

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Sipho Jonathan NKAMBULE¹

Abstract: *At the United Nations Millennium Summit, 191 member states gathered to set eight millennium development goals for the world's poor countries. The eight goals were used as a yardstick to measure development progress. However, many developing countries, particularly the African countries have insufficient resources to provide the necessary infrastructure and services to achieve these Millennium Development Goals². The paper aims to critically assess the Millennium Development Project by analysing the key documents. It is critically important to devote attention to the potential impacts of development on vulnerable segments of the human population. The field of research is Development Studies (Sociology). The paper concludes that the Millennium Development Goals are unlikely to bring positive development in poor countries particularly in Africa. Therefore the whole project needs to be reviewed.*

Keywords: *development; social; economic; poverty eradication; poor.*

1. Introduction

Millions of people around the globe live in absolute poverty. Whether there is political will to solve it is another matter. Some of the people have been neglected to an extent that nobody is giving them a chance to improve their lives. In view of this the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) was designed to eradicate poverty in poor states. However there is overwhelming evidence that developing countries including

¹ Teaching Assistant at the Sociology Department at Rhodes University. Sociology Department, Prince Alfred Street, Grahamstown, South Africa. Email: g03n1765@campus.ru.ac.za.

² Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

South Africa are not on track in achieving the Millennium Developing Goals (MDGs) of halving poverty by 2015. Although good in paper but they are not good in practice. However the issue of lack of resource have been the main obstacle for poor nations to achieve these MDG's. I argue that the MDG's are complementary to the Structural Adjustment policies which were introduced in the 1980's and "these policies and the IMF's role in implementing them have been criticized by developing country governments and development organizations as having worsened the situation of poor and lower-income people, as well as contributing to the degradation of the natural environment" (Naiman and Watkins, 1999, p. 2). An attempt will be made below to show why I believe that the MDG's are complementary to the Structural Adjustment Policies. In the answering the question the paper will also briefly explain what the Millennium Development Goals are and Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP's)¹ as they will be the basis of this paper. The paper will only focus on the African continent in general, specifically use Zambia case study to show if these goals are achievable or not. These are the main topics that will be covered are: Structural adjustments, Millennium development goals, Zambia case study, are developing countries failing to meet the MDG targets, the real agenda behind MDG's and conclusion. The present paper relies primarily upon data from international bodies, academics etc. In-depth document analysis was used to reach the goal of my investigation.

2. Structural Adjustment Program

A structural adjustment program (SAP's) is a plan employed by the Bretton Woods Institutions: the International Monetary fund (IMF)² and the World Bank (WB)³ in poor countries to try to get their economies to be more productive. The main aim of the structural adjustment program is to assist the borrowing countries to pay off their debts and have a "growing economy that will sustain them into the future". Structural adjustment programs were also designed by the IMF World Bank as a condition for further loans. Today the IMF and the World Bank dictate terms on economic policies in numerous countries. The failure of poor nations to repay their debt has forced them to rely heavily on new loans. The IMF has the power to verify whether countries are credit worthy or not. In order for a country to receive loan it needs to accept the stipulated conditions of the structural adjustment (Jauch, 1999, p.1-2).

SAP's have 4 aims according to which they are designed. The first aim is liberalisation which promotes the free movement of capital and opening of national markets to international competition. The second objective is privatisation of public

¹ Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP's)

² International Monetary fund (IMF)

³ World Bank (WB)

services and companies. The third objective is the de-regulation of labour relations and cutting social safety nets. The fourth and the last aim is to Improve competitiveness (Toissant and Comanne, 1995, p.14)

Based on these aims, SAPs recommend nearly always the same measures as a condition for new loans. These measures differ from country to country. The essay will focus on six of these measures. The first measure is the reduction of government deficit through cuts in public spending (cost recovery programmes). The second measure is higher interest rates. The other condition is liberalisation of foreign exchange rules and trade (deregulation). The fourth condition is rationalisation and privatisation of public and parastatal companies. The fifth condition is the deregulation of the economy. For example liberalisation of foreign investment regulations, deregulation of the labour market, e.g. wage 'flexibility', abolishing price controls and food subsidies etc. The last one is the shift from import substitution to export production (Isaacs, 1997, p. 135). Contrary to the SAP's which were designed by the Bretton Woods Institutions, the MDG's were formulated by the United Nations. The next section will focus on the MDG's.

3. Millennium Development Goals

In the beginning of the new millennium, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, 191 member states gathered to set eight millennium development goals for the world's poor countries. These member states committed themselves to achieve these goals by 2015. The eight goals were used as a yardstick to measure development progress (Todaro, 2000, p. 23). The achievement of each goal is based on measurable indicators. However the accomplishment of these targets is assumed without question that it is perfectly compatible with liberalism (Amin, 2006, p. 2).

Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Under this goal it was agreed that the number of people whose income is less than one dollar a day should be reduced into half between 1990 and 2015. It was also agreed that the number of people suffer from hunger should be reduced to half between 1990 to 2015 (Todaro, 2003, p. 24; James, 2006, 445; UN MDG Report, 2010, p. 6). However policies that causes poverty are never analysed, for example reduce in social expenditure. For Amin (2006) "without this how can there be policies to effectually eliminate poverty proposed". The policies of poverty reduction through economic growth promoted by the World Bank are driven by neoliberal reforms. In a report that was released by the IMF and World Bank, the World Bank clearly states that achievement of the Millennium Development Goals would mean "accelerating reforms to achieve stronger economic" (Tujan, 2004, p. 3; Gold, 2005, 23-24). It can be then

argued that if development is measured in terms of economic growth then that is not actually development. This is because development should be holistic it must combine four things economic, environmental, political and social factors. According to such a report it means that Africa in general needs to double its economic growth rate. The same report further states that the sub Saharan countries are “seriously off track, with just eight countries representing about 15 percent of the regional population likely to achieve the goal” (Tujan, 2004, p. 3). Although they realise that poorer countries cannot achieve these goals but they still impose such initiative.

Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education

Girls and boys alike from around the globe will be able to finish a complete primary schooling by 2015 (Todaro, 2000, p. 24; Gold, 2005, p. 31). Though enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa remains the lowest of all regions, it still increased by 18 percentage points—from 58 per cent to 76 per cent—between 1999 and 2008. Progress was also made in Southern Asia and Northern Africa, where enrolment increased by 11 and 8 percentage points, respectively, over the last decade (UNDP, 2010, p. 6). A majority of people are very poor they cannot afford to pay school. This is because countries are forced to reduce their public expenditure and privatise education. Therefore this needs to be investigated both in “theory and in fact” (Amin, 2006, p. 3). This goal was set using the global trends observed in the 1970’s and 1980’s. Universal primary education implies that each and every country must achieve “education for all” at the primary level by 2015. Most of this progress is expected to come from with low enrolment. It is unrealistic to expect such countries to achieve this target based on past experience observed in middle class countries and countries not affected by internal conflicts. Based on these facts it can be argued that this target is unrealistic (Vandemoortele, 2009, p. 362).

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

This goal is aimed to ensure gender equality in primary and secondary education by 2005 and all levels of education by 2015 (Todaro, 2003, p. 24; Khoo, 2005, p. 47; UN MDG Report, 2010, p. 20). In secondary education, the gender gap in enrolment is most evident in the three regions where overall enrolment is lowest which is sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia and Southern Asia. In comparison, more girls than boys have signed up for secondary school in Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia (UNDP, 2010, 1). Amin (2006) asserts that real discussion is required in the area of gender equality considering the “powerful role of religious fundamentalism is playing globally”. He believes that “without discussion, declarations on this question are only empty talk”.

Goal 4. Reduce child mortality

Reduce child mortality rate by two thirds to all children under five years, between 1990 and 2015 (Todaro, 2000, p. 24; Khoo, 2005, p. 47). According the MDG 2010 report the highest rates of child mortality continue to be found in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2008, one in seven children there died before their fifth birthday; the highest levels were in Western and Central Africa, where one in six children died before age five (169 deaths per 1,000 live births) (UNDP, 2010, 1).

Goal 5. Improve maternal health

The aim of this goal is to reduce by three quarters the number of women dying in childbirth by 2015 (Todaro, 2000, p. 24; Khoo, 2005, p. 47). The number of women in poor nations who received professional assistance during delivery raised from 53 percent in 1990 to 63 per cent in 2008. Improvement was made in all regions, but was especially dramatic in Northern Africa and South-Eastern Asia, with increases of 74 per cent and 63 per cent, respectively. Southern Asia also progressed, although coverage there, as well as in sub-Saharan Africa, remains insufficient (UNDP, 2010, p. 1).

Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

The aim of this goal is to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases (Todaro, 2000, p. 24; Khoo, 2005, p. 47). The epidemic appears to have calm down in most regions, while incidence continues to increase in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and other parts of Asia due to a high rate of new HIV infections. Sub-Saharan Africa remains the most heavily affected region, accounting for 72 per cent of all new HIV infections in 2008 (UNDP, 2012, p. 1). For Amin (2006) this is because "the means implemented in these areas are assumed to be completely compatible with extreme privatization and total respect for the "intellectual property rights" of the transnational corporations and, curiously enough, are recommended in Goal 8 concerning the supposed partnership between North and South".

Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability

To include the principles into the countries polices and programs and reduce the loss of environmental resources. The other aim of the goal was to half the number of people without access to safe drinking water, by 2015. It was also aimed to improve the lives of the people living in shacks by 2020 (Todaro, 2000, p. 24; Khoo, 2005, p. 47; UN MDG Report, 2010, p. 52). It is interesting that the largest polluters in the

world the United States refuses to sign the Kyoto Protocol and no one mention its refusal to promote environmental conservation. Moreover there is no mention of Multinational Corporation contributing in environmental degradation and the power of states to control is greatly restricted (Amin, 2006, p. 3; Khoo, 2005, p. 47).

Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development

This goal commits rich countries to work with poor countries to create an environment for rapid sustainable and broad based development. Each have a different task in accelerating progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (Todaro, 2000, p. 24; Khoo, 2005, p. 47; UN MDG Report, 2010, p. 66). However the very same goal is loaded with post – Washington consensus prescriptions that promote the neoliberal framework driven by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Both International Financial Institutions requires an “open, non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system. In short this means the imposition of free market rules on developing countries (Tujan,2004, p. 3; Morton and Weston, p. 88-89). The program for the heavily indebted countries generally imposes colonial rule to them. The governments of these countries are ripped their sovereign power to run their institutions (Amin, 2006, p. 4). The unsustainable debt problem has led to calls for debt relief from across the political arena. As the Economist has noted: "It has long been obvious that several countries, especially in Africa, cannot repay their debts. Their (occasional) efforts to do so impoverish already destitute people, and blight their hopes of economic take-off " (Naiman and Watkins, 1999, p. 5). Although the UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon has reported that there are “encouraging results regarding decline of extreme poverty, a better access to water, progress in combating tuberculosis and malaria, as well as a better gender parity in primary school enrolment. For example, only 61 per cent of people in sub-Saharan Africa have access to improved sources of water, while the level in most other regions is 90 per cent or higher,” but “many people who have escaped extreme poverty are still vulnerable to shocks, such as the impending food crisis in West Africa’s Sahel region. Hunger remains a global challenge with hundreds of millions of children undernourished” (UN News, 2012, p. 1). Another problem with these goals is that they have no clear guidelines to achieve these goals. The time frame of the MDG’s is also too short as most of these poor nations have been looted, disadvantaged for many years. Therefore twenty five years to achieve these goals is unfair for these developing countries. Using Zambian case study the next section of the paper will show whether Zambia will meet the MDG’s by 2015.

4. Zambian Case Study: Millennium Development Goals

Zambia is a landlocked country found in the southern Africa with a population of approximately 12 million. Zambia is one of the poorest countries in Africa. The overall

poverty rate declined from 70 percent in 1996 to 64 percent in 2006. Regardless of the progress, 50 percent of the population is still considered to be living in absolute poverty, with 14 percent classified as moderately poor (Gaynor, 2005, p. 1). The IMF rates Zambia as more likely to fall into economic crisis because of several interconnected factors: a sharp decline in price of primary export commodity, copper; devaluation of Zambia's currency, the Kwacha; a reduction in foreign direct investment; continued high food inflation and decline in tourism (FAO, 2009, p. 3)

Considering the majority of the people living in absolute poverty in Zambia the MDG's would be the right tools to eradicate poverty. However based on the current trends it is unlikely that the MDG's would be achieved by 2015. Zambia actually needs a constant 7 percent economic growth if it is to accomplish the MDG's by 2015. However as a result of global economic crisis economic growth rate has declined from 6 percent to 4 percent for 2009. The main reason that makes Zambia vulnerable to economic crisis is because it relies heavily on mining, specifically copper. The anticipated economic decline combined with political instability and the decline in international copper prices, caused the Kwacha to lose one-third of its value against the US dollar between March 2008 and March 2009. Food inflation increased from 10.1 percent in April 2008 to 15.9 percent in April 2009. This price inflation caused increase in the price of the maize which is the source of calories of the poor population (FAO, 2009, p. 3). Although "extreme poverty declined from 58% in 1991 to 51% in 2006 (LCMS), improving towards the target of 29%". However, abject poverty is still prevalent in rural areas at 67% compared to 20% in urban areas (LCMS). "On the target to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, the prevalence of underweight children declined from 22% in 1991 to 14.6% in 2007 (MDGR), while the target is 11%" Although, economic growth is vital but not enough for the achievement of this goal (UN, 2010, p. 1). While development is important in reducing poverty, development is meaningless if it does not improve the income and well-being for all. Economic growth that fails to increase the standards of living for all cannot be described as development (Hall and Midgley, 2004: 45).

It is at this point that "social policy interfaces with development". The best strategy of increasing the standards of living and eradicating poverty is found in an approach that combines economic development with introduction of social policies that explicitly and honestly tackle the poverty problem (Hall and Midgley, 2004: 45). This is because social policy is the integral part of social development and it is the tool that works in collaboration with economic policy "to ensure equitable and socially sustainable development" (Mkandawire, 2001: 1). Based on the above trends Zambia is unlikely to accomplish the MDG's targets. To achieve the first goal of reducing extreme poverty, Zambia needs to reduce poverty from 58.2 percent in 1991 to 29.1 per cent in 2015. Since the introduction of the MDG's the number of underweight under five infants has increased to 28 percent and there no realistic

hope that the targeted level of 13 percent will be reached by 2015. The primary enrolment ratio declined by 4% between 1990 and 2003 to stand at 76 percent. There is still a gap between female and male literacy, female literacy rates are still lower than those of male. To accomplish the maternal health goal, the maternal mortality ratio of 729 per 100 000 live births in 2002 will have to decrease to 182 by 2015. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS has been accelerating since 1996 and it remains unknown if the incidence of 16 percent will be stopped by 2015 (Gaynor, 2005, p. 2). "As customary law allows for early marriage, young girls are often confronted with teenage pregnancy, HIV and domestic abuse hindering progress towards this MDG" (UN, 2010, p. 1).

Malaria is the common cause of deaths among pregnant women and children under five and the prevalence rate of the diseases was 377 per 1000 in 2000. Stopping and decreasing its spread is a serious challenge. Environmental sustainability is a major challenge in Zambia with 85 percent of the population fire wood or rather solid fuels as an energy source. Drastic and urgent measures are needed to conserve natural resources in order to achieve the environment target for 2015 (Gaynor, 2005, p. 2). From the Zambia case study it can be noted that there are many hurdles that will prevent Zambia to accomplish the MDG targets some of these challenges are lack of resources, political instability, economic crisis etc. Unfortunately it is the IMF, World Bank and bilateral donors which have control over Zambia's development and "accompanying progress towards meeting the MDGs over the coming years" (Gaynor, 2005, p. 8). However this does not only apply to Zambia but to all poor nations. This confirms what was noted by Tujan (2004) that "many developing countries have insufficient resources to provide the necessary infrastructure and services to achieve these Millennium Development Goals". Although Zambia has shown some improvements in some sectors but it is unlikely to meet the 2015 MDG's targets. This is because Zambia's progress is measured in relative terms not in absolute terms. The next section of the paper will examine whether the developing countries especially Africa is failing to meet the MDG's.

5. Are Developing Countries Failing To Meet The Targets? ■■■■

On the other hand one would argue that developing nations specifically Africa is seen as not achieving the MDG's because progress is measured in comparative terms, this disfavour the poorer nations. This is because by expressing the targets "in terms of halving the proportion of those in income poverty by 2015 and halving or reducing by an even larger proportion those failing to achieve other goals, the poorest and the most deprived countries face the biggest challenge" (Jolly, 2003, p. 4). It also shows that there was no proper consultation with these poor countries in order to formulate MDG's suitable for each poor country. The MDG's is like buying someone clothes you do not know, the danger might be that you buy wrong size, and the taste of your

clothes is different from his. This example shows that consultation is important in order for development to be a success.

It is a pity that even though progress can be made by developing countries but it is reported as failure by international organizations. This is because their performance does not meet the global benchmark that is mostly expressed in comparative form. For example Africa has achieved remarkable progress since 1990 in areas such as primary education, especially for girls. Africa has also achieved some progress in measles vaccination and malaria prevention. About 2 million HIV patients are receiving anti-retroviral therapy (Vandermoortele, 2009, p. 362). The reality is that Africa need not to meet the global targets to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The report that "Africa will miss all the MDG's" actually "paints an unfairly bleak portrait of Africa" (Easterly, 2007, p. 56). These targets were not set using past experiences in Africa. Furthermore as comparative benchmarks they are quite impossible for most African countries (Vandermoortele, 2009, p. 363). It can be argued that Africa in general is achieving the MDG's in an African context. In any case development must not be imposed but be for the people by the people to whom is aimed at.

The MDG targets and indicators are themselves problematic. They are viewed as an international consent on global development goals; yet they overlook issues at the heart of development, such as conflict, human security, and reproductive and sexual rights. They are criticised as unreliable measures of progress due to unreliable methodologies and definitions. The measurement of poverty under Goal 1 exemplifies these problems. Monitoring of the MDGs has serious problems in data, national participation and ownership, together with other reporting processes, and capacity. There are unsatisfactory analyses of progress, "no mechanisms to explore factors which fall beyond the scope of the MDGs, and no guidelines to monitor the extent and quality of civil society participation" (Painter, 2004: 6). All these problems clearly shows that these MDG's are not really meant to eradicate extreme poverty. The next section will attempt to show what the "real goals" behind the MDG's are.

6. The Real Agenda Behind The MDGs

Although the MDG's was designed by the United Nations for poor nations but these poor nations need to lend money from the rich countries through the IMF. To get money from the IMF the countries need to accept the neoliberal policies. Amin (2006) argues that the "real goals" behind the MDG's can be outlined into five points. I tend to agree with Amin (2006) on his argument on "real goals". When critically analysing MDG's they are a continuation of the neoliberal projects specifically the Structural Adjustment Policies, but looking MDG's and SAP's at face value one might conclude that they are contradictory. An attempt will be made below to show how using Amin's

“real goals”. The five Amin real goals are as follows however I will only focus on three of these “real goals”. The first real goal is extreme privatization, aimed at opening new field for expansion of capital. The second real goal is the generalization of the private appropriation of agricultural land. The third Amin’s real goal is commercial “opening” within a context of maximum deregulation. The fourth Amin’s real goal is the equally uncontrolled opening up of capital. The last Amin’s real goal is the states are forbidden in principle from interfering in economic affairs.

6.1. Extreme privatization, aimed at opening new fields for expansion of capital

Privatization is aimed on reducing public spending especially in education and health. The view of the MDG’s to achieve universal education and improving health services lose credibility. I concur with Amin (2006) when he argues that “privatization of property and access to important natural resources, in particular petroleum and water, facilitates the pillage of these resources for the wastefulness of the triad (Japan, US...?) reducing the discourse of sustainable development to pure, empty rhetoric”. Goal 8 which aims to “Develop a global partnership for development” specifically the target “dealing with comprehensively with developing countries debt problems” is a strategy to ensure that the developed countries control the natural resources of the developing countries. Since they are providing solutions for their debts they come with strings attached to them. For example “good governance”. We have seen this in the past whereby SAP’s have been used to ensure debt repayment and economic restructuring. The poor countries have been forced to cut their expenditure in things like education and health. Actually the IMF and World Bank have compelled these poor countries to “lower their standard of living of their people” (Shah, 2010, p. 1). For example for Zambia in order to receive debt relief from IMF and other international creditors they are obliged to implement privatisation programmes and cuts in public spending (Gaynor, 2005, p. 6).

6.2. Commercial “opening” within a context of maximum deregulation.

This is a strategy of opening a space for trade without any obstacles. This kind of trade is unequal because it only gives power to the transnationals that control the trade in raw materials and agricultural products. For example coffee shows the “disastrous social effects of this systematic choice”. Two decades ago coffee producers were paid 9 billion dollars and consumers paid out 20 billion for this same coffee. Currently these two figures are six and thirty billion respectively. It is obvious that such conditions are in favour of what is called fair trade (Amin, 2006, p. 6-7). This is found in the last MDG goal 8, under the target “develop further an open trading and financial system...”. The rich countries through IMF, World Bank etc

recommend that the poor countries should open up to allow more imports in and export more of their commodities. This contributes to poverty and dependency to developing countries (Shah, 2010, p. 3). The strategy of “opening up” advantage the developed countries to be more affluent by “selling capital intensive ‘thus cheap’ products for a high price and buying labor intensive (thus expensive) products for a low price”(Smith, 1994, p. 127). One of the prescriptions of structural adjustment is that poor countries must increase their exports. Exporting commodities and resources is viewed as commendable to assist earn exchange with which to pay off debts and keep stable (Shah, 2010, p. 4). From above it can be concluded that MDG’s and Structural Adjustment Policies are complementary and both their aim is not to bring development but to colonise thereby plundering resources of the poor and making them even more dependant. It is a new form of colonization.

6.3. States are forbidden in principle from interfering in economic affairs

States have been made watchdogs. Globally, the state is reduced to guarantee debt service, as the first and foremost in public spending. Under globalisation the state can only provide those social and public services deemed essential by international capital and at lowest possible overhead cost. The MDG’s produce “apartheid on a world scale, reproducing and deepening global polarization” (Amin, 2006, p. 7). It is worth noting that the state’s capacities for governance have changed over the years and in many respects have weakened considerable, the state especially the developing countries have been turned to shopkeepers to generate profit for affluent countries through International Financial Institutions. Attached to both Structural Adjustment Programs and MDG’s is the process of liberalization, privatization, deregulation, neo-liberalism therefore the two are complementary they serve the same purpose to advantage ‘certain entities’. Embedded in both MDG’s and SAP’s is not actually development but to exploit the poor nations by making them markets. Therefore achieving the MDG’s is not actually the primary aim. The World Bank and the IMF have repeatedly come under sharp criticism over the failure of their SAP’s that is why MDG’s have been now designed to support an old idea.

Many scholars approve that the Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved by the target year of 2015. Regardless of “possibly falling short, the Goals have done something positive in giving the world benchmarks to measure progress. Even though the goals may be unrealistic, they still gave many something to strive for” (Poverty News, 2010, p. 1). Some of the success stories about MDG’s are that “sub-Saharan Africa chalked up the best record for improvement in primary school enrolment, but the world is far from achieving universal primary education, MDG 2. Burundi, Madagascar, Rwanda, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Togo and Tanzania are among the countries that have achieved, or are nearing the goal of universal

primary education. The abolition of school fees has contributed to progress in many of these countries” (Poverty News, 2011, p. 1).

7. Conclusion

From the Zambia case study above it can be noted that there are many hurdles that will prevent not only Zambia, but also developing countries particularly Africa to accomplish the MDG targets some of these challenges are lack of resources, political instability, economic crisis etc. Unfortunately it is the IMF, World Bank and bilateral donors which have control over poor countries and “accompanying progress towards meeting the MDGs over the coming years” (Gaynor, 2005, p. 8). Furthermore, many developing countries have insufficient resources to provide the necessary infrastructure and services to achieve these Millennium Development Goals. Although some poor countries including Zambia has shown some improvements in some sectors but it is unlikely to meet the 2015 MDG’s targets, this is supported by the data from the UNDP, UN News, FAO, academics etc. There is also some difficulty or lack of measurements for some of the goals. They are criticised as unreliable measures of progress due to unreliable methodologies and definitions. The measurement of poverty under Goal 1 exemplifies these problems. Monitoring of the MDGs has serious problems in data, national participation and ownership, together with other reporting processes, and capacity. There are unsatisfactory analyses of progress, “no mechanisms to explore factors which fall beyond the scope of the MDGs, and no guidelines to monitor the extent and quality of civil society participation” (Painter, 2004: 6). Another problem with these goals is that they have no clear guidelines to achieve these goals. The time frame of the MDG’s is also too short as most of these poor nations have been looted, disadvantaged for many years. Therefore twenty five years to achieve these goals is unfair for these developing countries.

When critically analysing MDG’s they are a continuation of the neoliberal projects specifically the Structural Adjustment Policies, but looking MDG’s and SAP’s at face value one might conclude that they are contradictory. Embedded in both MDG’s and SAP’s is not actually development but to exploit the poor nations by making them markets. Both the MDG and the SAP projects are loaded with post – Washington consensus prescriptions that promote the neoliberal framework driven by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Therefore achieving the MDG’s is not actually the primary aim. The World Bank and the IMF have repeatedly come under sharp criticism over the failure of their SAP’s that is why MDG’s have been now designed to support an old idea. If the MDG’s would have an African benchmark then the goals could be realistic but because they are in global benchmark they are unrealistic for Africa. The main driver of the MDG’s is goal 8 obviously all these poor countries they would need funds so if no funds they will not be achieved. All

countries want to eradicate poverty so they will fall in the debt trap which is the “best strategy” to exploit the powerless which is the poor nations. The first seven goals are harmless they have no cruel ulterior motive but the eighth goal shows very well the SAP’s continuation. The first seven MDG’s are designed in a manner that they look appealing to poor nations so that they can fall into “trap 8” which is goal 8.

References

- Amin, S. (2006). The Millennium Development Goals: A critique from the South. *Monthly Review*. Vol: 57, Number 10.
- Easterly, W. (2007). How the Millennium Development Goals are Unfair for Africa. Development Research Group Working Paper 14, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- FAO (2009). The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2009: Economic crises – impacts and lessons learned (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0876e/i0876e00.htm>). Accessed on the 26/07/2010.
- Gaynor, C. (2005). Structural Injustice and the MDG’s: A critical analysis of Zambian experience.
- Gold, L. (2005). Are the Millennium Development Goals addressing the underlying causes of injustice? Understanding the risks of the MDGs. *Trócaire Development Review*, Dublin, 2005, pp. 23-41
- Hall, A and Midgley, J. (2004). *Social Policy for Development*. London: Sage.
- Isaacs, S. 1997. *South Africa in the Global Economy*. Durban: TURP
- Jauch, H. (1999). *The Structural Adjustment Programmes: Their Origin and International Experiences*. Labour Resource and Research institute, Nambia.
- Jolly, R. (2003). ‘Global Goals: The UN Experience’. Background Paper for the Human Development Report 2003. New York: UNDP (http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/H_DR2003/papers/HDR2003_Jolly.pdf). Accessed on the 26/07/2010.
- Khoo, S. (2005). The Millennium Development Goals: A Critical Discussion. *Trócaire Development Review*, Dublin, 2005, pp. 43-56.
- Mkandawire, T. (2004). *Social policy in Development Context*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan
- Morton and Weston (2005). Trading for Development: Developed Countries’ Responsibilities under MDG 8. *Trócaire Development Review*, Dublin, 2005, pp. 85-102.
- Naiman, R., Watkins, N. (1999). *Survey of the Impacts of IMF Structural Adjustment in Africa: Growth, Social Spending, and Debt Relief*. Centre for Economic and Policy Research. Washington DC.

- Shah, A. (2010). Structural Adjustment- a major cause of poverty. Global Issues. (www.globalissues.org/article/3/structural-adjustment-a-major-cause-of-poverty). Accessed on the 26/07/2010.
- Todaro, M.P. (2000). Economic Development. Addison-Wesley.
- Toussaint, E., Comanne, D. (1995). Globalization and Debt. In: Notebooks for Study and Research 24/25, 1995.
- Tujan, A. (2004). The Millennium Development Goals: Reducing poverty or deodorizing neoliberal globalization. www.rorg.no/Artikler/717.html. Accessed 28/07/2010.
- Painter, G.R. (2004). Gender, the Millennium Development Goals, and Human Rights in the context of the 2005. Report for the Gender development network.
- Poverty News, 2010. Two successes of the MDGs. (<http://povertynewsblog.blogspot.com/2010/09/two-successes-of-mdgs.html>). Accessed on 25 March 2012.
- Poverty News, 2011. Latest MDG report shows uneven improvement. (<http://povertynewsblog.blogspot.com/2011/07/latest-mdg-report-shows-uneven.html>). Accessed on 25 March 2012.
- Smith, J.W. (1994). The World's Wasted Wealth 2. Institute for Economic Democracy.
- UNDP (2010). Millennium Development Goals. (<http://www.endpoverty2015.org>). MDG report for 2010. Accessed on the 28/07/2010.
- UN (2010). Millennium Development Goals Report.
- UN News (2012) Concerted global efforts have led to great strides against extreme poverty.
- Vandemoorte, J. (2009). The MDG conundrum: Meeting the targets without missing the point. Development Policy Review, 27 (4): 355-371.