

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Our vision and our responsibility are to end extreme poverty in all its forms in the context of sustainable development and to have in place the building blocks of sustained prosperity for all.”ⁱ

The Panel came together with a sense of optimism and a deep respect for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The 13 years since the millennium have seen the fastest reduction in poverty in human history: there are half a billion fewer people living below an international poverty line of \$1.25 a day. Child death rates have fallen by more than 30%, with about three million children’s lives saved each year compared to 2000. Deaths from malaria have fallen by one quarter. This unprecedented progress has been driven by a combination of economic growth, better policies, and the global commitment to the MDGs, which set out an inspirational rallying cry for the whole world.

Given this remarkable success, it would be a mistake to simply tear up the MDGs and start from scratch. As world leaders agreed at Rio in 2012, new goals and targets need to be grounded in respect for universal human rights, and finish the job that the MDGs started. Central to this is **eradicating extreme poverty** from the face of the earth by 2030. This is something that leaders have promised time and again throughout history. Today, it can actually be done.

So a new development agenda should carry forward the spirit of the Millennium Declaration and the best of the MDGs, with a practical focus on things like poverty, hunger, water, sanitation, education and healthcare. But to fulfil our vision of promoting sustainable development, we must go beyond the MDGs. They did not focus enough on reaching the very poorest and most excluded people. They were silent on the devastating effects of conflict and violence on development. The importance to development of good governance and institutions that guarantee the rule of law, free speech and open and accountable government was not included, nor the need for inclusive growth to provide jobs. Most seriously, the MDGs fell short by not integrating the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development as envisaged in the Millennium Declaration, and by not addressing the need to promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production. The result was that environment and development were never properly brought together. People were working hard – but often separately – on interlinked problems.

So the Panel asked some simple questions: starting with the current MDGs, what to keep, what to amend, and what to add. In trying to answer these questions, we listened to the views of women and men, young people, parliamentarians, civil society organisations, indigenous people and local communities, migrants, experts, business, trade unions and governments. Most important, we listened directly to the voices of hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world, in face-to-face meetings as well as through surveys, community interviews, and polling over mobile phones and the internet.

We considered the massive changes in the world since the year 2000 and the changes that are likely to unfold by 2030. There are a billion more people today, with world population at seven billion, and another billion expected by 2030. More than half of us now live in cities. Private investment in developing countries now dwarfs aid flows. The number of mobile phone subscriptions has risen from fewer than one billion to more than six billion. Thanks to the internet, seeking business or information on the other side of the world is now routine for many. Yet inequality remains and opportunity is not open to all. The 1.2 billion poorest people account for only 1 per cent of world consumption while the billion richest consume 72 per cent.

Above all, there is one trend – climate change – which will determine whether or not we can deliver on our ambitions. Scientific evidence of the direct threat from climate change has mounted. The stresses of unsustainable production and consumption

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patterns have become clear, in areas like deforestation, water scarcity, food waste, and high carbon emissions. Losses from natural disasters—including drought, floods, and storms – have increased at an alarming rate. People living in poverty will suffer first and worst from climate change. The cost of taking action now will be much less than the cost of dealing with the consequences later.

Thinking about and debating these trends and issues together, the Panellists have been on a journey.

At our first meeting in New York, the Secretary General charged us with producing a bold yet practical vision for development beyond 2015.

In London, we discussed household poverty: the daily reality of life on the margins of survival. We considered the many dimensions of poverty, including health, education and livelihoods, as well as the demands for more justice, better accountability, and an end to violence against women. We also heard inspiring stories of how individuals and communities have worked their way to prosperity.

In Monrovia, we talked about economic transformation and the building blocks needed for growth that delivers social inclusion and respects the environment: how to harness the ingenuity and dynamism of business for sustainable development. And we saw with our own eyes the extraordinary progress that can be made when a country once ravaged by conflict is able to build peace and security.

In Bali, we agreed on the central importance of a new spirit to guide a global partnership for a people-centred and planet-sensitive agenda, based on the principle of our common humanity. We agreed to push developed countries to fulfil their side of the bargain – by honouring their aid commitments, but also reforming their trade, tax and transparency policies, by paying more attention to better regulating global financial and commodity markets and by leading the way towards sustainable development. We agreed that developing countries have done much to finance their own development, and will be able to do more as incomes rise. We also agreed on the need to manage the world's consumption and production patterns in more sustainable and equitable ways. Above all, we agreed that a new vision must be universal: offering hope – but also responsibilities – to everyone in the world.

These meetings and consultations left us energized, inspired and convinced of the need for a new paradigm. In our view, business-as-usual is not an option. We concluded that the post-2015 agenda is a **universal agenda**. It needs to be driven by **five big, transformative shifts**:

1. Leave no one behind. We must keep faith with the original promise of the MDGs, and now finish the job. After 2015 we should move from reducing to *ending* extreme poverty, in all its forms. We should ensure that no person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, race or other status – is denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities. We should design goals that focus on reaching excluded groups, for example by making sure we track progress at all levels of income, and by providing social protection to help people build resilience to life's uncertainties. We can be the first generation in human history to end hunger and ensure that every person achieves a basic standard of wellbeing. There can be no excuses. This is a universal agenda, for which everyone must accept their proper share of responsibility.

2. Put sustainable development at the core. For twenty years, the international community has aspired to integrate the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability, but no country has yet achieved this. We must act *now* to halt the alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity. We must bring about more social inclusion. This is a universal challenge, for every country and every person on earth. This will require structural change, with new solutions, and will offer new opportunities. Developed countries have a special role to play, fostering new technologies and making the fastest progress in reducing unsustainable consumption. Many of the world's largest companies are already leading this transformation to a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Only by mobilizing social, economic and environmental action together can we eradicate poverty irreversibly and meet the aspirations of eight billion people in 2030.

3. Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth. We call for a quantum leap forward in economic opportunities and a profound economic transformation to end extreme poverty and improve livelihoods. This means a rapid shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production—harnessing innovation, technology, and the potential of private business to create more value and drive sustainable and inclusive growth. Diversified economies, with equal opportunities for all, can unleash the dynamism that creates jobs and livelihoods, especially for young people and women. This is a challenge for every country on earth: to ensure good job possibilities while moving to the sustainable patterns of work and life that will be necessary in a world of limited natural resources. We should ensure that everyone has what they need to grow and prosper, including access to quality education and skills, healthcare, clean water, electricity, telecommunications and transport. We should make it easier for people to

invest, start-up a business and to trade. And we can do more to take advantage of rapid urbanisation: cities are the world's engines for business and innovation. With good management they can provide jobs, hope and growth, while building sustainability.

4. Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all.

Freedom from fear, conflict and violence is the most fundamental human right, and the essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies. At the same time, people the world over expect their governments to be honest, accountable, and responsive to their needs. We are calling for a fundamental shift – to recognize peace and good governance as core elements of wellbeing, not optional extras. This is a universal agenda, for all countries. Responsive and legitimate institutions should encourage the rule of law, property rights, freedom of speech and the media, open political choice, access to justice, and accountable government and public institutions. We need a transparency revolution, so citizens can see exactly where and how taxes, aid and revenues from extractive industries are spent. These are ends as well as means.

5. Forge a new global partnership. Perhaps the most important transformative shift is towards a new spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual accountability that must underpin the post-2015 agenda. A new partnership should be based on a common understanding of our shared humanity, underpinning mutual respect and mutual benefit in a shrinking world. This partnership should involve governments but also include others: people living in poverty, those with disabilities, women, civil society and indigenous and local communities, traditionally marginalised groups, multilateral institutions, local and national government, the business community, academia and private philanthropy. Each priority area identified in the post-2015 agenda should be supported by dynamic partnerships. It is time for the international community to use new ways of working, to go beyond an aid agenda and put its own house in order: to implement a swift reduction in corruption, illicit financial flows, money-laundering, tax evasion, and hidden ownership of assets. We must fight climate change, champion

free and fair trade, technology innovation, transfer and diffusion, and promote financial stability. And since this partnership is built on principles of common humanity and mutual respect, it must also have a new spirit and be completely transparent. Everyone involved must be fully accountable.

From vision to action. We believe that these five changes are the right, smart, and necessary thing to do. But their impact will depend on how they are translated into specific priorities and actions. We realized that the vision would be incomplete unless we offered a set of illustrative goals and targets to show how these transformative changes could be expressed in precise and measurable terms. This illustrative framework is set out in Annex I, with more detailed explanation in Annex II. We hope these examples will help focus attention and stimulate debate.

The suggested targets are bold, yet practical. Like the MDGs, they would not be binding, but should be monitored closely. The indicators that track them should be disaggregated to ensure no one is left behind and targets should only be considered 'achieved' if they are met for all relevant income and social groups. We recommend that any new goals should be accompanied by an independent and rigorous monitoring system, with regular opportunities to report on progress and shortcomings at a high political level. We also call for a **data revolution** for sustainable development, with a new international initiative to improve the quality of statistics and information available to citizens. We should actively take advantage of new technology, crowd sourcing, and improved connectivity to empower people with information on the progress towards the targets.

Taken together, the Panel believes that these five fundamental shifts can remove the barriers that hold people back, and end the inequality of opportunity that blights the lives of so many people on our planet. They can, at long last, bring together social, economic and environmental issues in a coherent, effective, and sustainable way. Above all, we hope they can inspire a new generation to believe that a better world is within its reach, and act accordingly.

¹ Monrovia Communiqué of the High Level Panel, February 1, 2013, <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Monrovia-Communique-1-February-2013.pdf>