

Introduction

The United Nations and International Millennium Declaration Development Goals (MDGs)

Since 1990, the United Nations has held a series of world summits and global conferences with a view to laying out a comprehensive rights based development agenda. These series of conferences culminated in the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals

Zimbabwe was among the 189 Heads of State and Governments, which agreed to the Millennium Declaration at the Millennium Summit of September 2000. The International Development Goals (IDGs), which were drawn from UN global conferences¹ and the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration were merged to produce the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) comprise of quantitative goals, time targets and numerical indicators for poverty reduction, combating HIV AND AIDS, and improvements in health, education, gender equality and women empowerment, the environment and other aspects of human welfare. The targets set are to be achieved over a 25-year period – between 1990-2015.

This first National Millennium Development Goals report for Zimbabwe aims at beginning a nationally owned process of tracking progress towards achieving these goals. It also places the long-term national development priorities within the global context of the MDGs. Through the process of preparing this key public affairs document, it is hoped that awareness will be raised, alliances will be built among all stakeholders and commitment by both policy makers and donors alike to the development of this country renewed. The purpose is to generate a strong feeling of optimism so that policy makers and their development partners are reminded of development commitments.

The Zimbabwe MDG Report is a result of a consultative process spearheaded by the Government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare,

in their capacity as the chair of the Cabinet Committee on Social Services (SSAC), and coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme / Zimbabwe office (UNDP). To assist in the preparation of the report, a National MDG Taskforce consisting of Government and Civil Society was established. In addition, seven MDG thematic groups were formed, which are Health, HIV and AIDS, Education, Gender, Social Development and Agriculture, Environment and Global Partnership. These multi-stakeholder thematic groups were responsible for the production of the report.

In support of this national process, a United Nations Country Team (UNCT) MDG taskforce was also formed to work alongside the National task force. This taskforce consisted of all UN Agencies, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The report is, therefore, a result of collaborative efforts of Government, Civil Society and all UN agencies resident in Zimbabwe.

At country level, realigning development planning and programmes to the achievement of the MDGs provides a coherent operational framework. It is in light of this that this report goes a step further than most of the first generation MDG reports by giving an indication of resource and economic growth requirements for achieving the MDGs. The report also indicates a strategy for financing the goals, which include: national budget restructuring, strategy for economic growth development, productive asset redistribution, and enhanced global partnership.

It is hoped that the development challenges highlighted in this report will constitute the new development vision and planning framework for Zimbabwe. The participatory process undertaken in preparing this first Zimbabwe MDG report indicates a strong need for the various stakeholders to collaborate in both the implementation and monitoring of the MDGs.

¹ The major UN Conferences since the nineties include: World Summit for Children (1990), The Rio Summit (1992), The International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, September 1994); The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), The Beijing Conference (1995), World Food Summit (1996), HABITAT II (1996), Earth Summit (1997), Population Conference (1999), Beijing + 5 (2000), Millennium Summit (2000), Financing For Development (2002), Special Session on Children (2002), Food Summit (2002), WSSD (2002).





The report starts by presenting the development context of Zimbabwe, followed by eight sections that cover each of the 8 MDG goals. Under each goal, the status and trends, the challenges, identified supportive environment, national development priorities, development assistance needs, monitoring and evaluation, and a brief assessment of the

resource requirements for attaining the 2015 targets are presented. The report ends with a chapter on financing the goals, a proposal for an institutionalised MDG and poverty monitoring mechanism at both the policy and technical levels, and a detailed set of indicators.

“ We confront a world divided between rich and poor as never before in human history. Around one sixth of humanity has achieved levels of well-being that were impossible to contemplate even a few decades back. At the same time, another one sixth of humanity struggles for daily survival, in a life-and-death battle against disease, hunger and environmental catastrophe. In between, are around four billion people in developing countries, who no longer live right on the cliff-edge of disaster, but who remain very far away from the security, capabilities and material well-being enjoyed by the peoples of the developed world. ”

(United Nations Secretary General's Report: MDG 31 July 2002.)
