs failed to integrate or address inequality. Furthermore, the focus on national and global averages to measure progress masked a highly uneven rate of progress within and across countries and regions. Substantial, and in some cases growing, inequities exist within and between countries, with the poorest and most marginalised often benefiting least from progress.

40 UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda “Realizing the Future We Want For All”, New York June 2012
41 UN Task Team report “Realizing the future we want for all” June 2012
41 UN MDG report 2011; UNICEF Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity, 2010
1.11 The emphasis on national aggregates also meant that countries could be on track to meet goals, whilst the poorest and already most marginalised people populations fell further behind. In some cases this also led to efforts and resources being concentrated towards those who were easiest to reach.42

Recommendations:

— Tackling inequalities should be a central principle and objective of the new framework.
— All the goals and targets should be universal, in accordance with human rights principles of universality and non-discrimination.
— All of the indicators should be disaggregated, based on the most common forms of inequality in each goal area (such as gender, wealth, location, disability, minority status).
— The new framework should include i) measures for sustained improvements in national statistical capacities, including to enable data disaggregation and analysis; as well as ii) measures to support and enable people to set their own goals and monitor progress and improvements in their own lives, at the local level.
— Equity-focused approaches should be promoted as a means to achieving the goals.

One size does not fit all

1.12 The MDGs were never meant to be a global agenda for human development to be pursued by all countries uniformly, but were widely interpreted as such. The emphasis on global targets failed to account for varying national contexts and starting points, which resulted in the perception that some countries have failed on the MDGs, despite making substantial progress.43 The adoption of the global targets without tailoring them to suit different national contexts also led to a lack of attention to, and failure to reach, the most deprived populations.

1.13 The post-2015 framework must not aim to be a one-size-fits-all framework. It should be flexible and dynamic, with targets that can be tailored by each country to suit varying local contexts and starting points. Furthermore, it must be innovative in tackling the particular risks and uncertainties faced by children and women in conflict-affected, disaster-prone societies and in countries with weak or fragile public sector capacities.

Missing issues

1.14 At the same time as mobilising and galvanising support for the issues included in the MDGs, the MDGs have been criticised for oversimplifying complex development issues, and being too reductionist. Many of the issues which were left out of the MDGs have struggled for attention and resources.

1.15 Issues such as inequality, climate change, urbanisation, peace and security, protection for vulnerable groups, child stunting, disability, reproductive health, vulnerability to disasters, malnutrition, changing population dynamics, and human rights were inadequately addressed in the MDGs. Many of these issues have undermined and even threaten to reverse progress towards the MDGs.

Recommendation: The post-2015 framework must address the most pressing development issues which were missing from the MDGs and which threaten to undermine, or even reverse progress.

Climate Change

1.16 Climate change is one of the greatest development challenges facing children. The unaddressed impacts of climate change could undo progress already made towards the MDGs—in health, child survival, education, water and more. In sub-Saharan Africa, climate changes have altered growing conditions for crops, which in turn has affected livelihoods, nutrition and child survival—all key development goals. Climate adaptation such as developing hardier crops is crucial to the development of sustainable, climate resilient livelihoods. Adaptation is not just a response to climate change; it is a means to development. The MDG Summit in September 2010 reaffirmed this point, stated that “addressing climate change will be of key importance in safeguarding and advancing progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.”

1.17 Bearing in mind that many existing development challenges still need to be addressed in the post-2015 framework, integrating climate will be essential if we are to achieve development that enables all children to survive and thrive. Climate change must therefore be considered in the context of any target and thematic area of a post-2015 framework—so that development will be truly resilient and able to withstand climate changes.

Recommendation: Climate change considerations (and in particular adaptation) should be mainstreamed within any post-2015 framework.

42 UNICEF, Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity, 2010
43 William Easterly “How the Millennium Development Goals are unfair to Africa”, World Development, vol. 37, No.1, pp. 26–35; UN Task Team report “Realizing the future we want for all” June 2012
Disaster Risk Reduction

1.18 As a result of increasing climate change and trends such as increased urbanisation and land degradation, communities, and especially children, in developing countries are increasingly vulnerable to natural hazards and resulting disasters.

1.19 Humanitarian emergencies and preparedness for these were not addressed by the MDGs, despite its importance for communities to be able to withstand stresses and develop to their full core to any post-2015 framework, if such a framework is to truly deliver transformative change.

Recommendation: Disaster-resilient development—starting with poor families and communities—should be a core principle of any post-2015 framework.

Accountability

1.20 The absence of a mechanism for citizens to hold their governments to account for progress towards the MDGs was a major omission. Although some governments incorporated the MDGs in national development objectives and allocated resources for programmes and monitoring accordingly, others did not. MDG 8 “Develop a global partnership for development” has been particularly criticised for its weak accountability mechanisms, and many of the targets remain unfulfilled which has impacted on progress towards the other goals.

Recommendation: Accountability must be a central feature of the post-2015 development framework, including in relation to development finance and the responsibilities of all countries. Accountability mechanisms for progress and performance monitoring must be built into the framework and should be based on transparency, and the involvement of families and communities themselves.

Continuity with the MDGs

1.21 There is unfinished business with the MDGs in terms of goals not yet achieved, people not yet reached, and major commitments in the Millennium Declaration unfulfilled. Efforts must be accelerated between now and 2015 to meet the MDGs, and the new framework must aim to finish the job they started—for example to get to zero in preventable child and maternal deaths.

Recommendation: The post-2015 framework must deliver on the unfinished business of the MDGs, with a particular emphasis on reaching the most vulnerable and marginalised populations who have been left behind.

2. How should the “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) being established following Rio +20 relate to the “Development Goals” being considered by the High-Level Panel?

2.1 Sustainability has fundamental intergenerational implications at its core. It is about building pathways to development which safeguard the natural environment and provide the best possible outcomes for children now, as well as future generations.

2.2 If the post-2015 framework is to be truly transformative and ensure development outcomes for children everywhere, it must be based on strong sustainable development principles.

Recommendation: Sustainability considerations should be core to the discussions of the post-2015 High-Level Panel to ensure that sustainability is considered not just in the SDGs but in all aspects of the post-2015 framework.

3. The coverage of future goals

3.1 While the MDGs have generally been understood and interpreted as relevant for the poorest countries and regions, evidence shows that global poverty patterns have changed and the majority of poor people now live in middle income countries. The dichotomy between so-called donor countries and aid recipient countries which characterised the MDGs is also becoming less relevant.

3.2 Furthermore, in virtually all countries there are significant groups among whom children are unable to realise their full potential and rights and inequality remains a global issue. Challenges such as child poverty, child protection against violence and adolescent development are evident in all societies.

Recommendation: The post-2015 agenda should be universal—relevant for all societies and about all people regardless of where they reside. This will require global goals, with shared responsibilities for all countries.

4. The process: are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?

4.1 The process for agreeing the post-2015 framework must be inclusive, with special efforts made to listen to the views of those affected by poverty and the most marginalised.

4.2 Children and young people account for almost one third of the world’s population. In many countries, they constitute almost half of the national population. Furthermore, as creators of innovative solutions and as stakeholders in both present and future progress, children and young people must have a meaningful and continuous say in shaping the new development agenda for their world and in ensuring that governments meet their commitments.

4.3 Participation should be a central feature of the new framework: mechanisms should be established for civil society groups to participate in setting and monitoring disaggregated goals and targets and holding public sector agencies to account for their efforts and performance. These mechanisms should become institutionalised and should also be used to encourage and enable private sector accountability and partnership.

Recommendation: Participation should be a central principle of the new agenda and children and young people must be given meaningful opportunities to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 framework.

5. Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?

5.1 The MDG “target-based” approach was a qualified success—it did tend to strengthen both results-oriented planning and national monitoring systems, and also helped to mobilise efforts and resources. However, there are a number of unanswered questions, such as the opportunity costs of this approach, which are difficult to address in the absence of detailed country case studies.

5.2 A goals, targets and indicators framework should be retained. These include the need to provide scope for adaptation of targets to national conditions; the need to promote and encourage disaggregation of targets to reveal and not mask disparities (this can be done using a core set of standard indicators); and the importance of keeping targets explicitly linked to norms, standards and principles that reflect human rights commitments and equity.

5.3 Progress should be monitored through a combination of two main approaches: firstly, retaining and strengthening existing national household sample surveys (MICS, DHS) and institutional information systems (eg in health and education), and associated capacities for data collection, disaggregated analysis and dissemination; and secondly, by promoting a much higher level of local and participatory monitoring, including on qualitative aspects of development, using innovative as well as standard technologies. At the global level, data compilation and analysis should continue to be done and coordinated by the United Nations.

6. Financing global goals: are new mechanisms needed?

6.1 In 1970 rich governments agreed to meet the UN target of 0.7% of Gross National Income to be spent on Official Development Assistance (ODA). Although the MDGs have galvanised aid pledges, only five countries have met the 0.7% target. The UK Government has promised to meet the target by 2013, which will be a welcome demonstration of the UK’s commitment to international development.

Recommendation: The UK Government should meet the 0.7% target and enshrine the commitment in law, and continue to encourage other donor governments to do the same.

6.2 There is an urgent need to mobilise new and additional climate finance to address the development challenges presented by climate change. In 2009, developed countries agreed in 2009 to mobilise $100 billion dollars per year of new and additional resources by 2020 for climate change adaptation and mitigation in developing countries. This sum is roughly equivalent to the total current global flows of ODA. It is not as simple as “slotting” climate finance obligations into ODA budgets: there must be the guarantee of sufficient existing funds to meet the MDGs and beyond 2015 for vulnerable communities to survive and thrive in a changing climate.

6.3 The need for this money to be new and additional suggests that innovative finance mechanisms such as carbon taxes and private sector mobilisation will be essential for meeting climate finance commitments.

Recommendation: The UK Government should mobilise innovative finance mechanisms for climate finance now and from 2015 and beyond.

7. The role of the private sector

7.1 When the MDGs were agreed the development debate largely excluded the private sector. However, the last two decades have seen the reach and turnover of global corporations expand in an unprecedented manner and consequently the impact of the private sector on international development has intensified; from economic growth and productivity to poverty reduction, job creation, human rights and environmental issues. The private
sector should therefore have greater involvement in the design and implementation of the post-2015 development framework.

7.3 Although the duty to protect human rights rests with governments, companies have a responsibility to respect human rights. The private sector’s approach to pursuing development outcomes must be underpinned by a commitment to human rights and an integration of rights into core business practices. The challenge for governments is to create a regulatory and policy framework that maximises the positive impacts of the private sector on development, whilst reigning in negative corporate behaviour.

7.4 Additional steps must be taken to ensure that companies respect children’s rights in their direct operations, in their supply chain and in communities they impact. Children and young people are hugely impacted upon by companies: as workers in their factories; dependants of their employees; members of the communities in which they operate and also consumers themselves. The recently launched Children’s Rights and Business Principles offer the first comprehensive set of principles to guide businesses on the full range of actions they can take to respect and support children’s rights.

Recommendations:

— The post-2015 framework should require the private sector to integrate human rights (and specifically children’s rights) into core business practices.

— The post-2015 framework should call for national regulatory and policy frameworks that enable businesses to uphold human rights and advance sustainable development initiatives.

8. Timescale: what period should the new framework cover?

8.1 Another 15-year framework would be acceptable. There are however some good arguments for a 25-year framework of aspirational goals, given the deep scope of the challenges ahead. These could then be complemented by shorter-term national targets (eg five to 10 years).

8.2 What will be most important, however, are arrangements for regular (35-year) in-depth reviews of progress across all goal areas and the underlying factors affecting progress, drawing on both national and independent sources of data and analysis. These reviews should take place at country level, on a participatory basis, and then be compiled for global-level discussions. Updates and adjustments of the new framework should take place, based on these reviews.

September 2012

UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund, is mandated by the UN General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children’s rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and strives to establish children’s rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.

UNICEF UK is the UK National Committee for UNICEF.

Supplementary written evidence submitted by Richard Morgan, UNICEF UK

I suggest the importance of personal security and the improved protection of citizens from all forms of violence as an element to consider within the broader issue of Governance. It is probable that, at present, the many different forms of violence against people, especially the most vulnerable such as children, and against women, impose major costs on both human development progress and economic growth. As such, personal security and freedom from violence, and the fear thereof, could and should be considered as a development issue.

Improved protection of the most vulnerable groups, as envisaged by the Millennium Declaration, and the reduction of all forms of violence, whether it occurs in homes, in schools, on the streets or in wider society, would represent a major strengthening of Governance in many countries of the world, across all income categories, and would have significant or even major benefits for human well being, human rights and economic development. It would be challenging but certainly not impossible to measure these reductions, using different methods and indicators, some of which are already tested and available.

November 2012

Written evidence submitted by CAFOD

Introduction

CAFOD has been a leading civil society voice on post-2015 in the UK and at global level since the early days of the debate. CAFOD is a founding member and Co-Chair of the Beyond 2015 campaign, which brings together over 400 organizations from more than 80 countries. Beyond 2015 advocates for a global overarching cross-thematic post-2015 framework, to be developed through a participatory, inclusive process that is responsive to voices of those directly affected by poverty and injustice.

CAFOD is the official Catholic aid agency for England and Wales. We work for a safe, sustainable and peaceful world, with more than 500 partners from around the world.

This submission is 2,542 words in length (excluding examples and footnotes).

Summary of Key Points

— One of the key challenges for post-2015 is how to build on the strengths of the MDGs in times of crises when a rising tide cannot be assumed.

— Processes to develop “SDGs” should be wholly merged with those to agree “development goals” and work towards one single post-2015 framework which encompasses both strands of thinking.

— We do not think global goals and targets should be designed to tackle all the important issues in the world. CAFOD propose that the purpose of a post-2015 framework is to act as a prioritisation tool: i) keeping the issues that matter most to people living in acute poverty on the international agenda; ii) securing the highest level of political action and accountability; and iii) incentivising action that drives real progress on the ground.

— Achieving the goals will require global action—and all countries should be monitored and held accountable for their efforts to achieve them. However, the goals should be “for” people living in acute poverty, most of them currently residing in Low and Middle Income Countries.

— CAFOD’s long-standing work to ensure that people living in poverty are directly engaged in the process has started to pay off. The Participate project will bring knowledge from the margins to post-2015 policymaking. It will deliver products ahead of key decision-making moments in 2013.

— The “target-based” structure of the MDGs was its most fundamental strength—underpinning their value as an advocacy tool and accountability mechanism at national level. Goals, targets and indicators should be maintained as structure.

— The post-2015 framework offers an opportunity to draw from past experiences of international financing. However, the primary actions required to achieving post-2015 goals will not necessarily revolve around money. Taking action to change rules, incentives and power structures will be equally if not more important.

— When it comes to the content of the post-2015 framework, CAFOD will step back and look at the big picture, rather than being confined to single issues. We would not allow a framework which delivers for the common good, and drives progress in the real world for people living in acute poverty, to be torn apart because we didn’t get “our” goal in the final agreement.

— CAFOD is, however, committed to engaging in the tough questions on content. We have played a leading role in developing Beyond 2015’s strategy on content issues, which frames four key terms: vision, purpose, principles and criteria. Beyond 2015 will be developing shared civil society positions on these four key terms.

— As an independent agency, CAFOD are also exploring three specific issues as potential goals: 1) the basic conditions for human flourishing; 2) enabling societies and 3) equitable economies.

Recommendations

— CAFOD recommend that the UNGA Special Session in September 2013 is the launch point of one fully integrated process negotiating one single set of goals.

— Through his co-chair role in the High-level Panel (HLP) on post-2015, the Prime Minister should work to ensure that bridges are built with the Open Working Group on SDGs and that core concerns that have emerged through “SDGs” discussions are encompassed within the post-2015 agenda.

— CAFOD propose that the purpose of a post-2015 framework is to act as a prioritisation tool. The issues that matter most to people living in acute poverty should be prioritised because these groups have the least power, are most vulnerable to the vagaries of political will, and have the greatest need of an international framework to promote their interests. At the same time all countries need to be responsible for delivering on action. Based on these recommendations, targets and indicators should measure two things:

— The impact of the framework on people living in extreme poverty (currently in middle-income and low-income countries).

— The actions necessary to drive progress towards the goals (in high-income, middle-income and low-income countries).
— The UK government, especially the Prime Minister in his role as co-chair of the HLP, should lead by example and commit to championing the interests of people living in acute poverty and to integrating their perspectives and priorities, for example as presented by Beyond 2015’s Participate research initiative, into the deliberations of the HLP and other decision-making fora.

— CAFOD recommends a systematic overall approach to finance strategies: Analysing what actions are necessary to achieve the goals; agree whose responsibility these actions are; and then (for actions requiring finance) what the most appropriate mechanism is.

— Little or no data on 2015 will be available in 2015, and for this reason we suggest that the baseline for the new framework should be set as 2010. From a 2010 baseline, we suggest that new goals should have a deadline of 2040, with interim goals at five year intervals which are vital for accountability.

— In order to fulfil its purpose as a prioritisation tool, CAFOD recommend that the final framework should have between eight and 12 goals.

FACTS AND FIGURES

CAFOD’s 100 Voices\(^{50}\) report found that three-quarters of CAFOD’s Southern partners judge the MDGs to have been “a good thing”, and nearly 90% want to see some kind of successor framework after 2015.

IDC INQUIRY ON POST-2015
CAFOD SUBMISSION

Lessons learned from the adoption of the International Development Targets and the Millennium Development Goals: in particular how effective has the MDG process been to date

1.1 The pros and cons of the MDG approach have been thoroughly explored. CAFOD’s own 100 Voices\(^{51}\) report, and our recent paper, 1,000 days,\(^{52}\) covers the issues in detail—adding to a now extensive literature on the subject. The Beyond 2015 campaign, which CAFOD co-chair, keeps an extensive online library of publications, research and policy papers relating to post-2015.\(^{53}\)

1.2 The balance of evidence suggests that despite their problems, the MDGs were a positive influence on international development. There has been modest to significant progress on nearly all the goals, albeit in a patchy and uneven way, and the framework prompted significant improvements in monitoring and data collection against key indicators. Three-quarters of CAFOD’s Southern partners judge the MDGs to have been “a good thing”, and nearly 90% want to see some kind of successor framework after 2015.\(^{54}\)

1.3 The simple, measurable nature of the framework underpinned its most valuable use: as an advocacy tool for keeping focus on key development issues. The MDGs are widely acknowledged as having galvanised development efforts and sustained engagement over an extended period, and the structure of goals and targets ensured decision-makers could be held to account against their commitments. Despite their problems, the goals improved coordination of development work at local, national, regional and global levels—and became a reference point of shared objectives in bilateral and multilateral work.

1.4 Whilst these are clear ways in which the MDG framework added value, it should not be taken for granted that MDG related “achievements” are wholly attributable to the MDG framework itself. Progress against the indicators was often in the context of a rising tide, and it is challenging to clarify precisely how far the MDG framework accelerated progressive trends as opposed to simply recording them. One of the key challenges for post-2015 is how to build on the strengths of the MDGs in a historical context where a rising tide cannot be assumed.

How should the “Sustainable Development Goals” be established following Rio +20 relate to the “Development Goals” being considered by the High-Level Panel?

2.1 Processes to develop “SDGs” should be wholly merged with those to agree “development goals”. There should be one, single post-2015 framework which encompasses both strands of thinking. We recommend that the UN Special Session in September 2013 is the launch point of a fully integrated process.

2.2 Our rationale is as follows:

— The essence of sustainable development is to bring social, economic and environment spheres together:\(^{55}\) Having one set of goals which deals with the first two issues, whilst another framework deals with the latter contradicts what sustainable development really stands for.

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50 See www.cafod.org.uk/100voices
51 See www.cafod.org.uk/100voices
52 See http://www.cafod.org.uk/content/download/141954/1523020/version/1/file/1000daysdocument.pdf
53 See http://www.beyond2015.org/content/relevant-research
54 See www.cafod.org.uk/100voices
— Environmental and climate change issues are intimately connected with poverty issues. The poorest and most marginalised suffer first and hardest from environmental destruction, and it will not be possible to broker key international deals on climate change without safeguarding the rights of developing countries. Siphoning off the environment to an SDG framework risks making a “development goals only” framework irrelevant and out-dated.

— Having two parallel processes would split the political momentum, leaving both frameworks weakened and less likely to be implemented. A “race to the bottom” may develop, where the framework which receives the widest multilateral backing is the one which requires the least from national governments.

— It would double the burden on stakeholders seeking to engage in what is already a complex and multifaceted arena, and weaken the chances of either framework being agreed through an open, inclusive and legitimate process.

2.3 The fundamental challenge is a political one. A lack of trust in the international system, coupled with successive disappointments at international summits, has left key governments with little confidence that an integrated process will deliver their priorities. There is also a perception that under a universal “SDGs” type framework, Low and Middle Income Countries might be losing out on aid funding as the scope for spending aid could widen to all countries; and Low and Middle Income Countries could even be asked to contribute to aid funding as part of their shared responsibilities.

2.4 The High Level Panel will report several months before the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals, and therefore has an opportunity to start building bridges. Through his co-chair role, the Prime Minister should work to ensure that core concerns that have emerged through “SDG” discussions are encompassed within the post-2015 agenda, and build a compelling case for addressing the issues as a coherent whole.

The coverage of future goals: should they be for developing countries only or should progress be monitored in all countries?

3.1 The goals should be “for” people living in what we currently think of as developing countries. But achieving the goals will require global action—and all countries should be monitored and held accountable for their efforts to achieve them.

Example 1: Purpose Statement

CAFOD propose that the purpose of a post-2015 framework is to act as a prioritisation tool:

(i) keeping the issues that matter most to people living in acute poverty on the international agenda;
(ii) securing the highest level of political action and accountability; and
(iii) incentivising action that drives real progress on the ground.

3.2 A prioritisation tool can, by nature, only focus on a few key issues. We argue the issues that matter most to people living in acute poverty should be prioritised because these groups have the least power, are most vulnerable to the vagaries of political will, and have the greatest need of an international framework to promote their interests.

3.3 It is unrealistic to imagine that post-2015 goals and targets could effectively address all the important issues, for all the people on the planet. CAFOD have no interest in a “good on paper framework” that fails to deliver genuine change in the real world.

3.4 Today, the majority of people living in acute poverty do so in middle-income countries (MICs), with a lesser but still substantial number living in low-income countries (LICs). Monitoring the impact of the framework should therefore be focused on middle-income and low-income countries.

57 For example, Nigeria, South Africa and Bangladesh have been very vocal in being pro-MDG and anti-SDG; whilst Brazil and Colombia have been very pro-SDGs.
58 For CAFOD, acute poverty is more than just income poverty. Acute poverty is a multidimensional concept of deprivation, referring to all men and women who do not enjoy the minimum standard of the basic conditions that humans need to flourish. This includes income but also incorporates access to essential public services, political rights and cultural freedoms.
59 This is true both by multidimensional acute poverty measures (see http://www.oishi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/OPIH-MPI-Brief-2011.pdf?cda6c1) and by dollar per day poverty lines (http://www.ids.ac.uk/idspage/the-new-bottom-billion). Social safety nets, governance structures and justice systems in high-income countries (HICs) are typically strong enough to prevent large populations living in acute poverty.
60 If the global geography of poverty changes in the future, then impact monitoring should be adapted to track progress wherever people living in extreme poverty are living.
3.5 Whilst domestic action in these countries is key, High Income Countries (HICs) have a critical role in perpetuating acute poverty in MICs and LICs, and in helping to alleviate it. The continuing failure of HICs to take action on climate change and the environment, for example, is having an enormous impact on poor communities in Middle Income Countries (MICs) and Low Income Countries (LICs) and will do so even more in the future. Inadequate business regulation, unfair trade rules, and economic, foreign and defence policies led by HICs and increasingly MICs have wide-ranging effects on the lives of people living in extreme poverty, whilst aid plays a vital role in helping alleviate their suffering. Monitoring of the action necessary to drive progress on acute poverty should therefore focus on high-income countries, as well as middle and low-income ones.

3.6 CAFOD are supportive of a global framework in the sense that all countries should be required to take action—but we do not think global goals and targets should be designed to tackle all the important issues in the world.

3.7 This position is underpinned by our theory of change (see example 2).

**Example 2: Theory of Change for a Post-2015 Framework**

The value-add of an international framework of goals is to inspire and to have impact across borders. The framework should be the spark which incentivises and reinforces action at national level—and gives advocates stronger backing to make their case.

*How will it work?*

Global goals and targets will establish shared priorities which all countries are responsible for bringing about. To achieve the goals, action is required by HICs, MICs and LICs. When one country takes action, this incentivises other countries to act—through showing leadership; through the competitive advantage that countries gain through action; and because of the efficiencies that can result when nations act in concert. Thus, the international framework will prompt action that parallel efforts in individual countries could not.

Experience would suggest that cross-border action has a relatively modest power to incentivise national action in comparison with domestic political processes. This is why a post-2015 framework should set international priorities which strengthen the hands of advocates working at national level. The MDGs were valuable advocacy tools because they gave national level advocates levers with which to lobby for action and hold governments to account; giving examples of what is possible; holding up external mirrors to national processes; and creating influencing windows for action. The post-2015 framework should enable national level advocates in HICs, MICs and LICs to draw on international commitments and targets as they hold their governments’ feet to the fire. Thus, the international framework will give national level advocates levers for change that would not be available to them in other ways.
Real world precedents

...where action in one country has inspired and had impact across borders:

- Dodd-Frank legislation, passed in the US in 2011, required companies to report on the tax payments they are making on a project by project basis. The legislation meant that citizens in developing countries were able to see what payments extractive industry companies were making to their governments—giving them greater scope to hold their governments to account on how these revenues were being spent. The US legislation prompted the EU to look at the issue, and their work in fleshing out the detail of what is required has made it more likely that the EU will implement similar legislation.

- China’s vigorous investment on the “green economy” has prompted other countries to examine whether or not they are missing out on a competitive advantage by not pursuing green economy policies themselves. From a self-interest perspective, the action of China made others re-evaluate the direction of their investments.

- The MDGs have been widely acknowledged as valuable advocacy tools, which provided greater scope for monitoring and accountability at national level. Whilst there is significant room for improvement in this respect (eg by ensuring that proper national targets, rather than just global ones are set), the MDGs are an example of how action taken in one country built momentum for action in others.

Are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?

4.1 It’s too early to say whether the UN process will deliver the open and inclusive process it has committed to—but concerns have been growing in recent months.

4.2 Specific plans for the national and thematic consultations have still not emerged fully, and keep being modified.61 The thematic consultations look like they will be of variable quality. Very little of the funds raised for the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) process appear to have filtered down to the major civil society platforms who are being asked to broker involvement in these processes. As the volume of requests for involvement multiplies, but without full information or resources being offered, many civil society actors have identified the risk that civil society is co-opted for “legitimation” purposes, without being truly respected as a partner. It is vital that swift action is taken by UNGD to publish full information on their plans and provide resourcing for civil society groups to engage meaningfully.

4.3 We share the concerns raised by Beyond 2015 in relation to the launch of the UN High Level Panel on post-2015,62 and note the heavy representation of economists, state representatives and aid experts in this group. Whilst it would be impractical to rebalance or expand this panel, we recommend that panel members make a special effort to engage those outside their narrow grouping, and that they personally undertake immersions in poor communities to hear views from people living in poverty directly.

4.4 On a more positive note, CAFOD’s long-standing work to ensure that people living in poverty are directly engaged in the process has started to pay off. We are working with the Institute of Development Studies to coordinate the Participate project, which will bring knowledge from the margins to post-2015 policymaking. This qualitative, participative work will deliver products ahead of key decision-making moments in 2013, complementing quantitative and survey-based work. It includes organising immersions for key decision-makers enabling them to experience poverty issues first hand, and creating a “Ground Level Panel” to mirror the High-Level Panel’s work.

Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?

5.1 The “target-based” structure of the MDGs was its most fundamental strength—underpinning its value as an advocacy tool and accountability mechanism. The structure of goals, targets and indicators should be retained.

5.2 For CAFOD, the target-based structure of a future framework is the difference between talking about a successor to the MDGs, and a much wider discussion about what kind of future interventions we want in the world going forward. We believe the post-2015 debate should be focused on agreeing global goals and targets which will be as effective as possible in delivering change. The post-2015 agenda should not mean a discussion of all forms of international cooperation after 2015.

Example 3: Post-2015 doesn’t mean anything and everything

Many things will happen after 2015. The sky will be blue and the birds will sing. There will be an array of different advocacy tools, ideas and proposals for international cooperation that will compete for success—as they do in any period of history. It’s sensible to bear in mind that one of these proposals might become so successful that it eclipses a post-2015 framework—but it is not sensible

61 For example, the original “50 Country Consultation” process is now apparently being extended to 100 countries—but no details have been released on which additional countries are being included, or what the specific timelines and process look like at country level.

to consider that absolutely any idea that pertains to international policymaking after 2015 could become the official successor to the MDGs.

5.3 Based on our recommendation that the primary beneficiaries of the framework should be people in acute poverty living in MICs and LICs, but all countries should be responsible for delivering it, we propose that post-2015 targets and indicators should measure two things:

(a) The impact of the framework on people living in acute poverty (currently in middle-income and low-income countries).

(b) The actions necessary to drive progress towards the goals (in high-income, middle-income and low-income countries).

5.4 The original MDGs omitted to monitor the actions necessary to achieve them, and had no specification at all on how the goals were to be achieved. CAFOD suggest this is a critical gap to address in a future framework. We are not advocating a blueprint approach, and emphasise that monitoring of actions should stress the measurement of progress rather than dictating what each country should do. In the new global context where a “rising tide” of poverty indicators cannot be assumed, spelling out and monitoring the actions necessary to achieve goals is a key strategy for ensuring a framework is credible and realistic.

5.5 Agreeing targets for actions should be a key focus of interim summits, which would monitor progress towards the goals at five yearly intervals (see section 7).

Financing global goals: are new mechanisms needed?

6.1 The post-2015 framework should provide a unifying structure to monitor whether governments have delivered on the promises they have already made. Whilst there are huge gaps, especially regarding climate finance, the post-2015 framework is not starting from scratch. The post-2015 framework offers an opportunity to address longstanding shortcomings in the quality (not just the quantity) of international financing, and must ensure that developing countries have a proper role in the governance of funds. Past experience on issues like allocation, country ownership, transparency, and tied finance will be valuable far beyond traditional aid flows.63

6.2 The overall strategy should be to work systematically: Analysing what actions are necessary to achieve the goals; agree whose responsibility these actions are; and then (for actions requiring finance) what the most appropriate mechanism is. It should not be assumed that the primary actions necessary to achieving post-2015 goals will revolve around money. Taking action to change rules, incentives and power structures will be equally if not more important.

7. Timescale: what period should the new framework cover? Was the 15-year timescale for the MDGs right?

Example 4: Baseline data requires a back-dated timeframe

It is inaccurate to say that the MDGs had a 15 year timescale. The architects of the MDGs in fact took 1990 as their baseline year, setting a 25 year timescale for the whole framework in order to mirror the timespan of a generation.

Whilst today’s information revolution is changing the picture radically, global statistics typically still have a three to five year time lag. Little or no data on 2015 will be available in 2015, and for this reason we suggest that the baseline for the new framework should be set as 2010.

7.1 From a 2010 baseline, we suggest that new goals should have a deadline of 2040, with interim goals at five year intervals.

7.2 The MDGs took many years to become fully established and the investment of time and energy required to agree strong and legitimate new goals means this is not a process to repeat too frequently. A longer, 30-year timespan will enable more ambitious goals to be set with less compromise on realism, and provide the continuity of focus necessary to tackle more complex, entrenched challenges.

7.3 It is vital for accountability, however, that this longer term timespan is combined with interim goals set at five yearly intervals. There should be five-yearly international summits to monitor progress against the goals, and hold global leaders to account against the targets. Five years is roughly the span of an election cycle in many countries, and it is also a realistic period within which new monitoring data can be gathered and synthesised at national and global level.

7.4 The interim targets would be important in terms of ensuring that a post-2015 framework is coherent with existing time-bound commitments which are working on shorter time-scales. Some key challenges (particularly in the climate arena) require shorter term goals,64 and interim targets should ensure that there is no lowering of ambition.

7.5 The five-yearly intervals would be a valuable opportunity not only to evaluate whether the international community is “on-track”, but also to verify the relevance of particular targets. A particular priority at interim summits should be to check what “action” targets and indicators are necessary, and ensure necessary steps are

63 Alex Wilks, A just allocation of resources, Discussion paper for CAFOD, July 2010
64 For example, many NGOs are arguing that Ban Ki Moon’s initiative on universal energy access should have a 2020 deadline.
taken to accelerate progress where goals are lagging behind. Without repeating the whole political process of establishing goals, interim summits could also check that targets make sense in the context of any shocks or unforeseen events that have arisen—and take advantage of new, improved data sources or monitoring systems that will have emerged.

The content of future goals: what would be a good set of global goals? What continuity should there be with the MDGs, and how should the unfulfilled MDGs be taken forward?

8.1 Like every agency, CAFOD have issues that are particularly close to our hearts and that we would like to see as priorities for international action in the future. However, CAFOD’s advocacy on post-2015 will step back and look at the big picture, rather than being confined to single issues. Learning from the tale of Judgement of Solomon (1st Kings 3:16–28), we would not allow a framework which delivers for the common good, and drives progress in the real world on issues that matter to people living in acute poverty, to be torn apart because we didn’t get “our” goal in the final agreement.

8.2 CAFOD is, however, committed to engaging in the tough questions on content. We have played a leading role in developing Beyond 2015’s strategy on content issues, which frames four key terms: vision, purpose, principles and criteria as the lynchpins of the debate (see Example 5). Over the next 12 months, Beyond 2015 will be working to develop shared civil society positions on these four key terms.

Example 5: Vision, Purpose, Principles and Criteria
It is critical to have clear thinking on the core rationale and conceptual underpinnings of post-2015 framework, in order to have a sensible discussion on specific goals. Beyond 2015 addresses the lynchpin issues under four key terms:

1. The “vision”
   This is the broader state that we want the world to be in, and that we want the post-2015 framework to be working towards. The framework should contribute to the vision, but it does not have sole responsibility for bringing it about.

2. The “purpose”
   This is the particular role that the framework has—describing exactly how the framework is going to contribute towards the vision. The framework should be designed in such a way so it can fully achieve this purpose.

3. The “principles”
   These are characteristics that should underpin the whole framework and be reflected throughout its whole structure. The principles should support the design of the framework so it will achieve its purpose.

4. The “criteria”
   The criteria are the means by which we can evaluate specific proposals for goals. These should facilitate a basic but systematic assessment of whether a proposed goal is a strong option for a post-2015 framework.

These terms are designed to slot together like a jigsaw, without overlap or repetition.

8.3 As an independent agency, CAFOD are also exploring three specific issues as potential goals: 1) the basic conditions for human flourishing; 2) enabling societies and 3) equitable economies (see Example 6). We intend to publish more details on specific candidate goals over the coming months.

Example 6: CAFOD’s Emerging Proposals for Specific Goals

Goal 1: Basic conditions for human flourishing
This goal would ensure that every individual has the basic building blocks they need to freely participate in social, political and economic life. Essential services such as health and education, water and sanitation and a minimum level of financial security would be made universal under this goal. Resonating with thinking around the need for a social protection floor and to follow through existing MDG commitments, this goal would deliver the fundamental basics that humans need to escape acute poverty and flourish.

Goal 2: Enabling societies
It’s not enough for individuals to have the basic conditions for human flourishing, they also need to operate in a wider environment that facilitates their contribution to society. This goal would promote the ability of citizens to fully participate in public life. It would safeguard the rights of civil society groups to organise, promote the inclusion of those who are most marginalised, and ensure that individuals have the freedom to express themselves and hold decision-makers to account.

Goal 3: Equitable economies
Inequitable economic structures are deepening the gap between those in acute poverty and those in privileged groups, and are undermining the ability of poor and marginalised groups to make their full contribution. This goal would ensure fair markets where corporate power is appropriately

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65 A similar process of checking targets has been undertaken in trade agreement processes.
regulated and would ensure individuals have the opportunity to pursue their own creative potential without power imbalances stacking the odds against them.

8.4 In order to fulfil its purpose as a prioritisation tool, CAFOD recommend that the final framework should have between eight and 12 goals. These should be emblematic and inspiring, but we must acknowledge the impossibility of creating a framework that is both wholly comprehensive, and also concise enough to drive concrete progress in the real world.

8.5 For this reason, the fight for justice, rights and sustainability must continue far beyond the boundaries of one single multilateral initiative.

September 2012

Written evidence submitted by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Participate project

ABOUT THE PARTICIPATE: KNOWLEDGE FROM THE MARGINS FOR POST-2015 PROJECT

(PARTICIPATE)

Participate has been established to ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalised communities have the opportunity to shape post-2015 policymaking and that a future global framework reflects the priorities of those directly affected by poverty and injustice. It will fill a crucial gap in the current policy context and provide a more accurate insight into the realities of how people experience poverty and how they think change is possible at ground level. Initiatives such as the United Nations Development Group 50+ country consultations and global surveys provide important inputs into the post-2015 process. Participatory research can complement these efforts by engaging the most marginalised and vulnerable groups, helping them to directly communicate the reality of their lives and what is most important to them.

The Participate initiative will draw together an extensive body of participatory research that has been carried out or is in the process of being carried out that can provide an invaluable contribution to discussions about what should replace the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The initiative is co-convened by IDS and Beyond 2015 and funded by the UK Department for International Development.

For more information or for further evidence in support of this submission please contact Joanna Wheeler, Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies and Co-Director of the Participate initiative (J.Wheeler@ids.ac.uk).

This submission responds to the following questions:

— Lessons learned from the adoption of the International Development Targets and the Millennium Development Goals: in particular how effective has the MDG process been to date, and
— Targets: was the MDG “target-based” approach a success? Should it be retained? How should progress be measured?
— The process: are the right voices being heard? What are the opportunities for and constraints to global consensus?
— The content of future goals: what would be a good set of global goals? What continuity should there be with the MDGs, and how should the unfulfilled MDGs be taken forward?

1. The MDGs have made modest inroads in tackling global development challenges in part because they have not had legitimacy with those most affected by poverty. So despite the emergence of international frameworks for reducing poverty, there are important lessons from the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with regard to the barriers they constructed for achieving both inclusive and socially transformative global development pathways.

2. Firstly, given their sectoral focus the goals did not really reflect the realities of the most marginalised and vulnerable. The interconnectedness of the issues that affect the lives of people in the poorest communities, and their views on what is important were also not sufficiently considered, and given their marginalisation, their stories are rarely told. In addition, the current framework of the MDGs does not reflect or respond to the rapidly changing realities of people living in poverty, how they understand change and what will lead to positive change in their lives. These challenges span both the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of these global development frameworks.

“What is needed post MDG is a much more effective and realistic way of keeping in touch and up to date with the rapidly changing realities of poor people. The rate of change is quite spectacular.”

(Robert Chambers, IDS 2012)66

3. Understanding this rapid change is essential as it highlights complex issues and development challenges such as an increasingly mobile world. The MDG’s have tended to target static populations—providing services within localities. Mobile populations: pastoralists; refugees, people moving from the rural to urban locations

66 All quotations are from members of the Participate: Knowledge from the margins for post 2015 initiative. For more information see the Participate project page on the IDS website: http://www.ids.ac.uk/idsproject/participate-knowledge-from-the-margins-for-post-2015
often find themselves outside of the infrastructure and services that are provided through programmes linked to the MDGs.

4. Secondly, the MDGs have been relatively poor at influencing the underlying structures that perpetuate inequality and poverty. Social and political norms and institutions that lead to discrimination, exclusion and systematic marginalisation are entrenched at the structural level, for example how in many countries children with disabilities are not required to go to school.

5. Accountability of governments to their citizens is also an essential component of transformative development that responds to the complex socio-political realities that individuals and communities face. An informed and empowered citizenry engaged in transparent and accountable governance processes is integral to decision-making that is inclusive of the voices and perspectives of people from all sections of society.

“In Nigeria, the poorest people in our communities are not aware of the MDGs, they mean very little in their day to day lives: This has of course contributed to their limited success in Nigeria. If the government is not open and transparent with its citizens on their responsibility to meet these global development goals, then how are the people going to be empowered to hold them to account?”

(Oga Steve Abah, Director of the Theatre for Development Centre 2012)

6. This relationship between citizens and the state is particularly challenging in insecure contexts, and contexts where there are high levels of violence. The MDGs have been particularly inadequate where violence and fragility affect societies.

7. There has also been a significant deficiency in terms of the mechanisms for how governments and international agencies can be held to account for delivery of the goals. Accountability within global governance frameworks is only possible if they are built in dialogue with stakeholders from the initial stages, in both an open and transparent way: the most important stakeholders in the process of building a global development framework are those whose lives they aim to impact upon. Previous attempts to include those living in poverty have been experienced by many as “extractive”—with poor people feeling that their voice has been used for political ends which are not their own. There are considerable lessons to be learned about what to do, and what not to do. If the future of development is to be characterised by a tangible degree of “ownership” by those who are affected by it, then it is crucial to learn these lessons.

“Without the involvement of the people who a framework is supposed to help, work to hold decision-makers to account against their commitments will be poorly grounded and carry little weight.” (Dr Amy Pollard, CAFOD and Beyond 2015 2012)

8. Demands for social justice are increasingly part of mainstream development debates, such as the Beyond 2015 campaign’s call for a framework that is informed by people living in poverty and injustice. A future framework should speak to the fundamental concerns of a more just and sustainable world, rather than only measuring progress in relation to narrow, sectorally-defined indicators. This will only be possible if the pathways to change supported by the post 2015 framework are informed by the experiences of those living in poverty and marginalisation.

9. The right voices to hear in relation to the post 2015 debate are the voices of those most affected by poverty, marginalisation and vulnerability. Perspectives of those living in extreme vulnerability and poverty matter in making decisions about how international development should happen. They matter, not only because they are the people most affected by development, but because their perspectives can shed light on how lasting change is possible.

10. The UK government and other national governments, the UN, and other key agencies are increasingly recognising the importance of engaging these marginalised perspectives in the post-2015 debate. While initiatives such as the UNDG process, global surveys and those using new technology will provide important inputs into the post-2015 agenda, participatory research can complement these efforts by engaging the most marginalised and vulnerable groups, helping them to directly communicate the reality of their lives and what is most important to them.

11. There is an extensive body of participatory research that has been carried out or is in the process of being carried out that can provide an invaluable contribution to this dialogue. The Participate initiative has been established to draw this work together, ensure that knowledge from the margins shapes post-2015 policymaking and that a future framework reflects the priorities of those directly affected by poverty and injustice.

12. Of central importance in the role of participatory research in the reframing of the MDGs is the knowledge generated regarding the real stories of people’s lives and what is important to them. This knowledge provides detailed insight into how and why things happen to people in communities where there are large numbers of people living in poverty, and what it is that makes the problems that they face intractable. Because participatory research is rooted in long-standing relationships it is able to engage those who feel threatened by institutional processes, and as such is more likely to reveal the reality of what is going on; this is essential for example in conflict-affected contexts where safe spaces for people to freely articulate their priorities are limited.

13. As such, through participatory research you are able to understand more about how development interventions are experienced, whether or not they make a difference, and if so whether it is positive. Of
14. The data collected within the participatory research process has relevance and integrity as it is situated and contextualised within a wider location and community context. Without the benefit of understanding the systemic features of the context within which people live, data can be disembodied, decontextualised and policy-irrelevant. Participatory visual processes can reveal and communicate powerfully about experiences from the margins by providing further contextualised examples of the complex and nuanced understanding of the subjective aspects and consequences of development. Participatory research processes which draw substantively on group analysis processes enable deliberation and interrogation of ideas and issues building a deeper understanding than traditional surveys and qualitative depth interviews.

15. The evidence base being built through participatory research is far from anecdotal. For example, Reality Checks which have been supported by a number of donors (which have been carried out in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Mozambique, Mali, Malawi) have involved in-depth work with 700 people in three districts, and 300 local service providers. This provides a depth of understanding of both the issues that are important to people, and how people’s lives play out. The Participate Initiative will synthesise major participatory studies from the past five to seven years, as well as those ongoing, in relation to their implications for the post-2015 framework.

16. To conclude this section, it is important to emphasise that a global consensus is not necessarily desirable or achievable, except on very minimum standards. Instead, it is more important to identify the issues, groups and perspectives that have been invisible in the current MDGs, and why these matter for a future framework. There is a need for a new development framework that recognises the complexities of development problems and does not reduce these to simplistic and narrow goals.

17. A critical question for the new framework is its core purpose. A goal oriented approach inevitably led to development interventions being results driven. The first goals have been mainly about services and much less about social and sustainability goals. To reach the poorest or the most marginalised populations, goals and their interventions must take into account the multiple, intersecting and dynamic social and structural inequalities that keep them poor and excluded. Following on, the core question becomes about what results matter and how we measure them. Currently, service delivery interventions produce results that favour actions and outcomes that are easy to count.

18. What would a new development framework look like if its primary purpose was to alleviate the deprivation of those living in the greatest poverty and those most marginalised? It becomes a required result to ask about whom benefits, as well as how many. For example, large clean water infrastructure programmes may bring needed water to millions, but if the price of the new water source is not affordable, the poor in those areas will not benefit. When HIV prevention has focused mainly on numbers of new infections, medical technologies and individual behaviour change, prevention efforts have failed or had limited success.

“Health is driven by social and structural drivers, including gendered roles and relations, sex, poverty, ethnicity and age that create and reinforce inequities and exclusions, stigma and discrimination that determine health and access to services. For example, changes in how we deliver prevention of parent to child transmission of HIV is a strong case study of how the health sector has succeeded in lowering transmission rates. But equally importantly, it shows how efforts also continue to fail to lower rates as much as is possible. Failures reflect policies and programming that do not adequately address the complexities of being a poor girl, young woman or an older woman—who may have a partner or not, who is pregnant and who is HIV positive.” (Beryl Leach, Panos London, 2012)

19. We have learned a lot about the role of inequality and exclusion in delivering development that helps transform the lives of the poorest populations. Given the complexities of poverty and marginalisation, approaches that have remained in sectors and service delivery silos have had limited success. We gained important evidence about the importance of including populations and communities in development planning and implementation. And we have learned a lot about how to measure and evaluate complex interventions. A post-2015 framework that is equitable and sustainable will be built on this knowledge and practice. Goals will speak across to each other and indicators will explicitly address gender, inclusion and equity measures.

20. As iterated throughout this submission, a key consideration for the future framework is about how it is monitored and what systems will be put into place for accountability. This requires creating mechanisms for people living with poverty to hold governments and international institutions to account. Significantly, examples...
from citymakers (homeless population) of Chennai suggest that institutionalising community-led systems of preparing report cards on state actions on ensuring rights and entitlements can keep government engaged in community needs. Participatory monitoring is empowering in nature and also strengthens communities awareness about their rights and the responsibilities of governance institutions. Mechanisms for ensuring that these accountability mechanisms are intrinsically connected to the new global framework will help ensure that the legitimacy lacking in the MDGs will be built at the heart of the post-2015 process.

21. The message at the core of this submission is that there is an urgent need to understand from people living in poverty their experiences of the policies and practices associated with the pursuit of the MDGs, and their views on the future prospects for positive change. In doing so, we will be able to see the effects of institutions, relationships and development processes as they interact in people’s lives and build a new global framework that is both legitimate and accountable to people living in poverty.

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