



Accelerating Private Sector Action to Help Close MDG Gaps

Key Messages

- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) embody the dignity, equality and opportunity that all humans deserve. Achievement of the eight Goals in all countries by the target date of 2015 will require renewed and accelerated global action by all actors.
- While Government has primary responsibility for a country's development, the private sector – as the driver of innovation, investment and job creation – plays an integral role in helping to deliver economic and social goals.
- Based on ten years of advancements and lessons-learned around the MDGs – by Governments, businesses, civil society, the UN and numerous other institutions – effective solutions and methods for advancing development have been identified and are ready to be scaled up. There is an enormous opportunity to bring new pace and collective commitment to closing the remaining gaps among and within countries in the next five years.
- The UN Private Sector Forum on the Millennium Development Goals gathered Heads of State and Government with chief executives, civil society leaders and heads of inter-governmental organizations at this critical juncture to identify concrete actions the private sector can take – individually and collaboratively – to help close MDG implementation gaps, as well as to highlight ways in which Governments can further facilitate business engagement for development.
- At the Forum, over 30 commitments to advance progress on the MDGs were made by companies, foundations and civil society organizations – with the goal of inspiring other organizations around the world to join in the urgent effort to achieve the MDGs. The range of commitments – including a multi-million dollar contribution towards education technology solutions worldwide, an inclusive business model that provides finance and training to small farmers in Pakistan, a public-private partnership to improve health and safety practices in African clinics, and commitments by numerous CEOs to advance gender equality throughout their organizations – represent examples of tangible action towards closing key development gaps in countries. Many MDG-related actions are carried out by participants of the UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate responsibility initiative with 8,000 signatories in over 135 countries.

Business Supporting Development

- Business and society are inextricably linked – neither can thrive in the long-term without the strength of the other. Increasingly, the private sector is recognizing that working with and investing in pro-poor business models can bring about robust markets.
- Companies around the world have introduced numerous profitable innovations to provide poor communities with access to health care, clean water, sanitation, communication technology or financial services. Likewise, new public-private partnerships and initiatives seek to improve access to education, empower women and eliminate gender inequalities.
- Business growth without a moral compass is not good enough. Only through responsible practices can business build trust and social capital, and ultimately help ensure that markets also serve the poor. Companies everywhere are called on to conduct business in a responsible manner that is aligned with universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.
- In addition to supporting development through core business operations and value chains, companies can make essential contributions through social investment and advocacy engagement. Social investment – the practice of making voluntary financial and non-financial contributions – can demonstrably help local communities and broader societies to address their development priorities. As well, advocacy by the private sector, together with other stakeholders, can enormously help to raise awareness of and resolve development and policy issues.

Business Action to Bridge the Gaps

- Through roundtable discussions, participants of the UN Private Sector explored how to advance business solutions in six MDG-related areas deemed most relevant for private sector engagement and action: (i) poverty and hunger; (ii) maternal and child health and HIV/AIDS; (iii) access to education through innovative ICT; (iv) innovations for financial inclusion; (v) empowering women and achieving equality; and (vi) green economy.
- Roundtable discussions aimed at identifying proven solutions that, if advanced robustly, can help to close MDG gaps around the world. Following are examples, by theme, of key business actions identified and commitments announced*:
 - 1) Poverty and hunger**
 - *Actions:* Undertake new types of public-private partnerships and business models that extend supply chains and create employment and incomes for low-income populations; Scale up implementation of proven and innovative interventions, for example in agricultural techniques, supply chain, food technology and inclusive business models.
 - *Commitments:* Ballarpur Industries Limited (India), Egyptian Food Bank (Egypt), Engro Corporation (Pakistan), Monster.com (USA)
 - 2) Maternal and child health and HIV/AIDS**
 - *Actions:* Undertake public-private partnerships that help to: improve access to health services, contribute to ensuring that health facilities are fully functional, create demand for health services through innovative approaches, use new technologies and approaches to address gaps in health information and reporting.
 - *Commitments:* Becton, Dickinson and Co (USA), LifeSpring Hospitals (India), Sumitomo Chemical (Japan)
 - 3) Access to education through innovative ICT**
 - *Actions:* Enhance the relevance, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and quality of teaching and learning activities – for example through mapping technologies, accessible devices that can affordably transmit large quantities of data, and durable, no-maintenance, affordable computers that combine textbooks, notebooks and reference materials.
 - *Commitments:* Dell Inc. (USA)
 - 4) Innovations for financial inclusion**
 - *Actions:* Expand the reach of financial services and create new opportunities to provide essential services to the poor through financial products and technology-based delivery methods; Increase financial products for the poor, such as money transfer services, microloans, microinsurance, and weather and catastrophic risk insurance.
 - *Commitments:* Lenox Park (USA), Recipco Holdings (Canada), Tameer Bank (Pakistan)
 - 5) Empowering women and achieving equality**
 - *Actions:* Examine internal policies and expand or revise where needed to include more women; Work to empower women in the communities where they operate; Undertake public-private partnerships to advance and finance gender equality.
 - *Commitments:* AWI Company (UAE), ExxonMobil (USA), The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women (UK), UPS International (USA), and 9 CEOs endorsed the Women's Empowerment Principles
 - 6) Green economy**
 - *Actions:* Invest in green sectors — such as, clean energy/technology, rural energy and renewables, sustainable cities, ecosystem infrastructure and sustainable agriculture/forestry — as growth engines and opportunities.
 - *Commitments:* Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (Sri Lanka), Viyellatex Group (Bangladesh), WaterHealth International (India)

Government Support for Enabling Business Environment

- Government support is needed to cultivate enabling environments for entrepreneurship and innovation, including via:
 - regulatory frameworks that uphold property rights, accelerate entry to the formal economy and root out corruption;
 - capacity building and access to finance, in particular for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
 - securing the necessary investments into core infrastructure, such as roads, energy systems, telecommunications and ports; and
 - promoting a fair, competitive and non-discriminatory global market.

* Organizations were encouraged to commit to development-related activities, programmes and partnerships in advance of their participation in the UN Private Sector Forum. The document “Commitments to Development” contains further information on each of the commitments listed. Additionally, the following organizations made broad commitments to advance the MDGs, extending beyond any one theme: Call2Action (USA), Crescent Petroleum Group (UAE), Qatar Airways (Qatar) and SAWA Global (Canada). Additional commitments announced at the Forum will be include in the Meeting Report.