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Editors' Note

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EDITORS' NOTE

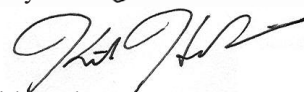
In 2000, world leaders gathered at the United Nations to adopt the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals (“MDGs”), which grew out of this Declaration, sought to unify the world around the achievement of eight goals by 2015: (1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; (2) achieve universal primary education; (3) promote gender equality and empower women; (4) reduce child mortality; (5) improve maternal health; (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (7) ensure environmental sustainability; and (8) develop a global partnership for development.

Five years later, in September 2005, world leaders gathered again in New York at the UN World Summit with the intent to review progress towards the MDGs. Although much of the discussion was diverted by concerns with security and restructuring the UN, participants exchanged ideas on the progress of the MDGs, including whether it was even necessary to create a “development agenda.” *Sustainable Development Law & Policy* (“SDLP”) attended several of the events running along side the General Assembly discussions, including “Investing in the Environment to Fight Poverty” and “Achieving the Millennium Development Goals for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Africa with a Gender Perspective.” At these events, government officials and leaders from nongovernmental organizations generally agreed that it is necessary to set goals, hold organizations accountable, and translate priority-setting into action.

This issue of SDLP examines the MDGs and the international community’s efforts to establish a global development agenda. Contributors to this issue discuss what is necessary to turn these goals into action, and whether the MDGs are the most effective means to mobilize countries, international organizations, and donors. Are the MDGs successful in unifying countries towards common goals even if they are not achieved? What are the implications for cross-cutting issues such as sanitation and chemicals management that are not addressed in the MDGs? Should aid focus on those countries that already have existing capacity to manage the aid? While it might not be possible to create blueprint solutions for complex issues, global development goals may be able to provide a strategy to alleviate some worldwide problems. Finding a way to link existing global, national, and local development plans may be the best, or only, approach to improving livelihoods worldwide.



Kelly Rain



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