The Nature of Our Demise: A Social Constructivist Analysis of Neoliberal Barriers to Development

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Abstract

The paper seeks to understand through a social constructivist lens how development strategies have been largely enforced by already developed states, serving their interests above affecting change. Specifically, neoliberal ideology is examined as pervasive through the socialization mechanism of change using the examples of Structural Adjustment Programs and Millennium Development Goals. The process in which development is defined, created, revised and adopted has lasting implications on the success level achieved. Understanding this process as socially constructed is an important step towards alternative development strategies.

This paper uses social constructivism as a method of explaining how social reality is created, changed and shaped. Specifically how power privileges some intersubjectively held beliefs of others with the dominant structure further reinforcing those privileges. The dominant rhetoric of neoliberal ideology that is pervasive in defining development as inevitable to serve its particular purposes and interests consequently harms the development of other states. The importance of understanding development policies as social constructions of neoliberal ideology is to understand how to generate change. Social reality is contingent on mutual influence between agents and the system, if this is recognized by humanity it may be plausible to affect change on a global scale.

To begin I will explore what it means to say neoliberal policies socially construct a system which perpetuates their existence as the dominant rhetoric under the guise of being inevitable. With a closer look at the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), consideration will be given to the mutual defining of collectively held beliefs and social structures. Of significance is how concepts, choices and definitions of those in power are privileged resulting in consequences for those targeted. Socialization, a social constructivist mechanism of progress, will then reflect how the millennium development goals (MDGs) continue this privileging of those in power while exacerbating the conditions of those it proposes to assist through superficial policies towards development and global equity. Subsequently, this knowledge leads to how real transformation of the social reality may be constructed towards a non-stagnant vision development with the participation of the individuals and groups of civil society.

Social constructivism

Social constructivism, based in social ontology, maintains the basic premise that the facts of social reality are fashioned, changed and reproduced by humanity on a daily basis (Risse, 2007: 128); these social facts exist, regardless of tangibility, due to collectively held beliefs from

which they are produced. These intersubjectively held beliefs "cannot be reduced to a series or summation of subjective, individual beliefs" (Abdelal et al., 2005: 2). Furthermore "human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings" (Risse, 2007: 128).

Social structures and agents are hence mutually defining; an established balance of structuralism and individualism (Risse, 2007: 128). In terms of globalization, this would refer to the mutual influence between the structure of the world and our collectively held beliefs. The notion of globality, that is, world society without borders as a result of the collision of various economies, cultures and politics, will later be of particular interest in deciphering humanity's ability to affect the structure based on these collective norms and understandings (Beck, 2009; 10).

Dominant Rhetoric

It is first important to contrast this with the currently dominant view of the world economy in international political economy which is a combination of materialism and rationalism (Abdelal et al., 2005: 2). The world economy for materialist scholars is defined almost solely by the material facts, "the reality that exists irrespectively of collective beliefs about its existence" (Abdelal et al., 2005: 2). "Rational, goal-oriented pursuit of policies" is privileged in this dominant view as a result of representing preferences or objectives rather than consequences "as the central casual mechanism in accounts of economic policy making" (Abdelal et al., 2005: 2). In the pursuit of policies, world affairs may even be misconstrued as universalization, a purposeful direction towards improvement on a global and species wide dimension; at the extreme even an objective to equalize the life chances of everyone (Bauman, 1998: 59).

The neoliberal pursuit of increasingly open markets as a means of strengthening the world economy is the current dominant rhetoric and it has been misconstrued as a purposeful direction towards global development for the benefit of all. Of significance is how these policies are a result of the concrete social and political decisions which reinforce and reproduce globalism, yet are portrayed as driven by ambiguous forces that inevitably will continue to define the system (Risse, 2007: 128-9). Globalization is thus suggested to have an "indeterminate, unruly and self-propelled nature … [which is] notoriously unintended and unanticipated, [with *effects*] rather than … global *initiatives* and *undertakings*" (Bauman, 1998: 59-60. Emphasis in original).

Globalism is the reduction of globalization to only its economic aspect, eliminating or supplanting political action with the notion that social problems can be solved in economic terms (Beck, 2009: 9). In essence, we are led to believe these "forces" incapacitate states or political agency from "[making] collectively binding choices and [carrying] them out" (Claus Offe as quoted by Bauman, 1998: 68). This is not to say that states are boundless, nor diminish analysis of the implications of material facts. Yet this necessitates the validation of the constraining ability

of social facts produced by the intersubjectively held beliefs of political agencies, including states, international organizations and multinational corporations (Abdelal et al., 2005: 8).

Furthermore, the discourse around being a "globalized" world obscures the disjointed reality of power and influence. "If we construct the world as globalized, we focus on interconnectedness, networks, and complex interdependence [and at] the same time we de-emphasize [the fragmenting and culturally differentiating] forces" (Risse, 2007: 129). It becomes clearer that the collective norms and understandings of some political agencies have power or force over other agencies due to this fragmented reality. Consequently, there is a privileging of what interpretations of social reality are received and which constructions become as dominant as to become de facto (Risse, 2007: 132).

Defining Development

I will focus particularly on the mandated SAPs in the developing world to illustrate these points. The SAPs were a product of the IMF which I find important to define using their own words;

> The [IMF] is an organization of 187 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world (2010).

Following neoliberal ideology, we might be tempted to receive this rhetoric as valid, which is to say their described initiatives are mutually supportive. Yet at the very least we must realize these are clear choices of what is and is not of importance according to a non-representative body; member states of the IMF do not hold equal voting power but are provided more weight based on economic contribution. Thus states with economic clout shape the policies of "development" that immerse those in conditions of poverty. Without going into the debate around reforming the IMF, we can understand it is influenced by this system and so too are SAPs; opening the gate up for particular purposes to be served above others.

SAPs were the "comprehensive restructuring of production priorities and government programs in a debtor" states in response to the debt crisis (McMichael, 2008: 130). The World Health Organization succinctly defines SAPs on their website in the following passage;

> SAPs policies reflect the neo-liberal ideology that drives globalization. They aim to achieve long-term or accelerated economic growth in poorer countries by restructuring the economy and reducing government intervention. SAPs policies include currency devaluation, managed balance of payments, reduction of government services through public spending cuts/budget deficit cuts, reducing tax on high earners, reducing inflation, wage suppression, privatization, lower tariffs on imports and tighter monetary policy, increased free trade, cuts in social

> spending, and business deregulation. Governments are also encouraged or forced to reduce their role in the economy by privatizing state-owned industries, including the health sector, and opening up their economies to foreign competition (2010).

While SAPs vary among states, this passage clearly indicates some of the ways the IMF has put forth to interpret how to achieve their objectives. What is most dangerous about these interpretations is the IMF's ability to make official development assistance for developing states contingent on compliance with the SAPs. Policy restructuring became a conditionality of loans as a means of stimulating the economy and *regular debt service* (McMichael, 2008: 130).

Furthermore, we can question the extent to which this model serves to undermine the interests of developing states. Specifically, to use Andre Gunder-Frank's phrase, how it obliges the underdevelopment of development (1996). "Development" is a concept with various constructions over time; it was once synonymous with industrialization while today it refers to "the participation in the world market" (McMichael, 2008: 132). Both of these conceptualizations of development are understood as political objectives rather than natural progressions and have had dire consequences for developing states (McMichael, 2008: 20).

Post-colonialism, "national industrialization" was pursued as destiny or the organic way in which states develop. Success was framed as attainable in a linear fashion with "the displacement of agrarian civilization by an urban-industrial society" as a prerequisite (McMichael, 2008: 48-9). The implementing of these assumptions was done under the implication that states would achieve Western levels of prosperity at the short term cost of social well-being (McMichael, 2008: 49-51). Development hence was not an organic destination but rather "*a method of rule*" (McMichael, 2008: 49. Emphasis in original). The debt crisis occurred as a direct result of the pursuit of industrialization through this definition of and assumptions about development; as a result there was a redefining of the dominant development rhetoric.

Development framed as participation in the global economy became the new method of rule as SAPs enforced adapting to the neoliberal economy as the only choice imparted upon developing states, resulting in a social policy "race to the bottom" (Risse, 2007: 128). That is as Riddell explains, due to SAPs citizens of developing states are faced with a dramatic reduction of living standards often on multiple fronts (1992). Sachs' elaborates that the debt crisis and the subsequent debt collection regime frames developing states as irresponsible borrowers (2004, 357); as per Easterly, "mortgaging the welfare of future generations to finance [the current] generation's … standard of living" (2004: 345). The framing of developing states as such can be understood as directly beneficial to lenders. Sachs argues it is rather the "ad hoc bailouts of private creditors by official lenders- for example, through IMF loans to debtor governments to maintain debt serving to private lenders … [which encourages] future indiscriminate lending by

creditors to weak borrowers on the basis of expected future bailouts" accumulating in his hypothesis "that poor countries are vulnerable to a poverty trap" (2004: 357).

The example of SAPs clearly demonstrates a privileging of some political agencies' intersubjectively held beliefs due to a fragmented reality accumulating in dominant inescapable rhetoric. Defining development strategies including what is viewed as success are enforced by means of neither presenting nor accepting alternatives. Furthermore, this rhetoric presents itself as a purposeful direction towards global improvement by means of economic solutions; yet undermines the ability to escape the poverty trap through overlooking the context of a fragment and unequal reality. Thus we understand that globalism posing as the world structure influences our collective norms and understandings while serving particular purposes and interests.

Socialization

One mechanism that explains why neoliberalism has been so omnipresent is socialization. It "suggests that norms or ideas spread in a relatively incremental, evolutionary way generate by repeated interaction with groups … [which] either through accident, deliberation, or initial innovative leadership" is oriented around the dominant rhetoric (Abdelal et al., 2005: 35). Thus the dominant rhetoric is reproduced and reinforced with every interaction, where on the margins reshaping occurs. Likewise, the mutual defining process between the social environment and social agents endures as neither can change dramatically without altering the other.

The MDGs exemplify this socialization process, where there has been a change in the definition of development over time yet little is done to address constraining social facts of the earlier dominant rhetoric of neoliberalism. The MDGs are a set of eight non-binding goals with a collective of 21 quantifiable targets and 60 indicators based on various United Nations (UN) resolutions over the 1990s (Danlog, 2010; please refer to appendix for the specific goals, targets and indicators). These resolutions are the significant interactions over that period of time that modified the definition of development in the margins; they were not the only interactions however, they were the privileged interactions.

Of significance from a constructivist viewpoint is the way in which the MDGs were conceived; were they a departure from the dominant rhetoric or just the evolution of it? Originally proposed and agreed upon at the 1996 Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Tujan explains, developing states were not included in the construction process (2004). Yet it is clear through each of the goals that they, the excluded developing states, are predominantly responsible for realizing the objectives through creating and executing development strategies irrespective of the undermining and prevalent neoliberal ideology (Tujan, 2004; Amin, 2006)

Officially they are based on the Millennium Declaration of the UN which reaffirms member states commitment to the Charter of the UN as well as commits states "to making the

right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want" (UN, 2000). Remarkably, this declaration was done by consensus and cosponsored by the World Bank, the IMF and the OECD, citing its base in previously agreed upon resolutions, rather than the normal UN procedure of extensive committee work, where documents of this nature would be formulated and discussed at length (Amin, 2006: 1-2).

The objectives have been once again imposed upon developing states by those with economic power without even a proposal let alone framework to establish how to meet these goals. They are clear choices of what should and should not be included and furthermore how concepts should be defined, based on the privileged rhetoric; recall the IMF self-description above.

In terms of how this further serves those in power we might consider what has been omitted from these objectives beyond a solid action plan. Civil society groups have been "highly critical of the process and content of the MDGs which avoided commitments to, and drew attention away from, the critical structural issues for global economic justice" (Tujan, 2004). Other issues still prominent today that were raised in the UN conferences of the 1990s, from which these goals were drawn, included; forgiving the debt, fair and equitable trade, and reform towards equitable participation in global institutions (Tujan, 2004).

Aside from what they do not include, it is also important to consider the validity of the modest goals measured, with progress being inconsistent at best. With the common rhetoric that praises any progress as momentous as if that is the pace of a globalized world, it is also important to consider how progress has been defined and at what cost.

Target 1a within the first goal, "eradicate extreme poverty and hunger," seems to be the main rallying point (UN, 2008); the website the banner screams that we can end poverty (UN, 2010a). According to the 2010 progress report, target 1A does indeed seem on track to meet the 2015 deadline (UN, 2010b: 6). The catch is, that while it is on track to halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day in terms of what a dollar was worth in the year 2000, it is estimated that due to inflation the same amount will be worth a mere 60 cents in 2015 (Schuftan, 2010). Furthermore, the indicators appear to be predominantly economic using dubious measurements including gross domestic product and purchasing power parity; both are social constructions with clear choices of what is and is not accounted for (for further discussion see Abdelal et al., 2005: 8-9 and Wade, 2004 respectively). By using economic measurements, there is a purposeful disregard for the root causes and thus policies which generate poverty go unrestricted, undermining long-term eradication (Amin, 2006: 3).

The second goal is a non-explicit reaffirmation of article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, in force since 1976. Throughout the entire document there is never any actual reaffirmation of particular covenants, resolutions or charters,

providing more freedom in interpreting the goals. While each goal is admirable on the surface, of note is how the goals are actually undermined. Recall that one of the contingencies of the SAPs was the privatization of state owned industries such as education, which can be now understood as a direct constraint on the achievement of this goal. Prior to SAPs, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had made tangible process towards this goal (Amin, 2006: 3).

The sole target for the third goal seems more so a continuation of the second goal, narrowing the goal of gender equity and the empowerment of women down to the target to eliminate gender disparity in all levels of education. Although, the indicators for this target broaden it slightly back up to wage-employment disparity and political representation. Thus once again we are faced with progress measured by economics, further undervaluing non-wage employment essential to society. Amin suggests that beyond the questionable validity of measurement for this goal, unless there is discussion it will remain out of reach due to the sentiments of some neoconservative Christian fundamentalists, Muslims and fundamentalist Hindus who decree that any reference to the rights of women and the family should be excluded (2006: 3).

Goals 4, 5 and 6 are all health related goals which are in and of themselves admirable. However, given that under goal 8 target 8E affordable essential drugs are deliberately mentioned as available through the cooperation of pharmaceutical companies there are once again validity issues of whether these goals are mutually achievable or compatible. With extreme privatization of healthcare, another contingency attached to the SAPs, and "total respect for the 'intellectual property rights' of the transnational corporations" success in any of these areas is at best limited to prevention closely tied to education rather than treatment (Amin, 2006: 3).

The seventh goal speaks to environmental sustainability measured by four targets; integration of environmental sustainability into policies, reduction of biodiversity loss, access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and reducing the population living in urban slums. Stated without reference to the Earth Charter released by the UN in 2000, the same year as the Millennium Declaration, this goal comes off as something to be monitored rather than met given the continual lack of guiding strategy particularly consider its global nature. This goal is a direct result of the ways in which development has overlooked the finite character of the planet. The ways in which development has been defined and sought after is unsustainable and destructive. Even within the MDGs success continues to be pursued in the same manner without addressing how the neoliberal, capitalist economic strategy could be compatible with environmental sustainability (Amin, 2006: 3-4). Nor does it address the inequality between those who originally created the damage through their development and the states now forfeiting the ability to development in similar ways.

The eighth goal refers to fostering global partnership for development thus insinuating the role of developed states. The most deliberate affirmation of the neoliberal agenda and agencies occurs through target 8A, "develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system [including] a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction" (UN, 2008). Given the origins and cosponsors of the MDGs, this can be understood as reaffirming and expanding the same open-market structures of the neoliberal doctrine on which the IMF based SAPs. Furthermore, by singling out the poverty reduction goal, it reinforces globalism and reduces the global partnership to an exchange of capital while placing the responsibility for each other goal on developing states. This goal also references the need to make debt sustainable, which was a goal of the SAPs as well and reinforces cooperation with the private sector. Subsequently, there has been no change in the structure which suggests there has been no change in the intersubjectively held beliefs of social agents as they are mutually self-defining.

Further complicating the validity of the MDGs, a portion of target 8B is a pledge of more generous Official Development Assistance for states committed to poverty reduction, as if to say developing states must commit to the MDGs in order to be considered for further assistance. While seemingly innocent at first, this small section reverberates the contingency factors of the SAPs.

The civil society group People's Health Movement (PHM) outline the MDGs as "suffer[ing] from: donor overinfluence, technical overemphasis, inattention to action on underlying social and economic inequalities, lack of systematic long-term financial commitments, and a predominant focus on health and education rather than on the entire political economy" (Schuftan, 2010). Furthermore, they call upon civil society organizations to contest "the system that day-in-day-out recreates the condition of poverty," and prepare a post-2015 strategy to minimize disenchantment in collectively held beliefs (Schuftan, 2010). To understand MDGs as a segment of neoliberal rhetoric, rather than a proper effort towards reducing inequality, enables civil society groups such as the PHM to conceive why it could not have worked, leaving solutions in its wake. Without this recognition, civil society groups, for all their efforts, become part of the systematic problems (Schuftan, 2010).

Development vision

Stiglitz suggests development strategies are achievable if they with a broader, more social oriented focus and may only be considered successful if the benefits spread throughout an entire society (2004: 84-7). Given a vision of transformation instead of only quantifiable goals, he explains, development strategies have the ability to not only increase GDP per capita, but also living standards, furthermore it will decrease poverty and strengthen sustainability (Stiglitz, 2004: 84). While not directly referring to the MDGs, he does insinuate objectives are not equivalent to a vision of transformation and can suffer from heavy historical influence as

institutions resist reform or replacement (Stiglitz, 2004: 84-5). A vision of transformation is alternatively a living document that sets "forth how it is to be created, revised, and adopted; the process of participation; the means by which ownership and consensus is to be obtained; how the details will be fleshed out" (Stiglitz, 2004: 85).

The constructing of development through consensus building and as a continuously adapting process can have just as highly influential role in the success of a development vision as the process of defining development had on the failure. It develops a sense of ownership and participation, rather than being enforced from the outside which can often impede the transformation process and go unchallenged for fear of imposed penalties. This goes further than simply allowing developing states to sit at the table; it is about the individuals of civil society. The people in the developing states affected are the catalysts of change and through their involvement in the process there are less "erroneous assumptions about the needs and capabilities of beneficiaries" (Stiglitz, 2004: 88-9).

Through this process of envisioning development alongside transformation of society, it is conceivable that while goals would still have a role, they would be prioritized and sequenced accordingly (Stiglitz, 2004: 85). Unlike how the MDGs pursue eight goals at one time without setting prerequisites for any, this approach would involve considering the steps needed to reach change. Above all there must be a consideration to the interconnected nature all sectors. For further discussion on the key requirements and steps towards the development of "the private sector, *viz.* international agencies, the state (the public sector), the constituents, the family, and the individual" see Stiglitz (2004: 90-5).

Conclusion

The social constructivist ontology as a method of explaining how social reality is created, changed and shaped has been explored specifically in relation to development strategies. Given that agents and social structures are mutually defining, it was shown how power privileges some intersubjectively held beliefs of others with the dominant structure further reinforcing those privileges. Specifically, the pervasive neoliberal pursuit of increasingly open markets has been the privileged voice in defining development strategy, consequently harming development for others. The SAPs were explained in terms of how their construction fulfils the neoliberal ideology while touting the slogan of a better world for all and the MDGs as the extension of this rhetoric via socialization, the slow, marginal, evolutionary changes happening due to interaction and daily reshaping of social reality.

The usefulness of exploring social reality as constructed was lastly discussed as a method of affecting positive change. If it is understood that reality is largely shaped by these social facts there is opportunity to decipher how to go about it differently, privileging instead the voices of those affected rather than those in power.

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Appendix

Official list of MDG indicators

All indicators should be disaggregated by sex and urban/rural as far as possible.

Effective 15 January 2008

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets **(from the Millennium Declaration)**	**Indicators for monitoring progress**
oal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
arget 1.A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose come is less than one dollar a day	1.1 Proportion of population below $1 (PPP) per day[i] 1.2 Poverty gap ratio 1.3 Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
arget 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, cluding women and young people	1.4 Growth rate of GDP per person employed 1.5 Employment-to-population ratio 1.6 Proportion of employed people living below $1 (PPP) per day 1.7 Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment
arget 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of eople who suffer from hunger	1.8 Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age 1.9 Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
oal 2: Achieve universal primary education	
arget 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, ill be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	2.1 Net enrolment ratio in primary education 2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary 2.3 Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men
oal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	
arget 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, referably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	3.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 3.2 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 3.3 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
oal 4: Reduce child mortality	
arget 4.A: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five ıortality rate	4.1 Under-five mortality rate 4.2 Infant mortality rate 4.3 Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles
oal 5: Improve maternal health	
arget 5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal ıortality ratio	5.1 Maternal mortality ratio 5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
arget 5.B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	5.3 Contraceptive prevalence rate 5.4 Adolescent birth rate 5.5 Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits) 5.6 Unmet need for family planning
oal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	

arget 6.A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of IV/AIDS	6.1 HIV prevalence among population aged 15-24 years 6.2 Condom use at last high-risk sex 6.3 Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS 6.4 Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years
arget 6.B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for ll those who need it	6.5 Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs
arget 6.C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of ıalaria and other major diseases	6.6 Incidence and death rates associated with malaria 6.7 Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide-treated bednets 6.8 Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate anti-malarial drugs 6.9 Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 6.10 Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course
oal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	
arget 7.A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country olicies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	7.1 Proportion of land area covered by forest 7.2 CO2 emissions, total, per capita and per $1 GDP (PPP) 7.3 Consumption of ozone-depleting substances 7.4 Proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits 7.5 Proportion of total water resources used 7.6 Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected 7.7 Proportion of species threatened with extinction
arget 7.B: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant eduction in the rate of loss	
arget 7.C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable ccess to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	7.8 Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source 7.9 Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility
arget 7.D: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives f at least 100 million slum dwellers	7.10 Proportion of urban population living in slums[ii]
oal 8: Develop a global partnership for development	
arget 8.A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-iscriminatory trading and financial system ıcludes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty eduction – both nationally and internationally	*Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.* <u>Official development assistance (ODA)</u> 8.1 Net ODA, total and to the least developed countries, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income 8.2 Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors

	to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
arget 8.B: Address the special needs of the least developed countries	8.3 Proportion of bilateral official development assistance of OECD/DAC donors that is untied
	8.4 ODA received in landlocked developing countries as a proportion of their gross national incomes
ıcludes: tariff and quota free access for the least developed countries' xports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor ɔuntries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous DA for countries committed to poverty reduction	8.5 ODA received in small island developing States as a proportion of their gross national incomes Market access 8.6 Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duty 8.7 Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries
arget 8.C: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and mall island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the ustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome f the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)	8.8 Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their gross domestic product 8.9 Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity Debt sustainability 8.10 Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative) 8.11 Debt relief committed under HIPC and MDRI Initiatives 8.12 Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services
arget 8.D: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing ɔuntries through national and international measures in order to make debt ıstainable in the long term	
arget 8.E: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to ffordable essential drugs in developing countries	8.13 Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis
arget 8.F: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits f new technologies, especially information and communications	8.14 Telephone lines per 100 population 8.15 Cellular subscribers per 100 population 8.16 Internet users per 100 population

The Millennium Development Goals and targets come from the Millennium Declaration, signed by 189 countries, including 147 heads of State and Government, in September 2000 (http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm) and from further agreement by member states at the 2005 World Summit (Resolution adopted by the General Assembly - A/RES/60/1, http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/60/1). The goals and targets are interrelated and should be seen as a whole. They represent a partnership betwee he developed countries and the developing countries "to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and the elimination of ɔoverty".

For monitoring country poverty trends, indicators based on national poverty lines should be used, where available.
The actual proportion of people living in slums is measured by a proxy, represented by the urban population living in households with at least one of the four characteristics: (a) lack o ccess to improved water supply; (b) lack of access to improved sanitation; (c) overcrowding (3 or more persons per room); and (d) dwellings made of non-durable material.