

WORLD BANK STATEMENT
Statement by
DR. MAMPHELA RAMPHELE
Managing Director, World Bank

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Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Distinguished Delegates:

At the World Bank, our main objective is poverty reduction. Through lending and knowledge-based activities, we aim to create a positive investment climate and sustainable human development for poor people of the world. The international processes emanating from the Millennium Declaration and more recently from the International Conference on Financing for Development have provided a substantial common ground for the international community, including the World Bank, on which we are beginning to construct an edifice for truly effective development together. This edifice is based on a series of fundamental building blocks for "staying engaged" in a forward-looking, implementation-oriented manner.

The first building block is the set of Millennium Development Goals. They provide an additional mandate for accelerating our work in many areas related to the link between economic growth on the one hand and human development on the other. There exists an unprecedented agreement on the Millennium Development Goals as a means of: (a) accelerating progress on the human dimensions of poverty reduction, (b) improving the effectiveness of the relationship between national governments and international agencies, and (c) keeping the multilateral system unified in its purposes so as to become in reality a coherent force for development.

The second building block is the emerging "global development compact" - an evolving common understanding among national governments of industrialized and developing countries exemplified in the Monterrey Consensus. In this compact, all countries bear responsibility for an effective global social order. Developing countries will endeavor to own their own development, design and effectively implement outcome-based policies and programs with visible impacts on key social indicators. In turn, industrialized countries will provide the necessary support to developing countries undertaking such policies and reforms so that in no country is the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals compromised because of lack of sufficient resources.

The third building block is implementation as the path to development effectiveness - country-owned development, coherence, accountability measured through solid analysis, effective monitoring and clear, attainable short-, medium, and long-term targets. While the MDGs offer a profound organizing principle, they mean nothing if they are not

realistically implemented. Goals cannot be imposed on countries. Countries must set their own goals and take responsibility for setting strategies to achieve them. Monitoring and public reporting on progress toward the goals is needed for both national policy purposes and for increasing support internationally for development cooperation. Many developing countries will require technical and financial assistance to improve their policies, enhancing their implementation capacity and developing their systems for producing and analyzing statistical information for monitoring progress. Donors will need to come up with additional support and improve their coordination of programs, policies and procedures.

As we have all begun to recognize, this shift in emphasis toward real partnership, implementation and accountability for results requires a sea-change in the way we do business. New and speedier approaches are required in areas such as quality universal primary education or improved health outcomes for low income countries.

Fast-tracking Education For All

The Development Committee, our intergovernmental body for consensus-building on development issues, has endorsed the new Action Plan to Accelerate Progress Towards Education for All (EFA) paper prepared by the World Bank in consultation with countries and partners. The EFA paper outlines a new and comprehensive approach for addressing illiteracy by identifying four gaps: (i) data gaps which deprive policy makers of timely and accurate information; (ii) policy gaps which render spending on certain activities ineffective; (iii) capacity gaps which reduce the ability to implement the right policies effectively; and (iv) financing gaps which can still exist even though the previous three gaps are not present. The application of the approach and recommendations of the EFA paper is proceeding fast. As of today, 23 countries with shortcomings in education enrollment have already been identified. The majority of them (18) will submit proposals for receiving additional donor financing for accelerating primary education enrollments, and the rest are expected to benefit in the first instance from analytical and technical support.

The Broader Picture

The speed and comprehensiveness with which EFA is progressing sets the stage for reforms and interventions in areas of the other Millennium Development Goals. The World Bank, in consultation with national and international stakeholders, will undertake additional activities which will result in a better understanding and more timely implementation of policies in the areas of communicable diseases within the framework of sustainable health care systems. We are also analyzing lessons drawn from community driven approaches to rural development with a focus on cross-cutting issues such as water and sanitation.

The World Bank extends its activities beyond education and health, nutrition and population policies to other social services essential to the poverty reduction agenda such as social protection. All of these activities are very much at the core in this year's topic of

ECOSOC's High-Level Segment. The linkage between economic growth and investments in human capital can set in motion a virtuous circle of improvements that reduce poverty and increase well-being. Social protection is essential to the development of critical population groups, especially the growing millions of orphans and disabled people.

The World Bank will utilize its various participatory approaches to country dialogue and country priority processes, such as the Country Assistance Strategy, and Poverty Reduction Support Credits, both of them in the context of the country-led Poverty Reduction Strategies, to promote improved outcomes through quality public expenditures for social services. This requires long term engagement with countries on budgetary issues and policies which relate to the quality of social services.

Our common agenda is becoming even broader both in substance and in geographic focus. The upcoming World Summit for Social Development in Johannesburg is as symbolic for Africa as substantive for the whole world. In line with the assessment of the international community, the World Bank recognizes the necessity of increasing the coherence and impact of our approach to the MDGs in Africa. In education, Africa and other regions have taken great strides in school attendance in recent decades, despite stagnant overall economies. In health, carefully coordinated international programs eradicated smallpox globally and eliminated river blindness in much of Africa, to take just two prominent examples of successful efforts that improve human well being and increase the productive capacity of poor people. But more needs to be done. The increasing global focus on communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis needs to be given special emphasis in Africa.

None of us can go it alone with this ambitious and critical agenda. As the World Bank acknowledges in our overarching and far-reaching Strategic Framework, partnerships are central to all of the activities undertaken by the development community. Each development actor (from multilaterals to bilaterals, governments to NGOs and the private sector) needs to be aware of what others are doing to work in a complementary fashion.

It is only through effectively utilizing the diverse strengths of different partners in a harmonized structure aimed clearly at sustainability that the Monterrey Consensus will produce timely results and the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved.