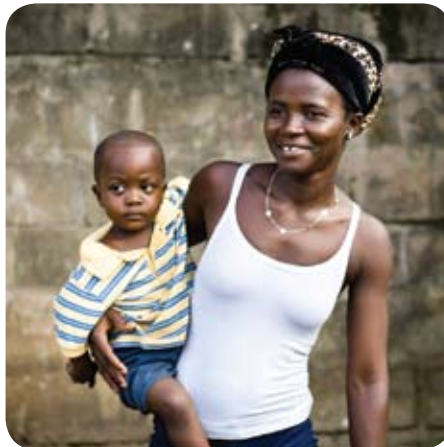


• Position paper

Towards the UN MDG Review Summit 2010

Recommendations to the EU



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Summary of Recommendations

The EU, as provider of 60% of global aid flows, and as a major trading partner for some of the world's poorest nations, should take the lead in preparing a successful UN summit in September 2010 to ensure that the steps needed to halve poverty by 2015 are taken by all concerned.

In order to do this the EU must:

- Adopt a MDG rescue plan at the EU Heads of States summit in June. The plan should be concrete and action-oriented and should include monitoring mechanisms. The EU should also use its influence to ensure that a similar plan is adopted at the UN MDG Review Summit in September.
- Use its influence (as the largest donor) to push other donors to perform better at the UN Summit in September and through discussion in other international fora (G8, G20, IMF, World Bank).
- Fulfill the commitments made in the EU Consensus on Development, and as a signatory to the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda for Action, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Cairo Agenda for Action and the fair, ambitious and binding commitments hoped for at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. Commitment to and achievement of these internationally agreed upon agendas would go some way towards achieving the MDGs.
- Implement the EU Agenda for Action and reach the targets on specific MDGs included in the Agenda.
- Adopt a human rights based and a gender equality approach, ensuring that vulnerable and marginalised people are the clear beneficiaries and there is long term, predictable investment in social and human development.
- Recognise the importance of tackling the MDGs as one holistic package with synergies between all the Goals and take into account environmental sustainability as a cross cutting issue that underpins all of the other MDGs, and human security by investing in greater integration of armed violence prevention and reduction strategies into development programming.
- Recognise that the MDGs can not be achieved without the EU and its member states engaging in meaningful and strong partnership with a wide range of stakeholders including civil society organisations in the North and the South, the private sector, UN agencies and other actors.
- Increase both the quantity and quality of EU aid and make greater efforts to implement the financing for development agenda. Collectively, the EU must recommit to giving 0.7% ODA/GNI by 2015. All EU Member States must commit to putting in place a legally-binding timetable of aid increases they will deliver in order to meet their aid commitments. Such timetables must be consistent with at least a linear scale-up of aid and be published and submitted to the European Commission before the end of 2010.

This would not be enough however to deal with new global challenges such as climate change, food and energy crises and the effects of the financial crisis. The EU should introduce innovative sources of finance (in addition to traditional ODA) to have the financing to deal with these challenges. These include the Financial Transaction Tax. The EU must advocate for this agenda internationally but also act swiftly to put in place such measures within the eurozone in the short term.

- Ensure that all policies elaborated at EU and at national level are consistent with the EU's legally binding development objectives by effective implementation of policy coherence for development. Pro-poor and sustainable development must prevail over short-term, narrow or elite European interests and sustainable development and the fulfilment of human rights form the basis for EU policy-making and implementation.
- Ensure the legal obligations set out in the Lisbon Treaty in relation to Development Cooperation and the objective of poverty eradication are reflected in the new institutional arrangements between the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission (DG Development).



Introduction

“Rather than retreat, now is the time to accelerate progress towards the MDGs and to strengthen the global partnership for development.” (Ban Ki-moon UN MDG Progress Report 2009)

The setting of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a decade ago at the 2000 Millennium conference represented the most significant collective effort ever made by the international community to eradicate extreme poverty. However progress on many of the eight MDGs has slipped far behind schedule and the prospect of fully achieving any of the Goals in the target year of 2015 looks remote. Progress has varied widely between goal areas and between countries with some enormous variation in achievements (examples can be found in the chapters dedicated to specific MDGs).

In September 2010, the member states of the United Nations will come together in New York to discuss what progress has been made towards the MDGs and agree which actions will need to be taken to ensure that the Goals are met.

There have been many substantial changes in the global context since the MDGs were set including a global economic and financial crisis, a food crisis and accelerated environmental degradation. The severity of the climate crisis has been increasingly recognised since the MDGs were agreed. In addition, we have seen 9/11 and the so-called ‘War on Terror’, and the very rapid rise of China and other newly powerful economies. Although the dramatic impact of many of these factors could, perhaps, not have been anticipated in 2000, we must ensure that they do not negatively impact on the achievements that have been made so far. Now is a key moment in which to achieve the MDGs and support the poorest in the world.

This paper, compiled by the CONCORD network of 1,600 European Development NGOs, sets out what the European Union needs to deliver to achieve progress towards meeting the MDGs, as well as our specific asks for the UN Review Summit. The introduction looks at the opportunities that exist at this important juncture, as well as tackling some of the overarching areas linking the Goals and important to all of them. This is followed by chapters on the individual MDGs where more detailed analysis is provided.



2010 and the need for Europe to take the lead on plans for reaching the MDGs

CONCORD believes that to put the world back on track towards reaching the MDGs, the EU, as provider of 60% of global aid flows, and as a major trading partner for some of the world’s poorest nations, should take the lead in preparing a successful UN summit in September to ensure that the steps needed to halve poverty by 2015 are taken by all concerned. **In order to do this the EU must:**

- Adopt an MDG rescue plan at the EU Heads of States summit in June. The plan should be **concrete and action-oriented**, should include **monitoring mechanisms**, recognise the importance of tackling the MDGs as one holistic package with **synergies between all the Goals** and take a **human rights based and a gender equality approach**, ensuring that vulnerable and marginalised people are the clear beneficiaries.
- Fulfill the commitments made in the EU Consensus on Development, and as a signatory to the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda for Action, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Cairo Agenda for Action and the fair, ambitious and binding commitments hoped for at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. Commitment to and achievement of these internationally agreed agendas would go some way towards achieving the MDGs.
- Implement the EU Agenda for Action and reach the targets on specific MDGs included in the Agenda.
- Renew emphasis and commitment to tackle climate change and environmental degradation.
- Use its influence (as the largest donor) to push other donors to perform better through discussion in international fora (G8, G20, IMF, World Bank).
- Ensure the new EU institutional arrangements and the structure of the European Commission and the European External Action Service reflect the legal obligations set out in the Lisbon Treaty. The Treaty identifies development cooperation as a separate and independent policy area with EU competency, and poverty eradication as the principal objective.
- Recognise that the MDGs can not be achieved without the EU and its member states engaging in meaningful and strong partnership with a wide range of stakeholders including civil society organisations in the North and the South, the private sector, UN agencies and other actors.
- Ensure that **pro-poor and sustainable development prevail** over short-term, narrow or elite European interests and that sustainable development and the fulfilment of human rights form the basis for EU policy-making and implementation thereof.

In addition to these recommendations, CONCORD wishes to highlight some broad overarching issues that must be addressed in order to create the conditions for the individual Goals to be attained. These are: 1) ensure that a rights based approach as well as gender equality are applied across the Goals thereby addressing inequities and discriminations; 2) recognise the linkages between the MDGs and capitalise on the synergies to ensure sustainable development; 3) secure adequate financing for development; 4) address incoherencies across the policy spectrum that undermine development; 5) strengthen accountability: development driven by Southern contexts.

1. Ensure a rights based approach and gender equality

While the MDGs have had an enormous impact on the development community, and have raised the ambition regarding the achievements necessary in the fight against poverty, they were not developed from a human rights, gender equality or sustainable development perspective. As a result, they fail to adequately address the structural and systemic injustices which continue to put the gains of the MDGs beyond reach for many.

Women and girls continue to be the majority of the world's poorest and vulnerable people. They experience discrimination in every sphere of political, social and economic life, and at every age, on the grounds of gender. This denies millions of women their basic human rights, to their personal security and physical integrity, to education, healthcare and other basic service and economic resources, and to political power. The causes and nature of women's poverty make it vital to look at a broad range of gender issues, from specific women's empowerment programmes to gender-sensitive approaches which also meaningfully involve men and boys.

Equally, the current MDG structure does not explicitly take into account excluded or marginalised groups, creating a real danger that they will be further pushed to the periphery in the drive to reach general targets and indicators. This includes people with disabilities, who comprise one of the single largest groups of marginalised and chronically poor people in the world with one in five of the poorest people being disabled, older people with an estimated 180 million people over the age of 60 living in poverty, children, with 8.8 million children worldwide dying before their fifth birthday in 2008, and minority and indigenous communities, which reside on the margins of society and are excluded from decisions regarding development taken at the national level.

Those groups must be included in development policies and programmes and the MDGs must be re-envisioned through a human rights lens and ensure that indicators of progress are disaggregated by disability, age, gender and ethnicity. This will guarantee that action to reduce poverty effectively targets and reaches those who are currently marginalised.

The best way to help people realise their rights is to invest in social and human development, and intensify the implementation of existing commitments enshrined in numerous human rights treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and Girls, the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The EU should prioritise its actions in areas that are vital to the achievement of the MDGs, such as gender equality, social protection including access to basic social services for all (health and education), especially for the



most marginalised groups. The EU needs to contribute to the realisation of social rights to reduce inequality and promote sustainable development if the MDGs are to be achieved.

We urge EU member states to:

- Ensure women's empowerment policies and programmes and gender sensitive approaches throughout the Goals, monitoring progress with disaggregated data.
- Look at the MDGs through a human right lens and ensure that most marginalised groups are reached.
- Ensure long term, predictable investment in social and human development.

2. A holistic approach to the MDGs, capitalising on the linkages between the MDGs and taking into account environmental sustainability and human security

While we are drawing attention to the groups and issues excluded from the MDG framework, it is also of vital importance to remember the important linkages between the Goals, and the fact that very often if one Goal is to be met, then others must be too. The current failure to reach the MDGs is only enhanced by a mutually reinforcing negative cycle of knock-on effects. We cannot treat the MDGs as silos: meeting all Goals is vital to the achievement of any one of the MDGs.

We urge the EU to build on the obvious links between areas such as education and health, water and sanitation and health, nutrition and health and recognise the importance of gender, human rights and environmental sustainability across all the Goals.

The achievement of Goal 8 has a fundamental impact on the achievement of the other goals. The EU's pursuit of a conclusion to the Doha round and of far-reaching free trade agreements (FTAs) with developing countries risks limiting the measures available to them to support the domestic industries, jobs, agricultural systems and basic services that are necessary to support the MDG's, particularly 1 and 7.

Ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG 7) needs the environment to be recognised both as a sector and as a cross-cutting issue. It requires effective integration between all strands of the MDGs and at all levels, from policy and planning through to delivery on the ground, for example, ensuring integrated water resource management and catchments protection for sustainable access to water and sanitation. It is vital that the importance of healthy ecosystems are recognised, effectively valued and incorporated into development work. They are the

fundamental building blocks of development and are often a lifeline for the poorest and most vulnerable people. Without environmental sustainability, any gains on the MDGs will be transitory and inequitable.

While not formally recognised to date as an element in the achievement of the MDGs, the negative impact of armed violence on human security and sustainable development is real and increasingly understood. Building on the momentum stimulated by the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the Secretary General's report *Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence (A/64/228)*, and the High Level Conference on Armed Violence and the MDGs (Oslo, April 2010), the EU must act by investing in and encouraging greater integration of armed violence prevention and reduction strategies into development programming.

Linkages between the MDGs and external factors affecting their attainment must be taken into account in both the design of policies aimed at fulfilling the MDGs and in their implementation.

We urge EU member states to:

- Address the MDGs as a holistic and integrated package recognising the links between all MDGs.
- Ensure environmental sustainability is addressed as a cross cutting issue that underpins all of the other MDGs.
- Ensure that the EU acts by investing in and encouraging greater integration of armed violence prevention and reduction strategies into development programming.

3 Financing for development

Development aid is more important than ever, since the financial crisis has shrunk other sources such as private capital flows, remittances and export revenues to developing countries.



The European Union is the largest provider of development aid in the world, which gives it critical responsibility in the fight against global poverty. The EU has clearly committed not only to further increasing the volume of aid, but also to improving the quality of the aid.

2010 is the target date for meeting the EU collective commitment of 0.56% Official Development Aid (ODA)/ Gross National Income (GNI) towards 0.7% in 2015 and individual ODA targets for EU member states – 0.51% of GNI for the EU-15 and 0.17% of GNI for the EU-12. The 2009 AidWatch report *Lighten the Load* demonstrated that many EU member states are not on track to meet this interim target, let alone 0.7% by 2015. The OECD has since confirmed that the 2010 collective EU target will not be met, with aid from big EU economies such as France (0.46%), Germany (0.40%) and especially Italy (0.20%) expected to fall some way short of their individual commitments.

To reach the MDGs targets both the **quantity** and the **quality** of the EU's aid needs to be increased and the EU must make greater efforts to implement the **financing for development** agenda. International aid commitments (0.7%) *must* be met but will not be enough to deal with new global challenges such as climate change, food and energy crises and the effects of the financial crisis. The EU needs to find additional sources of financing to deal with these challenges.

We urge EU member states to:

- Deliver at least 0.7% of GNI in ODA by 2015 at the latest (and 0.56% by 2010) and to put in place binding timetables at national level showing year on year increases leading towards the attainment of these targets.
- Dedicate at least 20% of all EU assistance to basic social services, such as health and education as repeatedly called for by the European Parliament.
- Ensure that all of the money allocated under the geographic programmes of the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and at least 90% of funds under the thematic programmes qualify as ODA in accordance with the provisions of the DCI itself.
- Step up efforts to improve the quality of aid and report annually on the progress made in the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action Commitments. Agree to new binding commitments on aid effectiveness at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Seoul in 2011.
- Phase out harmful economic or trade policy conditionality attached to development aid as well as conditionality on migration control measures.
- The European Consensus and the Accra Agenda for Action have identified the need to strengthen mainstreaming across all sectors of policy and programming. The issues identified are human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability. Without the systematic mainstreaming of these issues, aid cannot be effective or sustainable.

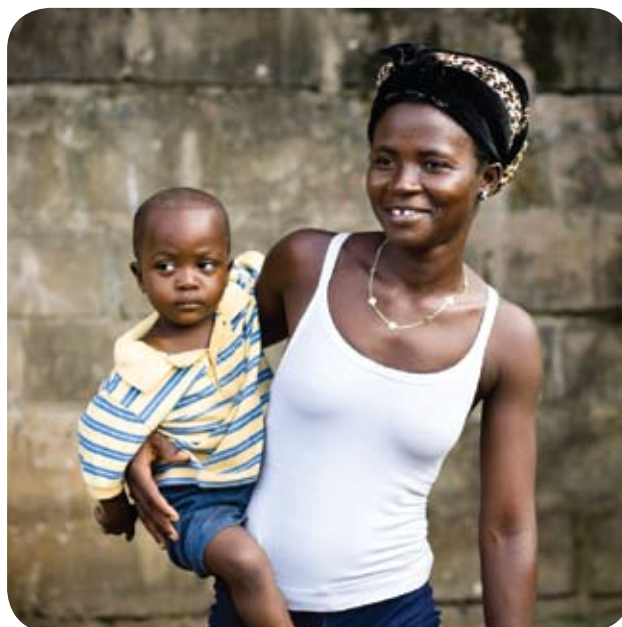
- Provide developing countries with the tools they need to mobilise domestic resources effectively, including through tackling capital flight, tax competition, corporate tax evasion and avoidance, transfer pricing, bank secrecy. In particular, the EU should champion the creation of a global multilateral information exchange convention, a country-by-country financial reporting standard for Multi National Companies, and a strengthened UN Committee of Tax Experts with a political mandate. The EU should work multilaterally to achieve these three objectives by 2015.
- Introducing “**innovative**” sources of finance (ie, in addition to traditional ODA). These include the **Financial Transaction Tax**. The EU must advocate for this agenda internationally but also act swiftly to put in place such measures within the Eurozone in the short term.
- Cancel all debt for those developing countries which currently cannot finance the MDGs from domestic resources.

4. Improve policy coherence of the Union’s internal and external policies to achieve sustainable development

Trade, agricultural, environmental, migration, financial, and many other European policies have an impact on the capacity of developing countries to attain the MDGs. Not only have these policies not sufficiently and directly contributed to poverty eradication globally, but their inconsistency with development goals can be costly and can negate the impact of development aid. Achieving the MDGs will only be possible if we ensure that all policies elaborated at EU and national level are consistent with the EU’s legally binding development objectives.

Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is an important tool that, if implemented effectively, could have a markedly beneficial impact on sustainable development, respect for human rights and poverty reduction. For this to happen, CONCORD has identified the changes needed:

- Make more explicit the **multiple linkages** between different policy areas in order to give a better understanding of the complexities of policy solutions.
- Ensure that its policy-making becomes more **transparent** and **participatory** (ie, participation of the relevant stakeholders in Europe and in developing countries, including civil society and parliaments) from the earliest stages and that the EU is held accountable of the harmful impact of its policies on development.
- Strengthen the **capacity of both national and EU administrations** to improve the coherence of their respective policies in relation to EU and national level development objectives as well as international commitments on development; with a view to have an effective impact, to identify the incoherencies regardless of the policy areas involved and suggest solutions in order to improve impact.
- Make sure that the **work programme on PCD** for the 2010-2013 period is developed with a view to attaining the MDG targets and to assessing the impact of all relevant EU policies on the progress made towards the MDGs.



5. Strengthening accountability: development driven by Southern contexts

Despite increasing evidence that successful pro-poor development is driven largely by domestic political processes, donors continue to intervene in countries with little priority given to the political, historical or social context. Donors must recognise that the MDGs do not exist in a political vacuum. Improving governance and addressing corruption in developing countries must be a core concern – and this can only be effectively tackled by adopting a less technocratic approach to international development.

While some progress has been made on focusing on the political economy of different contexts (eg, the Swedish and UK power analysis and drivers of change approaches), the EU as a whole must invest more into understanding the underlying factors (for example, history, geography, sources of government revenue, deeply embedded social and economic structures) that shape formal and informal relationships between the state and organised groups in society, the incentives that drive politicians and policymakers, and the potential pressures for or against progressive change. A better understanding and a willingness to prioritise this approach will help in the formulation of policies that are fit for the context, will address governance issues more effectively and will, ultimately, enhance efforts to achieve development goals.

This approach should not be an optional ‘add-on’. It should be fully integrated into all country assistance strategies and be mainstreamed within aid effectiveness mechanisms and development processes.

At the heart of this approach must be the intent and action to build stronger state accountability towards its citizens. Without stronger state-citizens relations the implementation of the envisaged Breakthrough Plans is going to be plagued by the same challenges that have contributed to compromising the attainment of the MDGs.