Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals

Making the Link
This Primer is based on the views and experiences of development practitioners on linking human rights and the MDGs in their work. It provides basic guidance on how to make the link and explores the key questions that practitioners will face in doing so. The primary audience is the non-human rights development practitioners, expressed in a virtual discussion on the subject. The Primer responds to the request from the non-human rights community for guidance on the subject.

Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equity and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development
Community of practice is eager for guidance on the following questions:

- Operational link between MDGs and human rights is tenuous at best
- How exactly do human rights strengthen MDG programmes?
- What is the usefulness of linking human rights with MDG processes?
- Do human rights help under the challenge of prioritising?
- Will the promises of linking human rights with MDGs ever be fulfilled?
- Where are the main distinctions between them?
- If human rights and the MDGs have comparable objectives?

However, making the link explicit is not clear or simple. More guidance is needed to help development practitioners explain the MDGs to their audiences.

In September 2000, 189 world leaders agreed to the Millennium Declaration:

> "...the need to eradicate hunger, achieve sustainable development and promote social equity and human dignity, for all peoples and for all countries, without the distinction of race, gender or religion, within a framework of democratic governance."

2. OHCHR (with UNDP). M. HURIT, forthcoming.)


4. R. Transactional rights development (TXRD)– a development tool.


Human Rights and MDGs

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achieved through international cooperation.

Global approaches recognize the interdependence of poverty worldwide, which can only be
addressed through international cooperation.

MDGs are a set of quantifiable time-bound goals that articulate the social,

egalitarian and development objectives of the MDGs.

The MDGs

are a standard and consistent framework of human rights.

Box 1: The Three Categories of State Obligations

1. To respect human rights means simply not to interfere with their enjoyment

2. To protect human rights means to take steps prevent their enjoyment

3. To fulfil human rights means to ensure that rights are enjoyed

Defining the Terms

and differ from each other.

Obligation to fulfil:

These refer to the obligation to respect the obligation to protect and the

Sieve obligations referring the rights contained in these goals fall into

human rights treaties, and 80% of the states have ratified four or more

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Human Rights and MDGs: Complementarity Frameworks

Table 1: MDGs and Key Human Rights

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<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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A number of ways. These will be discussed in Part 3.

Human Rights and MDGs are also two interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

Contents on the progress towards the MDGs

- Governmental actions – goal-driven assistance to address directly Key
- Public support for action
- Complementing/modulation – helping to build awareness and galvanize
- Analysis – assessment of the policy dimensions of achieving the MDGs
- Monitoring – leading progress towards the MDGs

The human rights to life, liberty and security and the right to development are fundamental, they are the ultimate objectives of promoting human rights, and MDGs are tools for achieving this. The MDGs can help alignment efforts towards the achievement of human rights. The MDGs can help galvanize efforts towards the achievement of human rights.

Many countries have begun to integrate the MDGs into national development frameworks through careful selection of social development strategies. An important challenge in aligning the MDGs to ably monitoring progress in achieving the MDGs is how to align the MDGs with national economic and social development plans.
The MDGs are meant to measure –

• To be achieved by 2015.

Human rights have no deadline for when they must be realized.

• By contrast, the MDGs have an agreed timeframe in which they are
expected to be accomplished.

measuring empowerment of human rights is much more complex and less

The MDGs feature well-established indicators used to monitor progress:

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The Contribution of a Human Rights Based Approach to the MDGs

Table 2: Differences between Human Rights and MDGs

<table>
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<th>Human Rights</th>
<th>MDGs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ratified universal values</td>
<td>Focused on certain countries/groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legally binding</td>
<td>Not legally binding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time-bound</td>
<td>Not time-bound</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandated</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not quantified</td>
<td>Quantified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including poverty (wide spread coverage)</td>
<td>Focused on poverty for all people</td>
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The following table summarises these key differences:
human rights-based approach to development programming...

A human rights lens of analysis

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A Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Programming

Human Rights Based Development Programming

Human rights-based development programming is an approach that integrates the respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the heart of all development planning and practice. It involves a comprehensive and participatory approach to development that ensures that the rights of all people are taken into account at every stage of the development process.

The human rights-based approach is grounded in the following principles:

1. Human rights are indivisible: All human rights are interdependent and interrelated, and therefore integral to the development agenda.
2. Development is human rights based: Development policies and practices must be consistent with human rights.
3. Participation is key: All stakeholders, including affected communities, must be involved in the decision-making process.
4. Accountability: Accountability mechanisms must be in place to ensure that human rights are respected.

The human rights-based approach is not just about adding human rights to development projects, but about fundamentally transforming development practices to respect, protect, and promote human rights at every stage of the process.

Development programming that is truly human rights based must:

- Reflect the full spectrum of human rights in all development activities.
- Ensure that human rights are respected, protected, and promoted in all development projects.
- Incorporate a human rights perspective into all aspects of development planning and implementation.
- Ensure that human rights are integrated into all policy and programming decisions.

The human rights-based approach to development programming is not just a matter of adding human rights to development projects, but a fundamental transformation of the way development is conceived and implemented. It is about ensuring that development benefits everyone and respects the dignity of all people.

In conclusion, a human rights-based approach to development programming is crucial for ensuring that development is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable. It is about recognizing the fundamental rights of all people and ensuring that they are protected and promoted in all aspects of development.

References:


The Universal Declaration on Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. It is a foundational document that sets out a general standard of human rights to be enjoyed by all members of the human family without any discrimination.

Being up against one’s rights

Using a human rights analysis to identify and address discrimination

Step 1: Expression, access to justice, etc.

Expression and health care services, participation in public decision-making, freedom of religion and belief, and right to education are human rights that must be respected and protected. These rights are fundamental to the dignity of the individual and to the fulfillment of human potential. To realize these rights, action is needed at both the level of governance and at the level of societal structures and institutions. The second step is to identify which groups of individuals are affected by discrimination.

Step 2: Monitoring and valuing

This is the first step in addressing and eliminating discrimination. All individuals and communities have a role to play in promoting human rights and addressing discrimination. To do this, they must be aware of their rights and the mechanisms for enforcing them. This involves education and awareness-raising campaigns, as well as legal and policy frameworks that protect human rights.

Apply human rights in practice

Incorporating human rights into national policies and practices is crucial to realizing their full potential. This involves ensuring that laws and policies are consistent with international human rights standards, and that they are monitored and enforced effectively. It also involves promoting human rights as a fundamental principle in all sectors of society, including education, healthcare, and the economy.

This is a continuous process that requires ongoing commitment and action. By working together, we can ensure that human rights are respected and protected for all.

*Disclaimer: This text is an example and may not reflect the exact content of the original document.*
media sound services without the involvement of other parties. Without the involvement of other parties, this means that the needs of those who are affected by a crisis must be met without the involvement of the crisis. Without the involvement of other parties, this means that the needs of those who are affected by a crisis must be met without the involvement of the crisis.

Association and Expression of Views: Helping Engage the Media Process

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For more information, see the website of the Ministry of Human Rights and the Human Rights Commission. 

A Framework for Guiding State Action

Disaggregated Data an Example from UNDP Malawi

The MDGs do not produce a detailed methodology for how they should be implemented to engage the media. A useful guide to doing so is the framework presented by the Human Rights Commission. 

The notion of "participation" and "consultation" have deep roots in development and are expected to be the ultimate goal of development. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have both expressed a commitment to the notion of "participation" and "consultation" as a central component of their approach to development. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have both expressed a commitment to the notion of "participation" and "consultation" as a central component of their approach to development.
Empowering the accountability of all relevant actors

For more information, see the Global Partnership’s work on human rights and the rights of women, children, and people with disabilities.

Many of the challenges that the world currently faces, such as the global refugee crisis, are intertwined with the issue of accountability. Human rights are non-negotiable, and the rights of children and women are particularly vulnerable. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have been working to improve accountability through various initiatives.

Accessible services are expected to be accessible to all, in terms of education and health care.

The right to education

The right to education is a fundamental human right that is essential for the development of all aspects of life. Education provides individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to participate in society and make informed decisions. It is also a means to overcome poverty and improve living standards. Education is a right that should be accessible to all, regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status.

Minimum standards of service delivery

The quality of services provided must meet certain minimum standards. These standards are defined in the “Minimum Standards for Services in Education” document, which outlines the basic requirements for access to education.

Access to education is a right that should be universal and non-discriminatory. The right to education includes the right to a quality education, which must be free, accessible, and inclusive. It also includes the right to access to educational materials and resources, and the right to participate in the decision-making process related to education.

The right to health care

The right to health care is another fundamental human right that is essential for the well-being of individuals. Health care services must be accessible, affordable, and of high quality. The right to health care includes the right to access to medical treatment, including maternal and reproductive health care, as well as the right to access to health education and information.

The right to adequate housing

The right to adequate housing is another fundamental human right that is essential for the well-being of individuals. Adequate housing includes the right to access to safe and healthy living conditions, as well as the right to access to basic amenities such as water and sanitation.

The right to food

The right to food is a fundamental human right that is essential for the survival and well-being of individuals. The right to food includes the right to access to nutritious and sufficient food, as well as the right to access to food education and information.

The right to freedom of movement

The right to freedom of movement is a fundamental human right that is essential for the well-being of individuals. The right to freedom of movement includes the right to access to safe and secure movement, as well as the right to access to information and assistance in case of arrest or detention.

The right to participate in cultural life

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The right to work

The right to work is a fundamental human right that is essential for the well-being of individuals. The right to work includes the right to access to safe and healthy working conditions, as well as the right to access to information and assistance in case of employment-related issues.

The right to participate in public life

The right to participate in public life is a fundamental human right that is essential for the well-being of individuals. The right to participate in public life includes the right to access to information and assistance in case of participation-related issues, as well as the right to access to cultural activities.
Challenges

Legal accountability provides an effective vector for rendering human rights and MDGs accountable

A report from UNDP

"In order to make people aware of human rights, we need to establish a broader understanding of the MDGs and the role they play in contributing to human rights and the fight against poverty.

When people are engaged in monitoring progress towards the MDGs and ensuring the implementation of human rights accountability mechanisms, such as National Human Rights Institutions and human rights mechanisms, it is essential to develop a legal basis for accountability.

Moreover, the MDGs and human rights need to be linked more closely in both theory and practice. UNDP’s work has helped to facilitate this linkage through various initiatives, including the establishment of a National Human Rights Office in several countries.

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Enforcement and Accountability of Rights

Failure to effectively enforce human rights principles and norms can undermine human rights enjoyment and ultimately impede progress towards achieving the SDGs. Ensuring accountability mechanisms are in place is crucial to prevent human rights violations.

Promoting Development Objectives

Promoting development objectives is key to achieving the SDGs. This involves ensuring that policies and programs are gender-responsive, inclusive, and support the rights of all individuals.

Key Challenges Regarding the Implementation of Human Rights in the MDGs Context

- Ensuring that development projects and initiatives align with human rights standards and norms.
- Providing targeted support to sectors that are lagging in terms of human rights implementation.
- Strengthening institutions and capacity to monitor and evaluate human rights performance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of the MDGs and the achievement of the human rights agenda are interdependent. By promoting and protecting human rights, we can ensure that the SDGs are realized in a way that respects and promotes human dignity and well-being.
Human Rights as Empowerment

Final Remarks

Human rights as empowerment

Example from Benin

In its ‘2006 PRSP Participation’ report, UNDP mentions raising awareness raising campaigns conducted in a municipality in

In 2006, UNDP partnered with the NGO Social Watch to reach out to the population and ask them their views on the PRSP. On the basis of this input, the PRSP process Social Watch and UNDP conducted a number of civic education campaigns to build awareness among the people of the municipality of their rights, and how to claim them. Due to high levels of illiteracy, many people had no knowledge of these issues. As a result of this campaign, women started to engage in the local development policy process. They went on to train other women in human rights concepts. This development was positive for the municipality, as reported out of their own initiative they went on to train other women in human rights concepts. This development was positive for the municipality, as reported

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The Human Rights Info-link was developed in parallel to this Primer. It is a collection of perhaps 100 case studies that have been developed as a companion to this Primer. It is a collection of practical examples designed to guide and inspire efforts to link human rights and the MDGs. For practitioners seeking more information on how to link human rights and the MDGs.

For More Information

Some important initial steps towards bridging this gap:

- Ensure the part of the MDGs is human rights based.
- Establish linkages between human rights and MDGs in development work. This Primer and the feedback from practitioners has highlighted the need for national coordination.
- For practitioners seeking more information on how to link human rights and the MDGs.

For More Information
Both the Primer and the Website were developed as a follow up to the:

**Fortcoming:**

**Millennium Development Goals—Theoretical and Practical Implications doc**


Centre UNDP in September 2006: A study on the possible implications of linking human rights and the MDGs. The report of the working group meeting “Human Rights and the MDGs—Theoretical and Practical Implications” has also been published from the Centre UNDP and WHO.

**Report of the Working Group Meeting “Human Rights and the MDGs”**


Human Rights and MDGs from April to June 2006: The discussion was based on the UN Networks on MDGs and Human Rights in Development. How to effectively link MDGs and Human Rights in the context of the MDGs.