

# **Celebrate, Innovate, and Sustain: Toward 2015 and Beyond**

## ***The United States' Plan to Accelerate Progress toward the Millennium Development Goals***

### **Summary**

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The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a symbol of our common humanity. They are a declaration of the world's commitment to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality, and extending hope and opportunity to millions across the developing world. The eight goals, organized around internationally-agreed targets, have provided a framework to translate our highest ideals into concrete action. They also have helped mobilize unprecedented political support and resources for development.

Enormous progress has been made so far toward meeting the MDGs, and we must recognize, celebrate, and support these achievements. Above all, credit belongs to the citizens and governments of countries that have prioritized development and invested in their people. These achievements are also testimony to the power of successful development partnerships.

But much more remains to be done. If we are to meet the ambitious objectives we have set, historical leaps in human development will be needed. For this reason, we must be even more determined, strategic, and focused on results as we chart the path to 2015.

In the recently released National Security Strategy, the United States recognizes development as a moral, strategic, and economic imperative. Countries that achieve sustained development gains make more capable partners, can participate in and contribute to the global economy, and provide their people with the opportunity, means, and freedom to improve their lives.

President Obama launched a study of U.S. development policy in September 2009 and will be issuing a new development policy in the near future. The policy will focus on achieving sustainable development outcomes by promoting broad-based economic growth and democratic governance, investing in game-changing innovations that have the potential to solve long-standing development challenges, and building effective public sector capacity to provide basic services over the long term. The policy also puts a premium on selectivity, on leveraging the expertise and resources of others, on mutual accountability, and on evidence of impact. This new development policy will guide the U.S. approach to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The United States fully embraces the MDGs, and as we move toward the UN High-Level Meeting to review of the MDGs this September, it is critical that we take stock of what we have learned. The MDGs are a powerful symbol of our shared commitments, but we must keep our focus on the development outcome we seek: sustainable progress toward higher standards of living in the developing world. We know that assistance, while essential, cannot bring about development in the absence of domestic policies and international flows of trade, investment, skills, and ideas that create opportunities for lasting economic growth.

In partnership with others, we are committed to preserving and accelerating the momentum toward the MDGs and to helping ensure that development gains are sustainable. We propose a strategy that focuses on learning from experience, maximizing development impact, and leveraging knowledge and human ingenuity. Our strategy is based on four imperatives:

1. Leverage innovation
2. Invest in sustainability
3. Track development outcomes, not just dollars
4. Enhance the principle and the practice of mutual accountability

Innovation—which is at the heart of our strategy—can be a powerful force multiplier when combined with other investments. Drawing on America’s long tradition of development through innovation, we will increase funding for applied research, expand access to effective existing technologies and practices, build learning partnerships, stimulate innovation in partner countries, and expand global access to knowledge. We will also embrace a new model for doing business to improve the way our development institutions work.

Progress toward the MDGs will be of little consequence if development gains are not lasting. To help make them sustainable, the United States will promote broad-based economic growth by helping countries formulate and implement pro-growth policies, promote trade, invest in infrastructure, and stimulate entrepreneurship. We also will support partner countries’ efforts to nurture well-governed institutions, and we will work closely with a broad array of organizations to invest in women and girls, build robust service-delivery systems, and help countries mitigate the impact of shocks.

Our commitment to innovation and sustainability will be underpinned by a relentless commitment to measuring results. To this end, we will upgrade our institutional capacity to monitor and measure development outcomes, as well as support and learn from centers of best practice in evaluation. We will ensure that our presidential initiatives have strong monitoring and evaluation functions, and we will continue to call for the same in the multilateral organizations we support. We will help sponsor new methods and data collection initiatives to improve how we measure progress toward the MDGs.

Finally, we will renew our efforts to live up to the principle and practice of mutual accountability and expect others to do so as well. For donors, this means delivering on our development assistance commitments and improving the transparency of aid flows. It also means forging a new and deliberate division of effort, one in which donors play to their respective comparative advantage while minimizing gaps and duplication.

For partner countries, mutual accountability means mobilizing domestic resources for development and ensuring that all development resources are managed transparently and responsibly. And for all countries and donors, it means shared responsibility for working toward the day when foreign aid will no longer be necessary. The health and prosperity of the world’s poor and vulnerable—and by extension, our own security and prosperity—will ultimately be determined not by the promises we make, but the results we generate together.