



United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Capital Development Fund

SCALING UP INTEGRATED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INNOVATIONS

A GLOBAL PROGRAMME PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL

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"Focusing on fulfilling local needs is another way to bridge the MDG gap... UNDP will provide support through a new global initiative and funding framework to scale up MDG interventions and efforts at the local level in partnership with UNCDF and building on successful global platforms such as GEF Small Grants Programme during 2009-2013."

*'UNDP's MDG
Breakthrough Strategy'*

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

With just five years until the 2015 target date, many countries have made substantial progress toward achieving their nationally set targets. Before 2008, many developing countries enjoyed strong economic growth that helped reduce poverty and strengthen public service delivery. Even with the recent economic downturn, "progress on poverty reduction is still being made," and "the developing world as a whole remains on track to achieve the poverty reduction target by 2015" (UN MDG Report, 2010). Major advances are being made in increasing primary school attendance even in the poorest countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Improvements have been made in key health interventions, such as malaria control and HIV prevention and treatment, and provision of immunization (UN MDG Report, 2010). The wide application of technology such as mobile phones has improved access to information, markets and services for many of the world's poor. Evidence from the past decade confirms that, even in the most challenging circumstances, the MDGs are achievable if they enjoy sustained commitment from governments and international partners.

However, progress toward the MDGs has been uneven, and large disparities still persist among and within countries. The recent financial crisis and the resulting global economic recession, as well as climate change, are directly harming the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable. In many fragile states, least developed countries (LDCs), and countries in or emerging from conflict, there is a real threat of halt or reversal of the progress made toward the MDGs. As a result of the recent economic crisis, an estimated 50 million more people will fall into poverty by the end of 2010 and one third of the world population—about 2 billion people—remains in poverty, living on \$2 or less per day (WB Global Monitoring Report, 2010). The impact of the crisis is felt deeply across other MDGs: under-five child mortality could reach 1.2 million, some 350,000 children will fail to complete primary school, and 100 million more people will lose access to safe drinking water (Global Monitoring Report, 2010). Furthermore, the economic crisis and climate change disproportionately affect women, children and vulnerable groups.

Progress toward the MDGs continues, but there are persisting and increasing inequalities "between the rich and the poor, between rural populations or those living in slums and better off urban populations, and those disadvantaged by geographic location, sex, age, disability and ethnicity" (UN MDG Report, 2010). Lack of access to essential public services such as health and education, infrastructure facilities such as water and sanitation, productive assets such as land, and limited opportunities to be engaged in decent employment threaten to perpetuate poverty across generations. The recent MDG International Assessment reported that countries with greater inequality are more likely to make slower progress toward the MDGs, and poverty, measured at \$1.25 per day, tends to be 42% higher in such countries than in countries with lower disparities. Disparities in nutrition between rural and urban children have increased in Latin America, the Caribbean and parts of Asia. In Southern Asia, 60% of children in the poorest regions were underweight, compared with 25% in the richest households (UN MDG Report, 2010). Disparities in access to quality education and health services disproportionately affect the poor, especially women and girls. Three fourths of those who do not have access to water live in rural areas (UNDP International Assessment (IA), 2010).

TURNING EVIDENCE INTO PRACTICE



Almost all countries, including LDCs, low-income countries (LICs), and even middle-income countries, have individuals and groups who have been excluded from the benefits of development by reason of their geographic location and ethnicity. Often, these are indigenous populations and/or people living in remote areas. In Nepal, for example, “individuals from lower caste and indigenous ethnic groups are disproportionately poorer” than other groups (MDG Synthesis Report, 2010). In Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, groups and individuals are often isolated and do not benefit from the development processes, which are concentrated in the capital cities (MDG country case studies). In Namibia and Mozambique, rural inhabitants often lack access to essential services, and in Bhutan, most people in rural areas rely on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods.

Evidence across the board shows that MDG strategies are much more likely to succeed when national governments work closely with local governments, civil society, and the private sector (IA, 2010). When participatory, MDG-based local plans more accurately reflect realities, needs and demands, allowing more effective targeting of excluded individuals and groups. When national and local governments cooperate, MDG localization can result in quick impacts through targeted transfer of resources and capacity investments. It is evident that, in conflict and post-conflict settings, local-level, non-state actors, community-based approaches and informal institutions play a critical role in service delivery and peacebuilding efforts (IA, 2010 and Somalia country case).

It has been proven that local actors (governments, communities, the private sector, and non-government organizations) play a crucial role in the achievement of the MDGs. Many countries, even the poorest and most vulnerable ones, have shown that when investments are made at the local level, progress toward the MDGs is more sustainable and faster. For example, a national reforestation programme succeeded when land ownership and responsibilities were transferred to local communities (MDG Synthesis Report, 2010). Local authorities and regional governments in Peru, Egypt and Niger have

BOX 1

Rationale for Investing in MDGs at the Local Level

MDG 1: Poverty, Employment and Food Security. Successful poverty alleviation, employment generation and food production efforts need to be based on local realities and initiatives and require the participation of and ownership by local governments and communities. Often, local-level MDG initiatives fall prey to endless piloting, without any real commitments by central governments and donors to scaling up and sustaining the results.

MDGs 2–7: Service Delivery for Education, Health, Water and Sanitation. Setting up and maintaining delivery mechanisms for essential MDG services such as primary health care, education, and basic infrastructure are the main responsibility of decentralized local governments. Yet, local governments everywhere are chronically underfunded, both by central governments and donors. Evidence from the field suggests that capacity development efforts at the local level are often overlooked, dismissed or mismatched with real needs, resulting in disparities and inequalities.

MDG 3: Gender Empowerment. Women and youth are catalysts of change in their households, communities and districts. Investing in efforts that directly target women, youth and children, such as primary health care, clean water and green energy, girl-friendly schools and small, sustainable agricultural practices, can immediately improve the well-being of everyone. Often, empowering women at the local level leads to better educated and nourished children, better management of natural resources, and stronger local ownership and accountability of development results.

MDG 7: Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability. Community adaptation and mitigation efforts to minimize the negative effects of climate change are effective when implemented at the local level in combination with MDG interventions. All public investments in MDGs, whether for employment generation through sustainable agricultural practices or development of green energy sources for clinics, schools and households, can greatly benefit efforts to preserve the environment and protect ecosystems.

MDG 8: Local Capacity Development. Developing local capacity is essential for ensuring aid effectiveness and sustainability of efforts supported by development partners. A global partnership becomes concrete by delivering basic services at the local level. Governments, service delivery agents, civil society organizations and private sectors working together are key for guaranteeing buy-in and sustainability of local development processes.

successfully implemented integrated anti-poverty and nutrition programmes. Morocco reduced poverty in certain localities by as much as 95% through its targeted national initiative for human development, which local municipalities implemented. In Nepal, enrolment rates substantially increased in targeted areas when education responsibilities were transferred to locally elected committees. In conflict-ridden Somaliland and Puntland, local transitional authorities have been the only channels of delivery of essential services and protection to communities. Rwanda is making progress in maternal and child health by transferring responsibilities and funding for health services to local communities. Despite years of conflict, Sri Lanka succeeded in maintaining essential health services, and thus progress toward MDGs 4 and 5, by investing in rural health personnel. Box 1 above summarizes the primary reasons for investing in MDGs at the local level.

II. INVESTING IN MDGS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

The increasing recognition of widening disparities in achievement of the MDGs calls for interventions that are better tailored to address development needs and priorities at the subnational level. Even in countries that are on track to achieve all or most of the MDGs at the national level (Mexico, Vietnam), there is an acknowledged need to emphasize more nuanced interventions, to go beyond ‘one-formula-fits-all’ approaches, and to recognize the role that local actors can play in addressing development challenges that do not simply conform to ‘average’ countrywide prognoses (GDHS, Mexico, 2006; MPI, Vietnam, 2009).

Local governments, in particular, have a critical role to play in addressing disparities in progress toward the MDGs¹. By virtue of their mandate, proximity, accountability to local constituents, and convening role, local governments are often pivotal in identifying and delivering locally relevant MDG interventions (Helling et al., 2005). Roles and responsibilities vary across countries according to systems of subnational governance, as decentralized systems of delivery can range from the highly devolved to the deconcentrated (see Box 2)².

BOX 2

Decentralized Delivery: Three Approaches

The transfer of functions from the central to the local level can take three forms (most countries exhibit two or more types of decentralized delivery):

- **Deconcentration:** Responsibility remains with the central government, but is dispersed from central government officials located within the capital to central government officials located outside the capital, or at the regional or local level. Responsible officials remain employees of, and accountable to, the central government.
- **Delegation:** The central government temporarily transfers management responsibilities to local organs on an agency basis or through a contract-type arrangement. Local entities have some operational autonomy, but their performance remains accountable to the central government. The central government provides the required resources and retains ultimate responsibility for the function being delegated.
- **Devolution:** Decision-making authority and resources for the devolved function are transferred to local governments, which become fully responsible for delivery and directly accountable to local constituents.

¹ The term ‘local government’ here is used to refer to subnational government: the regional/state/provincial level, as well as the municipal/district level. The number of government tiers varies from country to country.

² Despite such variability, it is generally acknowledged that there are broadly defined roles that different tiers of government are better positioned to play: (i) Central government: policy and legal/regulatory frameworks, national standards of service and performance; (ii) Provincial/state government: oversight and strategic interventions at provincial/state level; (iii) Municipal/district-level government: delivery of basic services and basic infrastructure (adapted from Shah et al., 2006). In reality, however, functional assignments across tiers of government rarely conform to such a neat division of labour. Adapted from Litvak and Seddon (1999) and UNCDF (2009).



Photo by: Curt Carnemark-World Bank

Despite such diversity, **evidence suggests that their relative proximity to local constituents and service users enables local governments to better identify and respond to local needs** and demands (Shah, 2008; Helling, 2005). Timely information allows local governments to ensure closer alignment between resource allocations on the one hand and actual needs and demands on the other. Furthermore, experience also shows the relative cost-effectiveness of local governments' interventions in the delivery of a range of services and infrastructure: local authorities in Uganda and Ethiopia, for instance, when equipped with adequate administrative tools, could lower the costs of social and economic infrastructure projects by 20% to 50% compared to alternative delivery methods (UNCDF, 2004). Reduced transaction costs allow more resources to reach intended beneficiaries and/or increase coverage.

Because local governments are directly accountable to their communities, they tend to have greater incentives to improve delivery. Whereas a central agency might be able to 'afford' being unresponsive to the demands of localities that have limited national political leverage, local governments have more at stake if local constituents perceive them as deficient; for services and infrastructure entirely under the jurisdiction of local governments, in other words, the marginal costs or benefits of underperformance or good performance are higher for local authorities than for higher tiers of government. Greater sensitivity to local needs translates into greater responsiveness if local governments are (i) legally empowered and (ii) equipped with the appropriate know-how and resources.

Local governments (LG) can also play a critical role in promoting community empowerment, as they can provide suitable forums for local communities and vulnerable groups to directly participate in decision-making processes. For example, the experience of participatory planning and budgeting exercises in Brazil reveals that local authorities can enable greater community engagement in public decision-making processes (Helling, 2005). Furthermore, local governments are uniquely able to convene other local stakeholders from the public, private, and non-governmental sector to address development priorities that are shared at the local level (Helling, 2005).

Local Governments and the Provision of MDG-relevant Services and Infrastructure

Typically, a legal framework, often underpinned by constitutional provisions, defines the roles and functions of local governments. Such a role can be defined in general terms, overlap with the role of other tiers of government, or devolve too little or too much authority (UNCDF, 2005).

As a general rule, **functional assignments for the provision of MDG-relevant services and infrastructure within a given political milieu are largely a function of jurisdictional size**, which determines the extent to which economies of scale are feasible. In Ethiopia, where the size of provinces is relatively large, local governments can be responsible "for both policies and operational activities for almost all basic public ser-

"By investing in the Millennium Development Goals, we invest in global economic growth; by focusing on the need of the most vulnerable, we lay the foundation for a more sustainable and prosperous tomorrow."

Ban Ki-moon

Secretary-General of the United Nations, 'Combating Poverty and Inequality'

vices – they might not only ‘run’ schools, but also be key decision-makers in determining some aspects of educational policy” (UNCDF, 2005). In Uganda, local authorities, which have jurisdiction over smaller areas in comparison and have few prerogative functions in policy-making, “are responsible for the operational aspects of [the most relevant] basic service delivery functions (including primary health care, primary education, water/sanitation schemes, rural roads and agricultural programmes)” (idem). As a general rule, the range of infrastructure and service delivery (ISD) functions that can be decentralized becomes more limited as the jurisdictional unit becomes smaller (UNCDF, 1999). However, where ISD is small-scale and affects a small and well-defined community of users, the provision of local service is more likely to be efficient and to have a reduced spill-over of costs and benefits: the larger the scale and the ‘more diffuse’ the intended beneficiaries, the less amenable they are to management by lower tiers of government³.

TABLE 1

Table 1⁴ shows the types of MDG-relevant investments that higher, district-level authorities can preside over and compares them with investments under lower, sub-national administration and community-based organizations; it also allows comparison of the extent to which beneficiary groups are well-defined and of recurrent cost implications for other tiers of governments.

Functional assignments are also partly determined by the relative complexity of the provision of the service or infrastructure in question and by the way in which central and local authorities interact. Although educational infrastructure in Nepal falls within the purview of LGs, for instance, the management of the recurrent costs associated with running schools has been problematic (UNCDF, 2004). In many cases, responsibilities are shared: line ministries often support construction of specialized infrastructure in health care, education, water supply and communications through technical and engineering inputs and may even be responsible for some parts of operations and maintenance (O&M), depending on the type of investments.

INVESTMENT PROJECT CATEGORIES

Characteristics	Community Investment Projects	Sub-County Projects	District Projects
Examples of typical or possible projects	Spring protection or well-digging School improvements (furniture, materials, upgrading of building, teachers' accommodation, etc.) Foot paths and other very minor improvements to roads or bridges Clonal coffee demonstration plot	Boreholes Improvements to health unit New nursery schools Upgrading of primary schools Culverts and community bridges Small extension programme for sub-county e.g., paravets	Gravity flow scheme or dams New health units New feeder roads Services provided for several sub-counties (e.g. technical schools, secondary schools) Health, education, agriculture, extension services covering more than one LLG, etc. Major rehabilitation of feeder roads
Beneficiaries	Small and well-defined user/beneficiary group (e.g. parents and students of a particular school)	Could be a small and well defined group of beneficiaries, but more likely to be a broader group (e.g. the entire population of the sub-county that may benefit from a health clinic)	
Recurrent Costs	No recurrent cost implications at sub-county level and above	Recurrent costs limited to sub-county level	Recurrent costs obligations at district level

³ Such recognition is consistent with the principle of 'subsidiarity', according to which governmental functions and tasks should be assigned to the lowest tier of government unless it is more efficient for higher tiers to undertake such functions and tasks.

⁴ Adapted from *Delivering the Goods*. UNCDF, 2005.

Beyond the delivery of MDG-relevant services and infrastructure, local authorities can also play an important role as **convening and coordinating entities** and as **interlocutors with higher tiers of government, including central governments**. They can be part of wider policy dialogues on MDGs – from social safety nets (Mexico) to public work programmes (India).

When empowered, local governments, together with civil society and service delivery actors, can promote a virtuous cycle of MDG achievement. When local governments have a clear mandate and adequate financing and when citizens are empowered to hold local governments accountable, there can be tangible progress toward the achievement of the MDGs at the lowest transaction costs and with the highest efficiency, transparency and responsiveness. Figure 1 below illustrates the virtuous cycle for MDG progress that should be promoted at the local level:

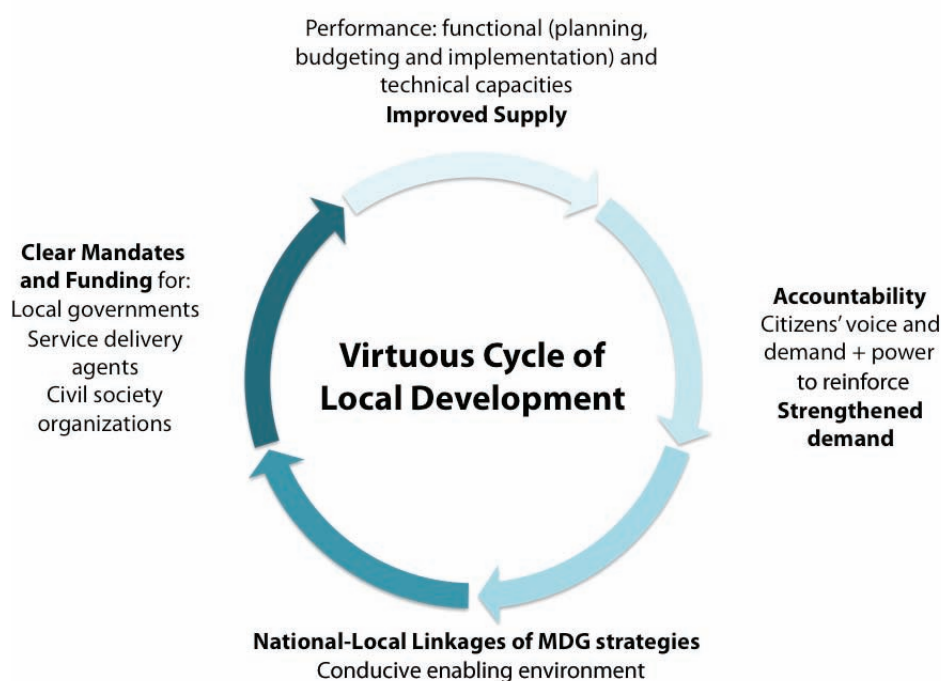


FIGURE 1

Virtuous Cycle of MDG Service Delivery at the Local Level

The Case for Investing in Capacities at the Local Level

Development partners recognize that capacity development is central to achieving the MDGs at the national and local levels. Most recently, the third high-level forum on aid effectiveness in Accra (2008) emphasized that there is a need to invest in capacity development (CD) to get better development results and stated the need for CD at the national, local and sectoral levels (SNV-UNDP, 2010). OECD/DAC recognized

BOX 3

The Case for Capacity Development at the Local Level

Despite local development planning and decentralization, "local capacity is both under-resourced and under-developed" as a strategy for accelerating progress toward the MDGs. Both government and donor investments in capacity development (CD) are low. For example, research conducted through SNV-UNDP partnership found that training for civil servants at the subnational level accounted for less than 1% of the total training budget (Vietnam).

From the demand side, the poorest communities may have low expectations of government services, little understanding of their entitlements, and little power to insist on change (or to articulate their demands). This, in turn, is reinforced by low incentives for local governments to improve their performance.

From the supply side, few products from the central government, agencies, or organizations provide CD training. CD is most often delivered to individuals and inadequately targets strengths and weaknesses of organizations (their 'business processes') and the institutional environment.

Although there is plenty of evidence that the local level has limited absorptive capacity, this should not be an argument for decreasing investment in capacity development. A case study from Nepal showed that, in order to achieve the MDGs and to deliver services promptly and efficiently, a significant increase in investment was required to manage larger budgets, more ambitious development projects and expanded services. When rightly implemented, CD investments can deliver great benefit. For example, through a focused CD approach, the SNV-supported biogas initiative is likely to benefit more than 1.8 million people in rural areas in five countries by supplying cheap and renewable energy from biogas plants. In Niger, strengthening local government capacities through participatory planning and budgeting led to greater MDG investment and 10% more domestic resource mobilization.

Capacity development should target three main actors at the subnational level: local government, service providers and civil society organizations (including community-based ones). When targeting service delivery agents (both public and private), CD investments should be made along the service delivery chain (as opposed to one-off training) so that the results will be more sustainable. For example, when targeting MDG 1 through boosting agricultural productivity, CD investments target those directly involved in the value chain process: inputs, production, processing, trading and consumption. In addition, CD interventions can be provided to business development and knowledge services (i.e., financing, marketing, research, and business development services such as agricultural extension service providers). CD for civil society organizations can be either for direct service delivery (e.g., HIV prevention, literacy outreach) or for management or monitoring of service providers and local governments (community participation in schools/health, public hearings, citizen score cards, budget monitoring, etc.).

Thus, the main CD investments to consider for effective MDG services delivery are those that strengthen supply and demand, improve accountability, and target organizational effectiveness. Specific interventions here include systems design, implementation procedures, technical support, manuals, formal trainings and general organizational support.



Photo by: Bill Lyons

"Meeting the MDGs does mean a better life for poor and vulnerable people around the globe. The decisions our countries, communities and organizations make now are critical to realising the Goals."

Helen Clark

UNDP Administrator, 'What will it take to achieve the Millennium Development Goals? An international assessment'

that adequate country capacity is one of the critical missing factors in current efforts to meet the MDGs and warned that development efforts in many of the poorest countries will fail – even if they are supported with substantially increased funding – if the development of sustainable capacity is not given greater, more careful attention (ibid., 2010).

Despite the evidence that MDGs are successful when inputs are made available to and managed by local governments and stakeholders, severe underinvestment at the local level continues to hamper progress toward the MDGs. There is not only inadequate support for implementation of MDG strategies at the local level, but, most important, there is also insufficient investment for capacity development. Box 3 summarizes the need for substantially increasing support for capacity development, if the MDGs are to be achieved.⁵

Limitations and Constraints to Good Subnational Governance

Accountability lies at the heart of improved local governance. But for there to be accountability, there must be 'local demand' and public calls for transparency and the sharing of information. When such demand is absent (for social, political or cultural reasons), the positive cycle from accountability to efficiency and cost-effectiveness is weakened. Individual citizens, media, and non-state actors should have the capacity and the legal mechanisms to express their voices and be sure that they are heard (Helling, 2005).

The political-legal environment sets the conditions under which local governments operate; if not adequately defined, 'the rules of the game' can also hamper local authorities' potential role. Unclear functional assignments may severely reduce local governments' ability to assume responsibility for the delivery of MDG-relevant investments. The unpredictability of fiscal allocations can lead to either unrealistic or unambitious plans and investment programmes, a situation especially likely during times of crisis or systemic shock. This may obstruct cooperation with citizens and local participatory processes. Overly stringent financial management rules that limit local governments' discretionary powers to allocate resources can also work against devolved delivery. A related constraint is associated with absorptive capacity: even when financial resources are available at the local level, the size and nature of the investments might overwhelm the ability of local-level actors to manage the resources.

Limited organizational capacities are another major obstacle to good performance. This challenge can be particularly severe in rural localities, where it is often difficult to attract and retain well-educated and professional staff. This can lead to a vicious cycle, whereby a lack of capacity becomes an 'excuse' for not assigning functions and resources that would naturally fall in the local arena; stalled devolution in turn does not allow local authorities to acquire the experience needed to improve their capacity in the

⁵ The box summarizes the main arguments provided in the UNDP Capacity is Development series: "Learning to localise: the case for investing more in local capacity development"; (UNDP, 2010).

medium to long term ('learning-by-doing').

National-local Linkages

National policies and processes for MDGs are intrinsically linked to local-level implementation. In order to have the greatest effect on development, both top-down systems (national legislation, sectoral and national policies and strategies) and bottom-up systems (local-level structures, deconcentrated sector departments, and devolved government structures) need to interact with, complement, and reinforce one another.

Depending on which governance structure and systems exist, different functions and responsibilities are assigned at various levels of government. Typically, there are two main types of structures: decentralized and centralized. As described earlier, countries may adopt, or have already in place, any of the following systems:

1. some type of decentralized structure, in which certain public service functions and responsibilities are delegated to local bodies;
2. a fully devolved system, in which local bodies constitute autonomous subnational jurisdictions, largely responsible for services development and delivery and able to collect taxes and revenues locally; or
3. a deconcentrated system, in which central governments may retain a monopoly over a supply of public services, while local sector departments carry out directives from the central government, financed through fiscal transfers.

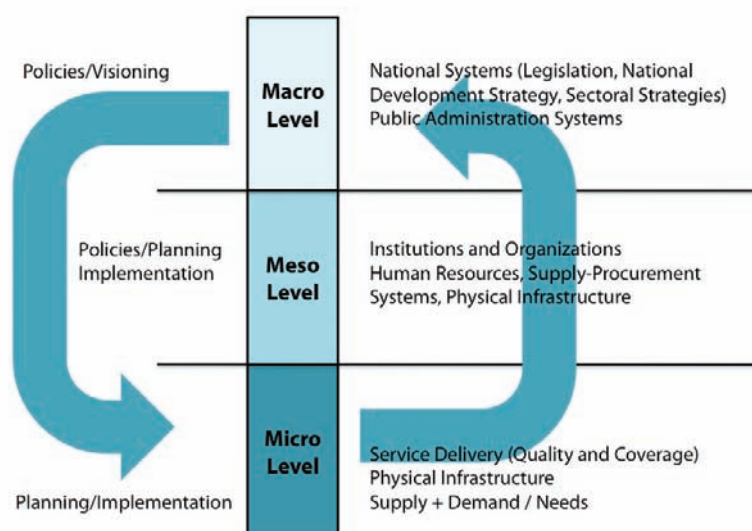
Under a centralized system, certain countries may also have a delegated structure under which competition for the provision of services is allowed and services can be contracted or outsourced to private service agents and associations.

Regardless of which governance system exists, an integrated approach to local development is essential for sustained results and progress. The linkages and feedback loops between national (macro), subnational (meso), and local (micro) levels for policies, planning and implementation cycles should promote demand-driven, participatory engagement and accountability channels. At the macro level, broad policy dictates the overall direction and vision for the MDGs and human development, affecting local-level realities. The overall public administration system delineates the functions and responsibilities of public servants, as well as those of elected or appointed local authorities, and specifies procedures and legal provisions. This process has a significant impact on local-level implementation. At the meso level, more specific plans and implementation processes are provided through public institutions and organizations. Further, sector-specific human resource strategies (e.g., health workers, teachers) are developed and implemented at this level. At the micro level, local authorities are responsible for ensuring the equitable delivery of quality services that are responsive and accountable to citizens' needs and demands. Experiences at the micro and meso levels

may inform policy dialogues and reforms at higher levels. Figure 2 below illustrates the linkages of planning and implementation at all levels.

FIGURE 2

Linkages at the National and Local Levels



Central governments play an important role for local service delivery. Even under strong decentralization frameworks, essential services cannot be fully financed locally. Effective delivery of services through LGs is dependent on an enabling environment, such as appropriate macro-economic policies, private sector and environmental policies, and microfinance institutions. Many essential functions, such as public health, vaccinations, social protection, and agricultural research, need to be retained and coordinated by central government agencies (UNCDF, 2004). Investments such as inter-village roads, schools and health facilities need inputs and oversight from higher levels of local authorities and de-concentrated line departments.

In order to have a greater effect that extends to more than one MDG target, it is sometimes necessary to prioritize strategic service delivery investments that capture broader public interests and that are planned or proposed by national and subnational institutions. Examples of such investments are construction of gender-sensitive school facilities, district or regional health centres/hospitals that can provide emergency obstetrics services for pregnant women, etc. **Thus, effective MDG service delivery requires contact with higher levels of subnational government and central authorities in order to facilitate fiscal transfers, technical support, coordination of planning and budgeting, upward transmission of ‘demand’ for services and downward sharing of legislations, policies and procedures** (UNCDF, 2004).

Different political environments bring their own set of challenges and opportunities for local service delivery. Nevertheless, the role of local government remains important across political contexts. In Nepal, for instance, local governments remained in place despite a

protracted conflict and political crisis that hindered interaction between citizens and local governments (especially at the village level). Although greatly challenged, local governments kept the responsibility for delivering basic services, a commitment that also implied that major line ministries in education and health were ‘devolved’. Violent conflict and political crisis often increase the need to support local governments (UNCDF, Nepal 2009).

Roles and Responsibilities of Non-state Actors: Civil Society, Community and the Private Sector

Without investment in effective local pro-poor public-private partnerships (PPPs) for service delivery strategies, continuing disparities, marginalization and lack of progress among poorer communities will likely persist. Government policy on PPPs and other strategies based on community approaches must be accelerated urgently in order to achieve the MDGs at the local level and to ensure that poor people receive services. There is evidence of good practices on how to strengthen the capacity of local actors, but a wider impact will require that local initiatives be scaled up and sustained, with greater investment from government and development partners at the local level.

In a conducive enabling environment, pro-poor PPPs can considerably improve citizens’ living conditions and access to basic services. The main types of investments include: (a) support for a conducive policy environment that includes PPP guidelines and principles regarding multi-stakeholder partnerships, models of service supply management, and regulatory and legislative frameworks; (b) targeted capacity development support to national and local stakeholders; (c) strengthening of service delivery partnerships between local government and the private sector, community providers and other non-state agents, including the creation of consortiums; (d) technical support, including tendering processes; and (e) public consultations and information networks for establishing service levels, standards and tariffs. Box 4 shows country experiences and types of investments that can be successfully delivered through pro-poor PPP arrangements to improve service delivery in poor urban and peri-urban neighborhoods in developing countries.

Civil Society and Community Engagement

Civil society actors can play an important role in enhancing the accountability and responsiveness of service delivery agents and local governments. Evidence from the ground shows that the promotion of genuine participatory processes has led to greater progress toward the MDGs. For example, a SNV-UNDP partnership supported the involvement of traditional leaders in regional and local MDG localization efforts, which brought stronger acceptance and ownership from local communities. In Macedonia, SNV and UNDP facilitated the establishment of local leadership groups with representatives from citizenry businesses and civil society actors. These forums helped integrate the needs of marginalized groups into national and local development strategies on the basis of the MDGs, resulting in tangible benefits such as the creation of mobile health care teams and daily centres for the elderly (SNV-UNDP, 2009). In Tanzania, civil society

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BOX 4

Public-Private Partnerships for Service Delivery

Lesotho: With the support of UNDP-Public Private Partnership for Service Delivery (PPPSD) and UN-Habitat, the Maseru City Council, together with the national government, was able to establish an effective pro-poor PPP framework for municipal service delivery, initially focusing on solid waste management and lessons that were later applied to other municipal services. Consequently, solid waste service coverage increased from 30% to 70% in the city of 228,000, at least 104 direct jobs were created (including for women and youth) and spurring the waste recycling business. The City Council replicated this approach in other municipal services such as health clinic management, dump site management, road maintenance and outdoor advertisement. This successful partnership directly contributed to the achievement of MDGs 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7 in this municipality and increased local revenues. There are now efforts to replicate it nationally in other service sectors through national policy formulation.

Mozambique: The supply of potable water supply remains a top priority for Mozambique, where only 57% of the country is covered. The cities of Maputo and Matola, with a combined population of 1.7 million, suffered from low coverage (40%) from the main private water operator, and peri-urban poor areas had no access at all to centralized distribution networks. As a result of support from UNDP and in close collaboration with the Water Assets Holding Company (FIPAG), the private operator (Aguas de Mozambique), the Water Regulatory Board (CRA) and local communities, Maputo and Matola, established a model for an inclusive public-private community partnership for the delivery of water service that created over 7,000 in-house and community tap connections in poor neighborhoods; this contributed primarily to the achievement of target 10 of MDG 7, i.e., to a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. In addition, effective support was provided in legalizing services performed by small operators in the poorer neighborhoods, institutionalizing this new model of water service delivery for the poor, and facilitating willingness to pay surveys and water quality assessments to match demand with supply.

Namibia: Most rural and urban poor in Namibia lack access to basic services such as health, education, water and sanitation. With support from UNDP, a national programme on pro-poor PPP for municipal service provision has been designed, in addition to capacity development of local actors and a guideline to engage on PPP to improve the provision of municipal services. As a result, the pilot towns of Gobabis and Katima Mulilo improved their solid waste management services for 7,000 poor people, established more than 100 jobs for disadvantaged individuals, empowered women and other local entrepreneurs with skills development to create sustainable businesses in the solid waste sector, and contributed to environmental sustainability by reducing pollution from waste disposal. In addition, more than 30 local authorities received capacity development support to develop effective PPPs for pro-poor service delivery and to establish a nationwide policy and legal and regulatory frameworks. A partnership has been established with a local training institution (Polytechnic Namibia) that is now providing professionals and students with a complete training course on PPP. Local authorities have employed some of the graduates to lead pro-poor PPPs that provide municipal services, thereby laying the groundwork for sustainability.

Nepal: Through PPPSD, UNDP has supported a national programme for pro-poor PPP to provide municipal services. The programme has promoted policy reforms, capacity development for local actors, and the drawing up of guidelines in the local language to assist PPPs in efforts to improve municipal services while involving local training institutions to sustain capacity development efforts. Consequently, some localities are now implementing pro-poor PPPs to improve the provision of various local services, including water supply, liquid sanitation and community facilities management. Solid waste management has traditionally been a uniquely municipal responsibility in Nepal, and the capacities of municipalities have been severely weakened due to recent conflict and neglect. By adopting a PPP in public services, one of the pilot localities, the city of Biratnagar, spearheaded the private sector's involvement in solid waste management. As a result, a local service provider (NGO) is now managing solid waste collection and all households (39,000) are benefiting directly or indirectly from these services; furthermore, demonstration sites for organic farming, composting, briquette production and renewable energy sources have been established. Kathmandu's low-income neighborhoods of Dhalko and Teku have also benefited from a PPP arrangement in potable water provision, which provides about 1,400 households with better water service. For more information visit www.undp.org/pppsd.

helped gather evidence on the quality and quantity of MDG services on the ground for local planning processes, which helped improve planning and delivery of health care and water services. In addition, effective information and public participation campaigns in Niger and Albania, conducted with the support of civil society and community actors and greater transparency in local planning processes, have led to improved local tax collection and resource mobilization at the local level. Across the world, civil society actors have been engaged in the monitoring of MDG progress, helping citizens hold their governments and service agents accountable for continuous improvement (SNV-UNDP, 2009).

Community-based and local government approaches are not mutually exclusive. Local civil society and non-government organizations may have a direct role in delivering services. Indeed, this has been useful in conflict and post-conflict situations, where central and local governments face severe constraints (Somalia country case). Community-based approaches may link with and complement sector and local government approaches to accelerate, align and facilitate local development (Figure 3)⁶.

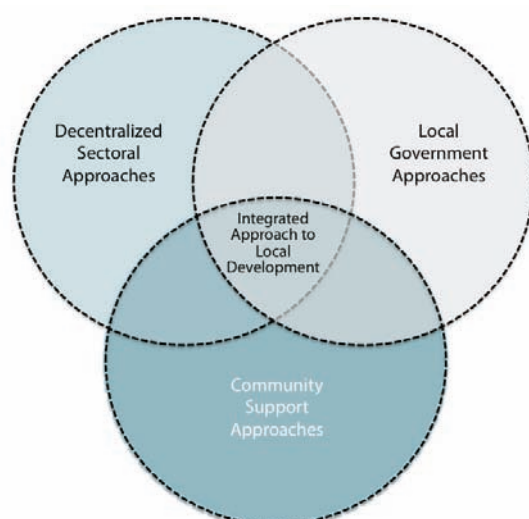


FIGURE 3
Integrated Approach to
Local Development

III. SCALING UP MDG SERVICES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Although each country has a unique set of challenges and opportunities, the integrated package of interventions and policies needed to achieve the MDG targets is well known and has been proven in various geopolitical and resource contexts. At the most fundamental level, the scaling up services to achieve the MDGs requires two strategies in which governments are backed by international support, the private sector and civil society. These are:

1. Scaling up the response of **sector ministries and departments in the central gov-**

⁶ Helling 2005, p. 47.

ernment in order to strengthen reforms in policy and regulation and to provide key MDG-related services for which responsibilities rest with the central government and its agencies at the national and subnational levels.

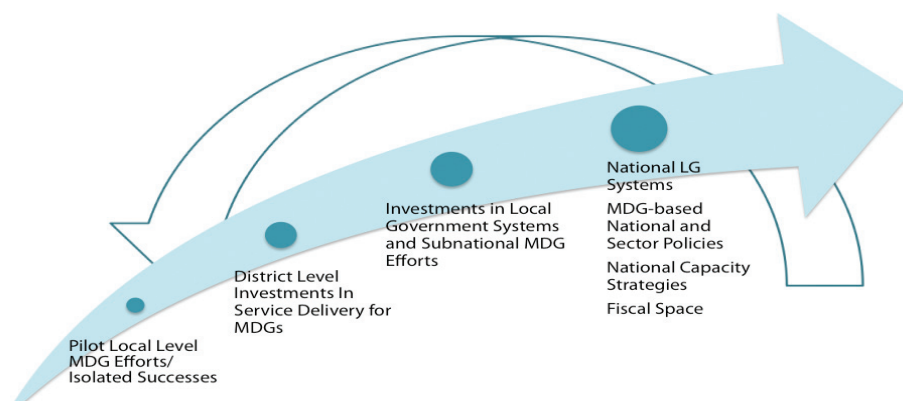
2. Scaling up support to **subnational governments, communities and other local actors** so that they can deliver the infrastructure and services in key MDG-related services for which distinctive roles belong to the local government, within the framework of national policy and legislation.

Scaling up MDG efforts at the local level requires (a) an expansion of the scope and reach of services; (b) an increase in the capabilities of local organizations and agencies to deliver services; and (c) an improvement of central and local policies and institutional frameworks. This leads to sustainable, effective and efficient national and local structures that provide quality public services at all levels – national, subnational and local – resulting in measurable progress toward MDG targets in the medium term (three to ten years). Support for local government and community-based service delivery, especially in rural areas, has been subject to numerous pilots. The focus now needs to be on the assistance of strategies for scaling up and partnering with local actors that could play a definite role in achieving the MDGs (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4

Scaling Up MDG Services
at the Local Level: Working
through National Systems

Scaling Up at the Local Level: Local Lessons/ Pilots Informing National Processes



Yemen's Decentralized Local Development Support Programme is an example of an ongoing scaling up process. This Programme started in 2004 as a pilot in six districts and expanded to 28 districts in 2005; a subsequent phase in 2006 reached an additional 20 districts, and finally, in 2009, the initiative extended to a total of 70 districts in nine governorates (UNCDF, UNDP, 2010). Another well-known scaled success is India's strategy for promoting decent work and sustainable employment through various public programmes, such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS). NREGS and its predecessors were successful in providing short-term employment and thus, safety nets to reduce food insecurity among the rural poor. In some cases, the benefits extended beyond short-term relief by creating 'green' jobs, increasing land productivity and improving water management.



Photo by: Adam Rogers

IV. THE STRATEGY FOR SCALING UP SUPPORT FOR THE MDGS THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Most developing countries have strategies and plans that address the MDGs to some degree. **The biggest challenge consists in achieving sustainable tangible results in the short, medium and long terms.** For instance, while Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Uganda and Vietnam have successfully initiated MDG localization efforts, scaling up these efforts to cover sizeable groups of the population remains a challenge.

In most countries, the focus will draw on MDG-based plans and be on one or two MDGs that national governments, in partnership with subnational government partners, consider most urgent.

Developing national and local capacities for sustained development results is at the core of UNDP work. UNDP, together with other UN and development partners, works on the ground in 166 countries, and is at the forefront of work with national and local partners seeking to develop their own solutions to development challenges and to progress toward MDGs. UNCDF's comparative advantage comes from a unique combination of investment capital, capacity-building and technical advisory services to promote microfinance and local development in the LDCs.

UNDP and UNCDF urge development partners and national governments to commit to delivering the essential MDG services to women and men left behind by development processes. The UNDP-UNCDF strategy consists of the following elements:

1. Synergizing successful efforts by different actors and development partners at the local level to target priority MDGs.
2. Disseminating the successful experiences that local development programmes have had in progressing toward the MDGs but that have not been transferred to other areas, sectors or population groups because of insufficient resources or capacities.
3. Supporting national implementation strategies in one or two priority sectors by focusing on building national systems required for maximum progress toward the MDGs.
4. Generating and sharing knowledge within and between countries, regions and the world by nurturing a community of practice on localizing MDGs and scaling up local successes.

This proposal recognizes that achieving the MDGs will be possible only if critical services and inputs are available to, and managed and used by, local communities in countries that are struggling to meet the MDGs. It therefore calls for urgent assistance and concerted commitments to allow local governments in impoverished and vulnerable countries and regions to plan and implement, through a participatory process, specific scalable local responses to the most urgent MDG challenges. This support will be provided through **a new global initiative and funding framework to scale up MDG in-**



Photo by: UNDP Kenya

interventions and efforts at the local level during 2010-2014. In tandem with providing significantly increased resources for small-scale service delivery, UNDP and UNCDF will also provide capacity development assistance to strengthen national systems and local governments responsible for the delivery of MDG services.

In terms of funding, allocations will directly fund local small-scale investments and services needed to achieve the MDGs while continuing to support national MDG efforts globally. The catalytic funds will enable governments to expand from a few pilot districts and isolated success stories to larger groups and/or geographical areas. Countries that already have systems to allocate funds at the local level may use the catalytic resources for the more efficient and effective delivery of MDG services.

In most countries, the focus will draw on MDG-based plans and be on one or two MDGs that national governments, in partnership with subnational government partners, consider most urgent. The selected MDGs will be: (a) goals where the countries are lagging behind on one or more targets; (b) goals where subnational governments and actors in that particular country have significant roles for the delivery of investments and services needed to achieve them; and (c) goals that, whenever possible and feasible, can have a positive spillover impact on other MDGs. The comprehensive scaling up efforts will include proven as well as innovative, sustainable practices (such as ‘green jobs’ and sustainable, organic farming) coupled with investments to develop the capacities of local government and service delivery agents. The systemic issues causing delivery bottlenecks must be addressed in order to maintain the long-term sustainability of results. **This global initiative will apply the positive experiences that helped local municipalities and communities to achieve the MDGs and other local development goals, and will support decentralized, global partnerships between municipalities in developed and developing nations.**

Focus and Objectives

According to the proposal, **the selected local government in each country, in partnership with local actors, will receive assistance to deliver local MDG-related infrastructure and services over four years in order to increase access to basic services that support one or two priority MDGs.** In addition to direct grants to local governments, funds will be provided for capacity development investments in service delivery, institutional strengthening, financial management, local MDG-based planning, budgeting and monitoring, and national-level project management. Overall, 95% of resources will be devoted to MDG investments at the local level and to capacity development at the national and local levels.

From this point onwards, the focus needs to be on assistance to strategies for scaling up if local governments are to play their part in reaching the MDGs.

In each country, the proposal will focus on increasing small-scale investments and services in priority MDG areas at the local level over four consecutive years, complementing existing central and local government allocations and community contributions. The launching phase of the initiative identifies main opportunities and challenges and develops a convincing, results-oriented scale-up strategy in each priority country that will measurably advance at least one or two national and/or local MDG targets. The following countries will be eligible for the preparatory phase of scaling up and subsequent fundraising efforts:

1. LDCs, which are the poorest nations in the world.
2. Countries emerging from crisis (such as conflict and natural disasters), where funds can be delivered through local governments in areas most affected.
3. Low- and middle-income countries with pockets of poverty, which have MDG challenges equivalent to those of LDCs.

It is acknowledged that proposals will not only target a variety of poverty levels, but will also address different political contexts, enabling environments, and competences for service delivery at the local level. The focus will be on those efforts where local governments and actors can play a particularly important role in achieving the MDGs and reducing disparities within countries; this includes local economic and social infrastructure and services and employment generation needed to reduce the proportion of the population living on less than \$1 per day.

As part of the launching phase, UNDP and UNCDF gathered evidence from countries currently implementing local development/MDG localization initiatives⁷. The evidence collected to date shows that targeted investments, coupled with capacity development of local authorities, actors and communities, can tangibly benefit poor and vulnerable groups quite quickly. The collected case studies covered middle-income countries such as Turkey and Macedonia, low-income countries such as Lao-PDR, Mongolia

⁷ The country cases are exclusively for informational and indicative purposes. The documents were prepared after consultation with UNDP Regional Bureaus, UNDP and UNCDF Regional Service Centres, and teams at Country Offices. However, final details of the scaling up efforts in terms of specific investments, funding modalities and actual coverage are subject to further definition and discussion. Country cases as presented in this package are not actual proposals.

and Lesotho, and least developed countries such as Niger, Mali and Nepal. Regardless of a country's level of development, all cases show that continued support for MDG progress at the local level is essential for reducing inequalities and disparities between regions, social groups and genders.

The case studies also demonstrate that, in order to scale up the isolated successes, it is necessary to strengthen national systems and to improve linkages between national and local policies, programmes, budgets and stakeholders.⁸ Cases from conflict and post-conflict countries such as Nepal and the Solomon Islands show that continuous support to local governments and actors during crisis is the surest way to maintain essential MDG services and to protect fragile livelihoods, despite local political complexities and challenges. The opportunities for scaling up that countries have identified vary greatly, and depend on the countries' individual circumstances and degree of development. These opportunities range as follows: scaling up community-based initiatives in health and infrastructure (Armenia); empowering small-holder farmers (Benin); integrated packages of services for isolated communities (Bhutan); infrastructure development for maternal health and girls (Lao-PDR); investments in maternal and child health (Lesotho); employment schemes targeting stigmatized groups (Roma) and women (Macedonia); integrated packages of services for the 166 most vulnerable communes (Mali); water and sanitation for rural nomads (Mongolia); livelihood recovery and energy access for the poorest (Nepal); energy access and water services for Somaliland and Puntland (Somalia); agriculture extension services (Sri Lanka); agriculture development and value chain development (Turkey); the creation of natural assets for food security (Yemen); and employment creation and care services for people living with HIV/AIDS (Zambia).

"As countries have made headway, they have accumulated a wealth of experience which can be scaled up to accelerate progress."

Helen Clark

UNDP Administrator,
'Unlocking progress:
MDG acceleration on the
road to 2015'

Working through National Systems and Existing Support Modalities

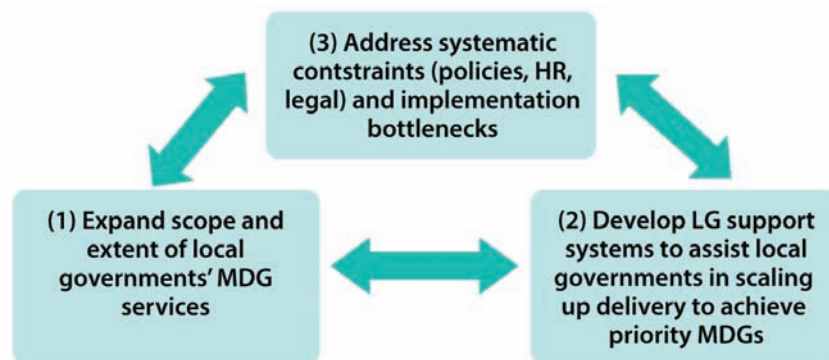
All countries will receive support to improve local delivery **within a national framework in order to achieve the priority MDGs nationwide. Three major steps will be addressed through an iterative process: (a) expansion of the scope and extent of local delivery within national systems; (b) development of these national/regional local governance LG systems; and (c) refinement of the business process (implementation process) and policy, legal and operational frameworks to address bottlenecks in delivery.** Figure 5 illustrates the interconnections of the scaling up process and the iterative process for the development of national frameworks for local MDG achievement.

The focus needs to be on assistance to strategies for scaling up if local governments are to play their part in reaching the MDGs. The corresponding scaling up of assistance to the national effort will be achieved within existing programmes rather than by establishing new interventions. The governments in each country will propose a plan for deliv-

⁸ The country cases are being prepared on a rolling basis. As more information becomes available, additional indicative examples will enrich the proposal.

FIGURE 5

Scaling Up Support for the MDGs through Local Governments



ery within the agreed modality and expand existing nationally executed programmes as needed (establishing new programmes only as an exception).

In LDCs and low- and middle-income countries that have not yet established a local government financing mechanism and a national system for capacity development support, the scaling up plans will include a proposal on funding mechanisms to directly finance local MDG initiatives, based on examples of Local Development Funds (LDFs) and Local Development Programmes (LDPs). In countries where national policies, financing modalities and capacity development processes are more developed, technical and financial assistance will be provided for scaling up support, following the interlinked process indicated above. In all countries, the support will have three dimensions: (a) financing; (b) capacity development that incorporates participation, community empowerment and accountability; and (c) development of the national policy framework. The countries will draw on the existing expertise of UNDP programmes and, in the LDCs, they will most often be implemented in partnership with UNCDF.

V. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Within the framework of the proposed global initiative, qualifying countries can receive support through a demand-driven process. Governments will develop proposals and identify the priority MDG(s), the tier(s) of local government that will scale up support for the MDGs, and the modality for scaling up. The proposals will also indicate the national institutions supporting the local efforts for which institutional reform and capacity development support are needed, and the key areas of local service delivery requiring assistance to identify bottlenecks. In addition, the proposal will specify whether support is requested for the entire country or to address pockets of poverty.

Operational Strategy

This global programme and funding framework envisages that **95% of support will be provided directly to local government and national systems to achieve tangible results and**

measurable change in the acceleration of one or two priority MDGs. Funds can be provided as block grants to the selected districts and provinces, and the rest of the finances will be devoted to providing effective capacity development and sound project implementation support at the national level. Earmarked resources will be provided to strengthen mechanisms of financial management, service delivery and institutional arrangements at the local level. Monitoring and evaluation will also have earmarked resources to ensure that, in accordance with the Results-Based Management (RBM) methodology, the project objectives and outputs match national and local needs and demand and that this global programme yields tangible results in strengthening local and national capacities for sustained progress toward the MDGs.

National level⁹ (95% of total programmable resources): In addition to block grants, countries will provide specific earmarked support for capacity development of LG financial systems, national LG support institutions and service delivery agents. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT), led by the Resident Coordinator, will provide day-to-day project implementation and oversight support, including coordinating technical assistance, as needed, from regional service centres and from the headquarters of UNDP and UNCDF. **This global programme will adhere to the principles of the Paris Declaration and use existing national systems for implementation as much as possible.** Resources will be provided to support participatory planning and implementation as well as national level advocacy and outreach for the MDGs. Rigorous M&E systems will be developed in each priority country to monitor measurable progress in the priority MDGs and to ensure that the project stays on track. The project will also ensure that gender-responsive, transformative practices and environmentally sustainable initiatives are prioritized.

Regional level (2% of total programmable resources): Support at the regional level is tailored toward the needs and demands at the local level and will be largely focused on strengthening local service delivery agents and local governance institutions. In countries that are fragile or have weak capacity, **substantial resources will be devoted to establishing systems that lead to a transformative change in capacities.** In addition, another main focus of the regional project support consists in promoting South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange.

Global level (3% of total programmable resources): The disbursement of project funds and the overall oversight will be at the global level. Once the funds become available, the fund disbursement mechanisms will be developed, most likely through existing UNDP Global Thematic Trust Fund windows; a global project management structure will be determined. **The main product of the global efforts is the consolidation of lessons learned, successes and recommendations from the selected countries, which will culminate in the global knowledge products and information sharing and in further global advocacy.**

Fund Management

During the launch phase, this global programme will be financed by contributions from

⁹ Given the nature of the initiative, this percentage corresponds to national and subnational levels.



Photo by: Jorgen Schytte



Photo by: Giacomo Pirozzi

UNDP and UNCDF, under parallel funding. UNDP and UNCDF will apply their own policies and procedures for the management of their own contributions.¹⁰ Beyond the launching phase, the best strategies and management arrangements that ensure a smooth programme implementation will be defined jointly with development partners.

The programme is designed to deliver localized support with limited project costs by **scaling up existing local development programmes in the majority of countries targeted**. In exceptional cases, a separate project will be established when a proposal is clearly building on previous experiences at the local level. **The resources could be administered either by a Thematic Trust Fund window already used by UNDP or by a dedicated Global Trust Fund**. The procedure for disbursement and the detailed management arrangements of the trust fund, especially at the implementation stage, will be based on the lessons emerging from the launch phase. UNDP will manage technical assistance, and regional service centres will lead in close partnership with UNCDF's regional teams and with technical backstopping from UNDP and UNCDF Headquarters (HQ).

Implementation

UNDP will provide technical support for local governance, local government service delivery and financing, localized MDG target-setting and monitoring, and capacity assessment and capacity development processes. **The national implementation (NEX) modality and the use of national systems and agents for implementation will be preferable to direct implementation by UNDP and/or UNCT.**

UNCDF – as the funding mechanism for capital investments within the UNDP group – will be responsible for managing funding for local governments at the country level, and together with UNDP for providing technical support for the development of an appropriate Local Development (LD)/MDG Localization programmatic framework for country-level scale up initiatives on the basis of relevant past experiences and lessons learned. In particular, it will also support field implementation through ongoing LD initiatives and through the (re)capitalization of Local Development Funds for MDG-relevant local investments in target LDCs. UNCDF will also develop strategic partnerships to support the global programme and resource-mobilization efforts.

VI. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

A broad global partnership will support the scaling up effort. The following partners are expected to join forces:

- UN agencies such as UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNESCO, and UNAIDS, committed to working together with UNDP and UNCDF, 'delivering as one' in support of the programme, providing funding and the necessary technical and management support to ensure delivery.

¹⁰ Funding arrangements under this option follow each agency's regulations and rules for individual programming and project processes.



Photo by: Peter Bruyneel

- Bilateral donors and other development partners committed to funding MDG achievement in LDCs and countries emerging from crisis – all sharing the commitment that local development should also comply with the principles of the Paris Declaration for accountable donor assistance.
- Development partners committed to building the capacity of local governments for MDG-related service delivery.
- Associations of local governments in developed and developing countries that are committed to enabling subnational governments in the poorest nations to play their mandated role in achieving the MDGs. This will be based on existing partnerships between UNDP and associations such as United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF).
- Development trusts and philanthropic organizations committed to supporting community-level projects, but aware of the need to avoid creating 'islands of development' and thus working in partnership with national actors.
- Private-sector partners as a key source of financial support, technological innovation, efficiency in business processes, and technical expertise. Economic growth, job creation and sustainability of local development processes require active engagement of the local and international private sectors.



Photo by: Elder Bravo

- Select international non-governmental organizations with specific sector and technical expertise.

Joint UN Support for National Processes and Partnerships

In each country, UNDP will manage technical support and programme assistance on behalf of the UN system, and the UNDP Country Office (CO) will bear overall responsibility for delivery of the support needed by national partners to successfully scale up local responses in accordance with the accepted proposal.

Reflecting the priority MDG(s), the government in each country that is applying for support will propose how it will draw on the technical expertise of other UN agencies and other development partners. For example, in a proposal from the Government of Mongolia, where MDG 7 (access to safe drinking water) is the one least likely to be achieved at the present rate of progress, the improvement of construction, repair and maintenance of rural drinking water schemes spearheaded by local governments in the most remote provinces would require lead technical support from UNICEF and WHO.

In each country, support for each sector and local service delivery involves development partners beyond the UN system, and proposals should include a clear role in policy and capacity development support for these partners. For the partners behind the global programme, special emphasis will be placed on linkages to existing programmes and any national development frameworks in each of the countries supported.

VII. CONCLUSION

The time for business as usual is over. The livelihoods of poor men and women are directly affected by challenges beyond their control, such as the threat of climate change and volatile economic political and financial systems. Every day, millions of people face dwindling economic opportunities, unaffordable food prices, and infertile lands. The vulnerable and the poor do not make the news and often do not have a voice – rather, they continue to suffer silently. By 2015, we will have broken our promises to those who are being left behind by development processes – unless we demonstrate our commitment through tangible results.

This proposal calls for the continuous support of innovations in galvanizing efforts and establishing partnerships at the local level. Focusing on the comparative advantage that local actors have for delivering essential services and overcoming development challenges, Scaling Up Support for the MDGs at the Local Level suggests a way to share the knowledge and experience that subnational governments and communities have acquired while working to achieve the MDGs. Geographical, thematic, sectoral and qualitative scale up initiatives, as well as critical policy reforms, can see local successes become regional and national ones.

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