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UN advocates agree to targeted actions in support of anti-poverty goals



MDG 8: a global partnership for development

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Eminent personalities from the private sector, academia, governments and civil society have agreed to lead a series of targeted actions to boost the achievement of the United Nations targets to slash hunger, poverty, disease and lack of access to education by 2015.

The MDG Advocacy Group was set up last year by [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon to help him build political will and mobilize global action towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Meeting yesterday at UN Headquarters on the margins of the 66th General Assembly, the Group endorsed an action plan that encourages each advocate to champion at least one of the specific MDG initiatives that are grouped in two thematic clusters: food security and sustainable growth; and education and health.

“Through these initiatives, the MDG Advocates aim to generate further momentum toward MDG achievement as the 2015 deadline for meeting the Goals approaches rapidly,” states a news release on the meeting, which was co-chaired by Presidents Paul Kagame of Rwanda and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of Spain.

Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro welcomed “the important leadership, passion and expertise” provided by the Advocacy Group and noted that “targeted interventions” in support of individual Goals would foster real progress.

During the meeting, the advocates also discussed the need to strengthen global advocacy on the MDGs in light of the current global economic climate and declining official development assistance (ODA), and to build strong political support for innovative financing mechanisms.

Yesterday’s gathering, the second annual meeting since the group was set up in June 2010, also touched on a number of other issues, including the linkages between poverty, climate change and sustainable development in light of the upcoming UN Conference on Sustainable Development to be held next June in Brazil.

The eight MDGs seek to: end poverty and hunger; achieve universal education; secure gender equality; improve child health; boost maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS; ensure environmental sustainability; and attain global partnership on development.

The Secretary-General’s latest report on the MDGs stated that, while many countries are making impressive strides, progress on many goals and targets in many countries continues to be slow and uneven.

“The global economic slowdown, high food prices, increasingly frequent natural disasters – including those associated with climate change, and the persistent exclusion of women, minorities, and other groups make accelerated progress difficult,” noted Helen Clark, the Administrator of the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)).

[Addressing](#) an event held today on the margins of the General Assembly’s annual high-level debate, Miss Clark highlighted a tool that has been applied in several countries, known as the MDG Acceleration Framework, which enables actors to identify bottlenecks blocking progress on the goals and then devise ways to overcome them.

“It works by breaking down silos between sectors, MDGs, and disciplines, in favour of an evidence-based, cross-sectoral, and problem-solving approach. Broad stakeholder engagement helps build national ownership and align the efforts of all partners in action plans,” said Miss Clark.

So far the framework has been applied in 14 countries and in the coming year, the UN will help another 20 countries to use this tool to identify practical solutions to MDG bottlenecks, she added.

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