

The Millennium Development Goals -
Challenges for German Development Policy

Summary of the BMZ Policy Paper

MDG Task Force, Head: Dr. K. van de Sand

Purpose of the summary of the paper:

The summary shows what the consequences of the Millennium Declaration (MD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are for German development policy. The paper underlines core elements of Germany's approach to development policy and lists possible fields of activity, each of which must be discussed further and specified in detail.

The purpose of the summary of the paper is to inform interested persons outside the BMZ and the BMZ's partners worldwide about BMZ policy in this respect.

The significance of the MDGs for German development policy

The German government sees its development policy as part of the joint global task of realising the goals of the MD, a task which public and private actors within the global community are called upon to carry out. The programmatic framework for these endeavours is given by the MD, the MDGs, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Poverty reduction, peacebuilding and justice in globalisation are the main goals of German development policy, which understands itself as a global structural policy. The aim of improving general international conditions and national structures in both partner countries and in Germany is linked with the goal of sustainable development, which comprises four dimensions: economic efficiency, social justice, ecological sustainability and political stability.

The German government has described Germany's contribution to and points of intervention in implementing the MD and the MDGs in its Programme of Action 2015 (AP 2015). The AP 2015 confirms that poverty alleviation is an overarching task of German development policy.

Poverty is not just about low incomes, it is also a question of having fewer opportunities and fewer chances to participate in political and economic life, of being particularly vulnerable to risks, of experiencing violations of human dignity and human rights, and of lacking access to resources.

Poverty alleviation can only be sustainable if investments in economic and social infrastructure are linked with institution building. This approach is based on the interdependence of empowerment, security and pro-poor growth. In the international discussion of strategies, Germany will be placing particular emphasis on ensuring that development achievements are lasting, by promoting peace, security, good governance and the rule of law as prerequisites for achieving the first MDG (halving the proportion of the population whose income is less than one dollar a day).

From the MD and the MDGs three guiding principles for German development policy are derived. They are defined as follows:

1. Coherence

The coherence requirement is part of the coalition agreement of 16 October 2002. It envisages the need to provide for a peaceful and just world and sustainable development as key tasks for the German government's policies. This means that sustainable development and global poverty alleviation are to be understood as cross-cutting political tasks. By involving all fields of policy and as many social forces as possible, poverty alleviation becomes a task for the whole of society.

2. Partnership, shared responsibility

The MDGs require closer strategic and co-ordinated co-operation between all relevant actors than ever before – both at the political level and in the context of implementation. It is particularly the multilateral institutions and the EU that have an important role to play in supporting partner countries' efforts to co-ordinate the implementation of bilateral and multilateral measures in the field. Germany must urge them to play this role both in decision-making processes in the field and in multilateral supervisory bodies, and support all efforts to achieve this aim.

The partnership principle implies that each partner should optimise his contributions at sector and at country level for the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1-7. Which is why the BMZ's priorities and country-specific priority areas of co-operation must be decisively aligned with national priorities, Germany's comparative advantages and the complementary contributions of other donors.

Germany is supporting the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSPs) elaborated by its co-operation countries and comparable national development strategies as the main instruments for implementing the MDGs. In doing so Germany is making a commitment to a comprehensive development approach which calls for the participation of partners from industrialised countries, international organisations, the private sector and civil society, under the leadership of national governments. Germany supports the alignment of the PRSPs with the MDGs as indicators for successful development. This fact is reflected in the BMZ's country papers and priority area strategy papers.

Furthermore, Germany is called upon to continue its contributions for the implementation of the 8th MDG and is therefore continuing to participate in initiatives concerned with trade policy, debt cancellation and the further development of the international financial architecture.

3. Results orientation

The conceptual approaches, measures and instruments of German bilateral development co-operation need to be analysed and further developed in terms of their relevance for the MDGs. This includes aligning the monitoring systems with the MDGs. In order to be able to list German contributions towards the MDGs and present them convincingly, it is absolutely vital that the relationship to the MDGs be made clear in strategies, monitoring procedures and appraisal reports. The GTZ and KfW have systems which measure the results and impacts of individual projects and programmes

and apply the findings to planning processes. These systems need to be assessed and developed further. The challenge is to show in a plausible fashion that, and in what way, German development co-operation is working hand in hand with the co-operation countries' own efforts and the contributions of other donors in order to do justice to the MDGs as the measuring stick for all players. This includes institution building in the partner countries to enable them to align their policies and administration with the target of achieving sustainable impact with regard to the MDGs.

Important multilateral and bilateral donors (the World Bank, Asian and African Development Banks, USA, Canada, United Kingdom and others) are in the process of adjusting their development co-operation so as to have impact-oriented management. Germany will be intensifying its efforts to reform instruments and procedures and its participation in this process in the relevant DAC working groups.

The BMZ has taken a step in this direction with the introduction of a comprehensive goal system that sets quality-based goals for every level of its work, the ministry as a whole, its directorates and divisions, and for individual members of staff.

The task is to mobilise stronger support for the concerns of development policy among politicians and the general public by providing evidence of progress made in achieving the MDGs and by showing the role of our contributions in achieving this progress.

Future procedure

The guiding principles for the continuing alignment of German development policy with the MDGs will have internal consequences for programme formation, steering, monitoring, impact assessments, determining priorities and the allocation of funds, as well as for co-operation between ministries (development, environment, foreign, foreign trade, security, financial, social and agricultural policy).

German development policy will also bring German experience and ideas into the development of strategies and instruments for achieving the MDGs at the international level.