

**Global Health and Global Governance:
Prioritizing Health within the Framework of the Millennium
Development Goals ***

I. Global Health as a Multisectoral Issue

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) represent a new consensus on development that is fundamentally different from the Washington Consensus. Whereas the Washington Consensus implied that sound economic policies are the sine qua non for development to occur, the Monterrey Consensus on the MDGs embodies a new notion that poverty reduction is multidimensional and that progress depends not on a single sector approach prioritizing economics but on simultaneous actions across sectors.

Health is a good example. Three of the eight MDGs are health goals: reducing under-5 mortality, reducing maternal mortality and reversing the spread of communicable diseases, specifically HIV/AIDS, 0.000TJ16.495 0 TDbut oniTJy M

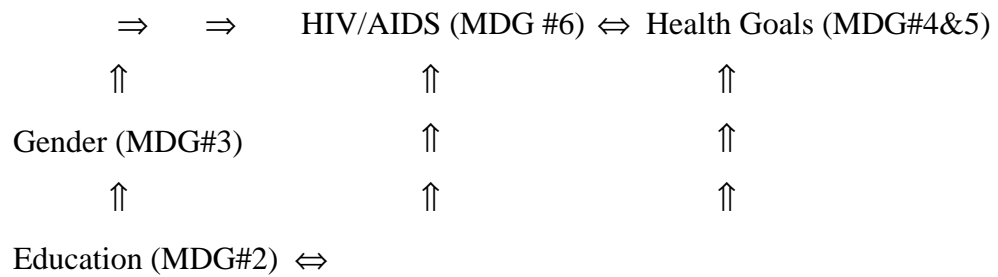
is polluted, if poverty reduction is not a priority and if scaled-up international cooperation is not forthcoming.

Furthermore, the MDGs have their roots in the series of UN summit conferences in the early to mid 1990s in which all nations participated, in which public officials, private sector leaders and civil society advocates were

sanitation in compatible, mutually reinforcing ways. To achieve this balance, strengthening public health systems needs to be at the center of the action as crucial for sustainability. For this centrality to become operative, investment in human resources in healthcare and in education-for-all becomes critical. Gender equality in education and in access to health, credit and jobs is vital to achieving major improvements in global he

Global Action Plan for Global Health

Overall Goal: Reduce the Death Rate (MDGs # 4, 5 & 6)



III. Global Governance, Global Action and the G-20

The human development agenda embodied in the MDGs is a political agenda. It is a political agenda because it represents a change in direction, shifts in priorities and an ambitious effort to mobilize resources and policies for accelerated transformative change. It represents a rebalancing of the tensions between financial stability and social sustainability toward a prioritization of interconnected investments in health, education and the environment. These shifts have implications for all actors. International institutions do not have the authority to shift direction, reshape priorities or raise resources; rather they reflect those changes expressed to them by national public officials. National governments, for better or worse, are the constituted authorities precisely because they are explicitly political and accountable directly or indirectly to their national societies.

As a result, the logical locus for global governance is an inter-governmental group of national public officials, such as the G-20. These kinds of ad hoc mechanisms have proven extremely useful in coping with a variety of global challenges. The G-7 has been in existence for over thirty years. The G-20 composed of the G-8 as well as ten large developing countries has been meeting at finance ministry level since 1999. The proposal by Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin to elevate the G-20 to a summit of heads of state (government) at leaders level (an L-20) provides an opportunity to advance the global agenda embodied in the MDGs and strengthen summit processes in a new more representative modality at the same time.

Using the G-20/L-20 mechanism to convene groups to formulate global action plans for health, education and the environment would circumvent the problem of capture by convening national authorities and international officials under the aegis of a global governance group accountable to over

sixty percent of the world's population. L-20 heads of state could convene three separate consultative forums , one for health, one for education and one for the environment, composed of G-20 ministers for each of the three sectors and heads of selected international organizations with responsibility in these domains. Working groups could be established composed of senior officials below ministerial rank who would interact with civil society, the private sector and other governments and international organizations not represented in the G-20 ministerial level sectoral groups. Working groups would report to ministerial level sector groups which would in turn report to leaders level heads of state at L-20 level for final review, revision and approval. The Global Action Plans would then be fashioned in a broadly inclusive fashion and recommended to the international community by a political body composed of the highest political authorities of most of the largest and most significant countries in the world. Not ideal, but a reasonable path to global action and global governance.

The advantage of building the consultative processes for the formulation of the three global action plans off of the G-20 base is that the G-20 is fundamentally a ministers of finance grouping. Whereas G-20 ministers of health, education and the environment would be the principal spark plugs for these efforts, there would be a need to keep their ministers of finance informed and involved in these formulations since in the end ministers of finance have decisive influence on national priorities and national budgets. An additional step in the process might be to convene a G-20 finance ministers meeting with each of the G-20 sectoral ministers prior to referring each global action plan to the L-20 for final promulgation to ensure concordance between sectoral priorities

business-as-usual and that the way to accelerate change and make qualitative leaps forward is to continuously connect sectoral programs to intersectoral linkages in order to achieve higher yield outcomes from simultaneous cross-sectoral actions instead of isolated deepening of sectoral specialization and parochialism. Continuously highlighting synergies and feasibility through integrated approaches building on the interconnected imperatives of the MDGs is at the core of the new global strategy. The L-20/G-20 is well positioned to force attention to the intersectoral linkages central to the new global agenda and to forge ambitious global action plans within feasible financial constraints. Convening consultations for global action plans would demonstrate the need for a broadly representative leaders-level grouping as a much needed mechanism for global governance.

IV. *Conclusion: Communique Language*

In an effort to make the implications for G-20/L-20 action as concrete as possible, the following language is proposed for L-20 communique in 2006.

“L-20 heads of state hereby delegate to their respective ministers the responsibility to convene three separate but related processes of consultation, deliberation and conclusion to generate sectorally specific Global Action Plans in health, in education and for the environment with the goal of completing draft Plans by the fall of 2007 for approval by each set of G-20 ministers to be then sent to their ministers of finance for their deliberations

This one sentence attempts to define the sequence of meetings, actions and approvals in a time frame that begins in 2006. The truth is that this process needs to get underway as soon as possible to have the greatest effect on the decade remaining until 2015. There is an urgency to initiating this process soon enough for there to be sufficient time for implementation to meet the MDGs in 2015.

*Note: This paper is being prepared for a meeting on Global Public Health and the G-20 to be held in San Jose, Costa Rica in mid-November 2004 sponsored by the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) directed by John English and based in Waterloo, Ontario, in Canada, and by the Centre for Global Studies at the University of Victoria in Vancouver, British Columbia, directed by Gordon Smith. Nevertheless, the ideas for this paper have come from an intensive interaction within the Helsinki Process (www.helsinkiprocess.fi) sponsored by the Government of Finland and the Government of Tanzania. The author of this paper is an adviser to the Helsinki Group and to the Global Economy Track of the Helsinki Process. Achieving the MDGs is the overarching framework for the Helsinki Process and the Helsinki Group. Global governance issues, including the G-20 have received serious attention within the Helsinki Group, the Global Economy Track and the Global Governance Track of the Helsinki Process. The ideas in this paper are in fact part of the deliberations within the Helsinki Process and are put forward here for possible discussion in Costa Rica in part to try to connect the discussion of the CIGI conference series (www.cigionline.ca) on issues for G-20/L-20 consideration with the action oriented agenda of the Helsinki Process. Both groups are seeking to advance similar agendas; it seems to make sense to try to connect them to each other. CIB 7NOV04 Revised Draft

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