

# Editorial note

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In September 2015, the United Nations launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), officially known as Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Some have criticized the MDGs especially in terms of the justification and development of its objectives and indicators. Moreover, with uneven country by country progress towards the goals, this edition of APS DPR presents a review of MDG achievements in selected countries across sub-Saharan Africa.

Obi and Tafa examine on key MDG by probing the determinants of household poverty in South Africa. While government generated reports show that the percentage of people living under the poverty line has decreased considerably, the authors question this decline in line with the reality of poverty at the household level. Their article thus examines policy loopholes in the determination of household poverty in South Africa.

The first submission on Zimbabwe is from Chiguware, who critically analyses the MDG compatibility with global development discourse. In particular, Chiguware revisits post MDGS and some of its critics. It examines general criticisms such as dealing with challenges with uniform indicators (does one size fit all). The article explicitly examines donor dependence, their prescription goals and its limitations on achieving MDG goals in Zimbabwe.

Looking into the future, Makina and Mago focus on Public Financial Accountability as a prerequisite to managing the development assistance in the era of the Sustainable Development goals. Using agency theory, their article approach identifies the challenges in the era of MDGs as a motivation for greater transparency and accountability in the management of Development Assistance in the Sustainable Development Goals era.

Another article on Zimbabwe provides a critical analysis of the progress and pitfalls of the MDGS in Zimbabwe. The article by Mutangabende and Shava takes the reader through the different MDG objectives and, based on their findings, recommend the institutionalization of the SDGs.

A focus on East Africa comes from Ndaguba and associates, who assess the Global Development Agenda (MDGs) in Uganda between 2000 and 2015. Although noting some

achievements, the authors remark that external issues such as environmental factors and structural realities of the Ugandan market forces have limited Uganda from achieving more. They suggest challenges of rural poverty, governance and institutions must be addressed to achieve the SDGs.

From West Africa comes Olasupo and Plaatjie's examination of the problems and prospects of the MDGs in Ghana. The authors argue that much like other African countries who embraced the MDGs, achieving the gains of MDGs in rural areas has remained an area of concern in terms of rural infrastructure.

Next, the focus shifts to Central Africa by examining the factors limiting the gains of MDGs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by Ndaguba and associates. From the perspective of a Fragile State, the authors make an argument that for any development agenda (global or otherwise) to succeed, the DRC has to begin to build and develop sustainable institutions, systems and structures.

Durokifa and Abdul-Wasi focus on the second West African country, Nigeria. The authors evaluate Nigeria's achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) where they indicate Nigeria's long history with development projects (like many other African countries). The authors assess the slight progress of the MDG targets in Nigeria. Critical to the author's arguments is that the new goals will go the way of its predecessors should the country not build good governance standards and prioritise these goals in line with Nigeria's unique goals.

Finally, this edition serves as a check to policy makers, civil society and the development community that the success of MDGs in many African countries has been muted. While development remains a critical goal for African nations, it is clear that there is a need for structural, leadership, good governance support for developmental efforts in Africa.

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