

**QUESTIONING THE ACHIEVABILITY OF
THE UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS:
NATIONALIZING/LOCALIZING THE MDG ONE IN TURKEY**

by

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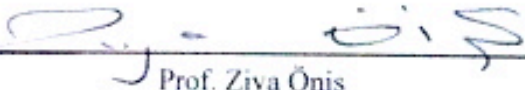
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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The overall aim of this thesis is to assess the United Nations' (UN) efforts to deal effectively with the problem of global poverty. The UN's efforts are valuable in the sense that this is a global and systemic problem and without eradicating the poverty problem, the world in which we live would not be just and stable. In this thesis, I suggest that despite the UN's success in developing a multi-dimensional approach to poverty alleviation through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), there is the problem of the Millennium Project failing to break with the neo-liberal orthodoxy that benefits the developed world, while the poorest nations remain excluded from global economic gains. In that sense, the MDGs fall short in helping poorest nations break the chains and cycles of poverty; and thus MDGs are likely to fail in penetrating national and local development strategies, as presented in the Turkish case. Hence, this thesis contributes to the literature in a way that the Turkish case illustrates a critical and analytical examination of policy implementations of the MDGs in a developing country context.

Keywords: United Nations (UN), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), poverty, development, Turkey

ÖZET

Bu tezin genel amacı Birleşmiş Milletler (BM)'in küresel yoksulluk problemini ele alışını Birinci Hedef çerçevesinde eleştirel ve analitik olarak değerlendirmektir. Bu değerlendirme BM'nin bu yöndeki çabalarını hem akademik literatür ışığında, hem de bu konudaki siyasaların uygulanışı bağlamında sorgulamaktadır. BM'nin çabaları, yoksulluğun küresel ve sistemik bir problem olduğu varsayımını kabul ederek, dünyada adalet ve istikrarın sağlanabilmesi için yoksullukla mücadelenin başat olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu tezde, BM'nin yoksullukla mücadele için geliştirdiği çok boyutlu yaklaşımın önemi vurgulanmakla birlikte; Binyıl Kalkınma Hedefleri'nin neo-liberal düzenin bir devamı niteliğinde olduğu, bu sistemin gelişmiş ülkelere büyük kazançlar sağlarken geri kalmış/az gelişmiş ülkelerin küresel ekonomik düzenin “kaybedenleri” oldukları ileri sürülmektedir. Bu bağlamda, Binyıl Kalkınma Hedefleri yoksul ulusların yoksullula mücadelesine hedeflendiği ölçüde katkı sağlayamaktadır. Böylelikle, Türkiye örneğinde irdelendiği gibi, Binyıl Kalkınma Hedefleri'nin ulusal ve yerel kalkınma stratejilerine eklemlenmekte başarısız olduğu ileri sürülebilir. Bu tez, gelişmekte olan ülkeleri temsil eden Türkiye örneği ile Kalkınma Hedefleri'nin siyasa uygulamaları konusunda eleştirel ve analitik açıdan literatüre katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Birleşmiş Milletler, Binyıl Kalkınma Hedefleri, yoksulluk, kalkınma, Türkiye

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To my beloved family...

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
HDI	Human Development Index
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOs	International Organizations
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SPO	The Undersecretariat of the State Planning Organization
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMP	United Nations Millennium Project
WB	World Bank
WDR	World Development Report

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women, and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want.

(UN Millennium Declaration 2000, Article III-11)

The overall aim of this thesis is to assess the United Nations' (UN) efforts to deal effectively with the problem of global poverty. The UN's efforts are valuable in the sense that poverty is a global and systemic problem and without eradicating this problem, the world in which we live would not be just and stable. In this thesis, I suggest that despite the UN's success in developing a multi-dimensional approach to poverty alleviation through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), there are certain limitations in relation to the transformative capacity of the UN and the Millennium Project is not likely to break with the neo-liberal orthodoxy that benefits the developed world, while the poorest nations remain excluded from global economic gains. As it will be illustrated in the case of Turkey, the UN puts emphasis on the notion of "national ownership" in meeting the MDGs and the implementation of the MDGs are discretionary, not mandatory. Under these circumstances, the transformative role of the UN is questionable. Indeed, in the existence of multiple actors penetrating national and local domains (for instance the European Union actor in the Turkish case), the UN's transformative role is becoming more marginalized. In this sense, the MDGs fall behind penetrating national and local development strategies and within these constraints the UN comes up short in helping poorest nations to break the chains and cycles of poverty. Despite the fact that we have five more years to see the successes and failures of the Millennium

Project, the trend so far indicates that there is a lot to do in terms of the institutional structures and the content of the MDGs in order to achieve these goals by 2015.

There are an estimated one billion people worldwide living on less than \$1 a day,¹ and approximately half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 a day (2009 WB Global Monitoring Report). Indeed, we are living in a world where someone dies as a result of starvation every 3.6 seconds.² These statistics position poverty as extremely pervasive and consequently demand immediate attention. Given the severity of poverty and the number of people suffering its effects across the globe, it is nearly impossible for international institutions in the global arena to remain unresponsive to these alarming developments. Discussion of this issue at a global level is inevitable and “ontological in a liberal political order, because it points to the difficulty of realizing an ideal of equal citizenship in societies that remain profoundly unequal” (Noël 2003: 1).³ This issue basically refers to the inequalities within and among societies which will be elaborated later in this thesis. While international institutions and the national governments are making an effort to alleviate poverty and decrease the inequality gap on the one hand, on the other hand nation states are forced to abide by the premises of the liberal paradigm, which itself triggers further poverty and inequality.

Although efforts have been made towards the eradication of poverty for decades, these striking contemporary statistics necessarily trigger a change in the perception of poverty and methods for its alleviation. Until very recently, poverty, especially absolute/extreme poverty, was understood essentially as a lack of sufficient income. Hence, both nation states and

¹ US\$1 a day basically refers to \$1.08 a day on 1993 PPP; but for practical purposes, \$1 a day is used <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Metadata.aspx?IndicatorId=0&SeriesId=580>

² <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/poverty.html>

³ The author refers to Procacci (1996) while making this comment.

international organizations assessed and addressed the issue through an economic lens. With globalization, it has come to be accepted that increasing economic interactions and economic growth will benefit all nations - that the “rising tide will lift all.”⁴

While poverty exists in all corners of the globe, some parts of the world, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, suffer more acutely from absolute poverty and lack the capacity to break the chains of poverty on their own. Recent reports from prominent international organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) clearly indicate that the most underdeveloped regions of the world are not benefiting enough from global economic growth (as the developed world continues to prosper comparatively more than the rest of the world). The most impoverished areas continue to struggle against poverty and have not made even modest steps up the development ladder according to development author Jeffrey Sachs (2005). In other words, all nations are not benefiting equally from economic growth and income inequality between and within rich and poor nations is rising as a byproduct of globalization. Consequently, failures in the fight against poverty tend to direct those involved to question their foundational understandings of the causes and hence solutions to poverty.

Global conferences on development topics, such as poverty, education, health, women, and environment, have been one approach to better understanding and addressing poverty and were particularly popular in the 1990s. Global conferences in this decade included the International World Summit for Children (1990), the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992), the World Conference on Human Rights (1993), the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the Fourth World

⁴ The next chapter of this thesis will elaborate both on economic growth trends over years and the impact of economic growth on poverty reduction.

Conference on Women (1995), and the World Summit for Social Development (1995).⁵ As Taylor and Curtis note, such conferences have assumed a crucial role in the globalization of human concerns and a growing sense of interconnectedness across the globe (2006: 419). This global awareness, in turn, has enabled a new global agenda comprised of different development concerns, generally under the auspices of the UN.

The UN, who has as one of its prominent aims the promotion of human development, took the lead in urging world leaders to agree on common development targets at the 2000 Millennium Summit. This summit represented a valuable attempt to include various dimensions of development, including gender, health, education and environment, on the global development agenda. At the conclusion of the summit, world leaders agreed to make a collective effort to achieve a number of common and ambitious development targets, which were then deemed the MDGs. Through the MDGs, the UN aims to: ensure the commitment of the 189 signatory nation states in the fight against poverty,⁶ ensure their commitment to development, vitalize the willingness of developing nations, provide guidance and expertise to those who need it, and set up partnerships among developed, developing and least developed nations to achieve MDG targets. Hence, the UN and member states demonstrated “a renewed interest in translating broad concerns into more specific and more manageable programmes” (Taylor and Curtis 2006: 419).

⁵ See both Saith 2006: 1170 and the UN website <http://www.un.org/news/facts/confercs.htm> for further details.

⁶ The representatives of 189 nations, including 147 heads of state and government, signed the Millennium Declaration at UN Headquarter in New York on September 8, 2000 (<http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics.shtml>)

1.1. The Structure of the Thesis

Initially, this thesis will explore the context in which the MDGs should be discussed. As the world becomes increasingly globalized, nation states become more aware of events occurring in different parts of the world. The striking persistence of poverty has stimulated efforts by some rich nation states and/or international organizations to harness the advantages of globalization, such as improvements in transportation and communication systems, to end global poverty. At the same time, neo-liberal globalization has meant further disadvantages for many poorer nations since this form of economic organization is far from a fair playing field that sweeps away historical and entrenched socio-economic inequalities among poor and rich nations. In the light of this, the first chapter aims to explain the interplay among globalization, social justice, and development, with particular reference to the shortcomings of globalization in fostering the economic and social development of developing and least developed regions. Economic growth indicators in recent decades, as well as the distribution of economic benefits in different parts of the world, will be discussed in relation to the changes in absolute poverty ratios in a number of regions and nation states. This thesis makes an attempt to show that, while global economic growth is a necessary condition for development, it is not the sole and adequate condition in alleviating world poverty,. In recognition of this fact, the UN introduced the MDGs which combined different aspects of development.

Building on this contextual framework, the second chapter will focus on efforts of international governance bodies, specifically the UN, and the appropriateness of their attempts to alleviate poverty. The UN Millennium Declaration and the MDGs will be examined in detail as ambitious projects for the new millennium. This chapter aims to answer the

questions “Why has the UN, rather than other multinational institutions, assumed a leadership role in managing global development?”, “Why are the MDGs considered to be so important?”, “Do they represent achievable targets?”, and “What is lacking in poverty alleviation methods that has prevented a breakthrough in solving humanity’s most far-reaching crisis?” While the UN is making valuable efforts to convene member states around the fight against absolute poverty and ending global suffering, there are many criticisms of the MDGs that should be taken into consideration. Given that many countries continue to lag behind MDG targets, an understanding of these critiques is essential.

In the final section, this thesis will assess the ways in which the MDGs, with a focus on MDG on poverty, are nationalized/localized in Turkey, as well as the strengths and failures of the Millennium Project in the Turkish case (which is a developing country context). The final chapter examines the pertinent state and non-state actors involved in the process of nationalizing/localizing the MDGs, with reference to official MDG reports. The interviews conducted in the Undersecretariat of State Planning Organization and the UN Turkey Office will shed light on the discussion of the successes/failures of the MDGs in penetrating national and local domains. Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the UN, emphasizes in the foreword of the 2009 MDG Report that “the right policies and actions, backed by adequate funding and strong political commitment, can yield results” (p.3). This final chapter will seek to determine (1) if any of these components, which are required for the achievement of the MDGs, are absent in the Turkish case and (2) whether there are incentives or not for the implementation of the MDGs at the national and local levels. As this final chapter will demonstrate in the absence of incentives by the UN, this discourse by the UN Secretary-General tends to remain as the expectations to be met by the national governments and this situation further limits the ability of the UN in achieving its global development project.

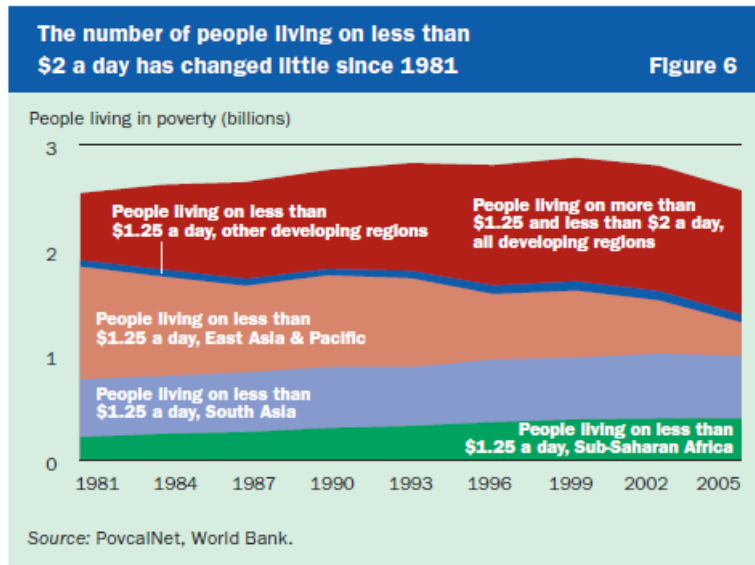
CHAPTER 2: GLOBALIZATION AND WORLD POVERTY

2.1. World Poverty: Absolute, Moderate, and Relative Poverty

Given the purpose of this thesis, it is necessary to differentiate between the different types of poverty. The UN MDGs are predominantly concerned with absolute or extreme poverty. According to Sachs, one billion people, or one sixth of humanity, suffer deeply from poverty: [they are] “too ill, hungry, or destitute even to get a foot on the first rung of the development ladder” (2005: 18). The author calls them the “poorest of the poor” or the “extreme poor of the planet,” all of whom live in developing countries. Sachs contends that while poverty is everywhere, this absolute poverty is a phenomenon of the developing world (which refers to the rest of the world besides from the developed world) - there is no absolute/extreme poverty in the developed world. Poverty in the developed world is restricted to moderate and relative poverty. Moderate poverty generally refers to conditions of life in which basic needs are met, but just barely, while relative poverty is household income level below a given proportion of average national income (Sachs 2005: 20).

Figure 1: The number of people living on less than \$1 a day and \$2 a day

Source: World Development Indicators 2008 Supplementary Data on Poverty (p.10)



The World Bank (WB) uses a standard measurement (or international poverty line) of \$1 a day to determine the number of people living in absolute poverty.⁷ In measuring the greater nuances of global poverty, the WB uses income assessments of \$1 per day and \$2 per day and calculates the number of people falling between these two categories (Sachs 2005: 20). As Figure 1, which was taken from the World Bank's World Development Indicators Report, shows, there has been a decline in the overall number of people living in absolute poverty. As we approach the present, the graph shows a slight downward trend. As for the geographical distribution of absolute poverty, the graph shows that most living in extreme poverty reside in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern and Eastern Asia, and the Pacific regions. Interestingly, while East Asia and the Pacific regions seem to have made at least some progress in terms of poverty alleviation, other developing regions appear to follow an unchanging path. The Sub-Saharan region, represented by the extension of the green area on the graph, challenges the overall decline in absolute poverty. In this region there has been an increase in the numbers of the extreme poor since 1981 (Sachs 2005: 21).

⁷ Note that \$1 a day poverty line was adjusted to \$1.25 per day according to PPP of 2005.

Figure 1 also suggests that people living in moderate poverty comprise a considerable share of the world's population. The red area in the graph (those earning between \$1.25 and \$2 per day) encompasses approximately 1.5 billion people. Thus, the number of people living in either absolute or moderate poverty is equal to 40 percent of humanity (Sachs 2005: 18-9). It should be noted that it would not take great economic changes for those living in moderate poverty (above \$1.25 per day) to slip into the absolute poverty category (below \$1.25 per day). Thus, while considering and examining "the poorest of the poor" this arguably miniscule distinction between moderate and absolute poverty should be kept in mind. While the second chapter of this thesis will focus largely on absolute and moderate poverty, the final chapter (an examination of the Turkish development context) will employ all three poverty measures – absolute, moderate and relative.

2.2. The Development of Gaps Between Rich and Poor: First, Second, and Third Worlds

As noted in the previous section, absolute poverty is a phenomenon of the developing, not the developed, world. Given this distinction, it is crucial to understand what the developed world did in order to alleviate absolute poverty in the wake of two World Wars. Likewise, it is crucial to examine the challenges of the developing world that lead to their global disadvantages and underdevelopment. According to Sachs, it is important to examine the very recent period of human history, when the divide emerged, in order to make the right interpretations. He explains the gap as follows:

The gulf between today's rich and poor countries is ... a new phenomenon, a yawning gap that opened during the period of modern economic growth. As of 1820, the biggest gap between the rich and poor – specifically, between the world's leading economy of the day, the United Kingdom, and the world's poorest region, Africa – was a ratio of four to one in per capita income (even after adjusting for differences in purchasing power). By 1998,

the gap between the richest economy, the United States, and the poorest region, Africa, had widened to twenty to one (Sachs 2005: 28).

The divide between the developed and developing world has increased significantly over time. In terms of the different or unique actions taken by the developed world to achieve progress, the market-based trading system takes centre stage. The rich or so-called first world succeeded in post-war recover through rapid economic growth. The second world, in contrast, was excluded from this economic system until the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of communism (Sachs 2005: 47). The rest of the world, or the so-called third world, and its economic interactions remained disconnected from the first and second worlds for a much greater period of time. Since they preferred to remain separate from both the capitalist first world and the socialist second world, they were “true third-way countries” and chose to follow their own development path which excluded the intervention of foreign multinationals, according to Sachs (2005: 47). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to debate whether there is a single path towards poverty alleviation and development, this section does aim to emphasize the increasing development gap, in the modern period, as a byproduct of extended economic interactions and globalization.

2.3. Asymmetrical Globalization, Increasing Globalization, and Neo-liberal Economic Principles

There is considerable literature on globalization, in which the definitions address one way or another, the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of economic, social, political, and cultural affairs. According to Joseph Stiglitz, globalization is fundamentally “the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world which has been brought about by the enormous reduction of costs of transportation and communication, and the breaking down of

artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and people across borders” (2003: 9). Nonetheless, it was originally used by thinkers and theorists who were proponents of the neo-liberal paradigm, free market economies and the notion of a global free market (Kitching 2001: 5) and this very narrow early understanding has had an impact on its ongoing conceptualization. Jan Aart Scholte criticizes traditional definitions of globalization which involve only internationalization, liberalization, universalization, or westernization, as he deems such concepts to be too shallow to capture the dynamic meaning of globalization in the contemporary world (2005: 54-59). Of note, while the definition of globalization takes on many different forms, it is important to remember that using globalization interchangeably with the global free market economy is still a widespread phenomenon.

As the early definitions of globalization suggest, the global world order interacts most frequently in the economic arena and tends to favor free market economy ideologies. Along these lines, neo-liberal orthodoxy fosters the assumption that countries involved in the global free market all stand to benefit from the gains of globalization. In contrast to this belief that the “rising tide will lift all”, many scholars contend that all parts of the world are not benefiting equally from the new global prosperity. According to Sachs, “the good news is that well more than half of the world ... is experiencing economic progress” (2005: 19). However, when he proceeds to explain his remarks in greater detail, the situation becomes more bleak. “The greatest tragedy of our time is that one sixth of humanity is not even on the development ladder. A large number of the extreme poor are caught in a poverty trap unable on their own to escape from extreme material deprivation” (Sachs 2005: 19).

Figure 2: World Real GDP Growth
 Source: World Economic Outlook 2009 Report, p. 1

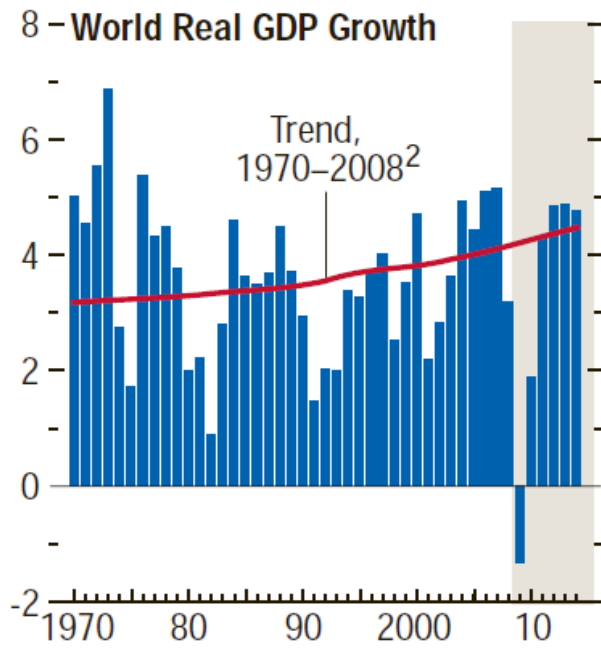


Figure 3: Real per Capita World GDP
 Source: World Economic Outlook 2009, p. 12

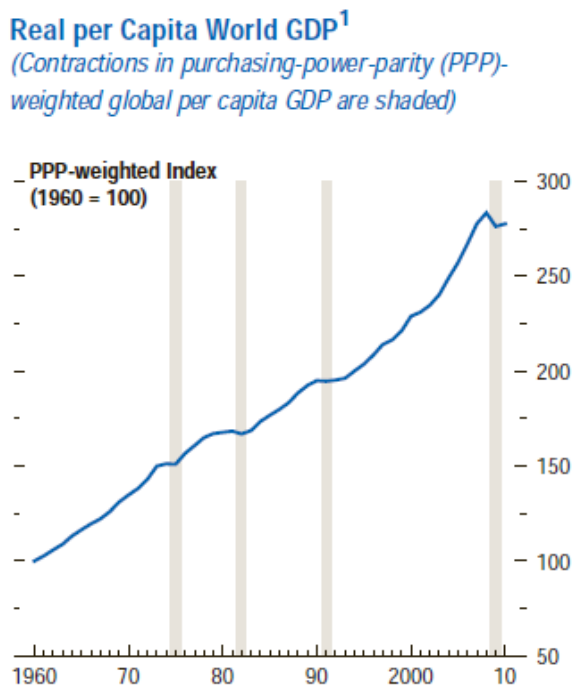


Figure 2 illustrates trends in global GDP growth between 1970 and 2008 and shows that there has indeed been increasing economic growth over the last four decades. Figure 3 outlines the increase in global GDP per capita over time. Despite such gains, the outlook for some underdeveloped regions, where there is little or almost no progress in terms of development, remains bleak. One possible explanation for this growth situation resides in the distinction between absolute gains and relative gains. According to Sachs, every region has experienced some economic growth, either in terms of the overall size of the economy or in terms of measures per person; however “some regions experienced much more growth than others” (2005: 31). So, while the rising tide may lift all a little some are lifted far less than others. The developed nations have benefited the most from economic globalization and in the global world order, it is less a matter of absolute gains, than of relative gains. If the developed nations are taking more of the limited overall pie, how can the gaps between the developed world and all others be admonished?

Table 1: The Increasing Gap between Poor and Rich States over Time

Year	Income ratio of 20% of the global population in richest countries to 20% in poorest countries
1960	30:1
1990	60:1
1997	74:1

The above table, provided by Thomas, shows the increasing economic gap between poor and rich states (2006: 646, Table 29.1). The table outlines income ratios between 20% of the world’s population in the richest countries and 20% in the poorest countries for the years 1960, 1990 and 1997. While the income ratio was 30:1 in 1960, it was 60:1 in 1990 and 74:1

in 1997. The growing gap over the last half century is striking. Likewise, according to Edward, less than one-tenth (9.5%) of the growth of the 1990s was distributed among the poorest half of the world's population, a significant majority of whom were living below the \$2 a day poverty line (2006: 1677). Given these figures it is possible to conclude that while some have been empowered by and enjoyed the benefits of globalization, others have been relegated to a destiny of disempowerment. McGrew refers this situation as asymmetrical globalization and notes that it creates winners and losers "not just between countries but within and across them" (2006:28). Asymmetrical globalization tends to favor the interests of the rich while precluding a real change in poverty alleviation worldwide. Kitching explains this asymmetry as follows:

Not only is it possible for richer people in both rich and poor countries to secure a disproportionate share of the benefits of economic growth in a narrow sense, it is also possible for them to avoid disproportionately the wider social and environmental costs of that growth. Thus, as industrialization and development proceed, rivers may become more polluted, but it is the poor not the rich who drink, bathe, or wash in those polluted waters. Thus, as industrialization and urbanization accelerate, urban air and atmosphere may become more polluted and give rise to a large increase in respiratory diseases, but the rich will contrive to live in places where they can avoid the worst of this pollution, if not all of it (2001:132).

Given this growing global disparity and its consequences, it is important to understand the causes of the global income gap. McGrew contends that inequality and exclusion are endemic and prevalent features of global politics (2006: 34). According to his analysis, power inequalities among nation states, hidden rules of global governance that tend to favour the interests of global capitalism, and the technocratic nature of most decision making in the global arena lead to the exclusion of poor nation states. In a world where global financial affairs are shaped by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, in which one dollar equals one vote, the financial system is bound to work in the interests of rich nations. The UN is also worth considering in this context, since it is the main

multinational governing body that attempts to bring all nations together. Despite the fact that UN operates on the basis of “one member, one vote,” the Security Council privileges certain nation states as permanent members and through veto power (Paul 2004: 375). According to Paul, “after 1990 the Council’s deliberations [became] more secretive and unaccountable than ever, with meetings largely held behind closed doors in private ‘consultations of the whole.’” Here again, the interests of poorer nations are likely to be disregarded if they conflict with the interests of those with the most financial or political power.

With respect to the hidden rules of global governance, beginning in the 1980s, neo-liberal economic policies were broadly favored and promoted. The Washington Consensus, developed at this time, was an agreement of economists “convinced that the key to rapid economic development lay not in a country’s natural resources, or even in its physical or human capital, but rather in the set of economic policies that is pursued” (Porter and Craig 2005:234). Thomas refers to the principles of the Washington Consensus in explaining the increasing gap between rich and poor nations:

During this period the Second World countries of the former Eastern bloc have been incorporated into the Third World grouping of states, and millions of people previously cushioned by the state have been thrown into poverty with the transition to market economies. In the developed world, rising social inequalities characterized the social landscape of the 1980s and 1990s. Within the Third World countries, the adverse impact of globalization has been felt acutely, as countries have been forced to adopt free market policies as a condition of debt rescheduling and in the hope of attracting new investment to spur development (2006:646).

As discussed earlier, third world countries are those most likely to be disconnected from the economic interactions of the first and the second world. Since third world countries preferred for a time not to engage in global economic relations, they were excluded, or possibly punished for not being part of an increased economic interconnectedness. Ultimately, these countries decided that the only way to survive was to engage in the world economy despite its

risks and asymmetries. According to Sachs, by the early 1990s, most second and third world countries had changed their position and felt obliged to adapt to the existing rules of globalization, noting that “We need to be part of the global economy once again. We want our sovereignty; we want our self-determination, but we will abandon the idea of self-imposed autarchy” (2005: 48). As this short discussion of the path to third world global integration shows, it is not easy to answer Clark’s important development question: “are the problems of the South due to the processes of globalization, or due to the South’s relative exclusion from current trends in globalization?” (2006: 735).

2.4. Economic Growth is Good for All but Not Enough for Human Development

Thomas notes that since 1945 poverty has almost universally been seen “as an economic condition dependant on cash transactions in the market-place for its eradication” (2006: 647). Economic indicators were used to judge societies and make categorizations among nation states, hence the World Bank’s four main country categories of low-income, lower-middle income, upper-middle income, and high income, based on national per capita income (Thomas 2006: 649). The dominant perception was that lower income countries were less developed when compared to those with higher incomes and that they needed further market integration in order to prosper. According to Thomas, in this equation the Western lifestyle and Western methods of economic interaction were promoted as superior and as the ideal means for achieving development (2006: 650).

Contrary to ideas of market-based economic growth, which were developed in the capitalist world, socialist ideologies led to state-planned economies. Not surprisingly, such economic modes were a source of conflict between the East and West. Third world countries were

consequently “born into and accepted a place within the Western orbit” or found an uncertain place for themselves on the socialist side (Thomas 2006: 650). In most third world countries, where most of the absolute poverty was concentrated, leaders pushed their people into the neo-liberalism and global markets because they felt that “There is No Alternative (TINA)” rather than purely for economic growth and human development (Thomas 2006: 651). In his historical discussion of this era, Thomas notes that the end of the 1970s brought an understanding of the failure of “trickle-down” concept. At that time, where overall progress was expected as a result of economic growth, even in the poorest regions, the trickle-down theory failed to hold true as statistics showed that the poorest regions did not make any progress towards development (Thomas 2006: 655). Thomas concludes his discussion by referring to the 1980s as the “lost decade” for Southern nations, especially Sub-Saharan Africa.

The failure of the notion that the “free market economy will lead to economic growth in Third World countries and so will lead to poverty alleviation” came as a surprise to the international community. In the 1980s and 1990s, poverty was rendered a matter of secondary concern in part because these paradigm failures were not fully accepted and integrated by the global community (Noël 2003:5). Indeed, the governments and people of the developing countries were blamed for failing at poverty alleviation as a result of “country specific imbalances, policy errors, or political difficulties” (Noël 2003:5). Nonetheless, in time the realities of poverty and underdevelopment did force the international community to revise its approach to poverty.

According to McGrew, because of an urgent need for action there was a growth of “transnational and global forms of rule-making and regulation through both the expanding

jurisdiction of established international organizations... and the literally thousands of informal networks of cooperation between parallel government agencies in different countries” (2006: 21). Moreover, the notion that it was possible to alleviate poverty through economic growth alone was rendered obsolete as the world increasingly saw that global economic growth did not benefit all parts of the world equally and did not have the slightest impact on some of the world’s poorest regions. It slowly became evident that although economic growth was good for human development, poverty could not be solved simply by increasing such growth. Consequently, it became necessary to develop a multi-dimensional approach to poverty alleviation and human development. As Porter and Craig state, there has since been a tendency to consider variations of three policy issues, namely promoting opportunities, creating security, and empowering people, as complementary to economic growth to meet the global development agendas (2005: 226). The premise behind the expansion being that bare economic indicators were not enough to capture an accurate picture of world poverty which needed to be approached in its many versatile forms. The UN has played a significant role in developing this multi-dimensional approach to poverty. The work of the UNDP, beginning in the early 1990s, has made valuable contributions towards distinguishing between income poverty (a material condition) and human poverty (encompassing dignity, agency, opportunity, and choices) (Thomas 2006: 648). Thus, the UN has not only helped to engender a change in perceptions of poverty, it has also triggered discussions of poverty through a number of different and more complex lenses.

Subsequent to the shift in global understandings of poverty, the provision of social justice and the equitable distribution of global resources to ameliorate the suffering of poorer nations have come become more apparent against the single-minded promotion of neo-liberal economic principles. These new priorities necessitate coming to an understanding of the

differences in the economic, social, and political structures of individual nation states and the role of such differences in making real change towards global development. As Sachs rightly points out, it is necessary for policy makers and analysts to be sensitive to geographical, political and cultural conditions, each of which has a significant role in shaping a country's future (2005: 73). Once poorer nations are saved, for example, from geographical isolation, vulnerability to disease and climate shocks, and social injustice, they will have greater capacity and willingness to participate in and take responsibility for development (Sachs 2005: 226). In Sachs' words (2005:242):

The starting point of this chain is the poor themselves. They are ready to act, both individually and collectively. They are already hard working, prepared to struggle to stay afloat and to get ahead. They have a very realistic idea about their conditions and how to improve them, not a mystical acceptance of their fate. They are also ready to govern themselves responsibly, ensuring that any help they receive is used for the benefits of the group rather than pocketed by powerful individuals. But they are too poor to solve their problems on their own. So, too, are their own governments. The rich world, which could readily provide the missing finances, wonders how to ensure that money made available would actually reach the poor and be an investment in ending poverty rather than an endless provision of emergency rations.

It is important to note, before concluding this section that such progress, while it must originate with poorer nations, cannot occur without the guidance and contributions of developed nations. Although some countries, such as China, India and Brazil, have demonstrated significant development as a result of their own strategies forwarded by their own national governments, most of the developing world lacks the capacity to single-handedly perform similar feats (Saith 2006: 1172). Both developing and the least-developed nations still need a hand to "get their foot on the development ladder" (Sachs 2005: 73). At the same time, it is important to differentiate between the significance of donor support for short term development and the significance of support for medium or long term development. While donor resources are indeed vital for the short-term development progress

of poor nations (Braunholtz-Speight 2007: 4), in the medium or long term these nations require the capabilities and infrastructure that will help them stand up for themselves and terminate their dependency on rich countries. Hence the poverty problem cannot be solved simply through increased short-term spending as more than donor aid is necessary for long term development (Centre for Global Development 2005). Certainly, the form or quality of aid gains a huge importance as opposed to the quantity of the donor aid. It is in this regard that it is important to teach people of poorer nations “how to fish” rather than perpetually providing the fish for them. This idea must be used to shape the new global agenda on poverty. As the world becomes more globalized, the transfer of technology, aid, and guidance becomes easier and these opportunities can be used to help end poverty-driven human suffering.

CHAPTER 3:

THE UN'S NEW CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: THE EMERGENCE OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THEIR DISCONTENTS

3.1. The Role of the UN in Global Governance

As Dolowitz and Marsh point out, international governance bodies, including the OECD, G7, IMF, and UN and its specialized agencies, play a vital role in spreading ideas and programs that influence national governments “directly, through their policies and loan conditions, and indirectly through the information and policies spread at their conferences and reports” (2000: 11). Given this, the ongoing efforts of the UN to develop a multi-dimensional approach to poverty alleviation are again worth emphasizing here. As a prominent intergovernmental organization, the UN deploys policy entrepreneurs to “sell” policies all around the world (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000: 21) and has the ability to penetrate and influence national and local policy domains. The UN’s ambitious Millennium Project offers an example of how international governing bodies can, in theory, influence national development strategies. Unfortunately, as five years remain until the MDG target year of 2015, the true success of this policy transfer potential remains to be seen.

In order to differentiate the UN’s role in the global arena from other multinational and international institutions, it is important to understand the two main approaches to poverty at the global level, the dominant or mainstream approach and the critical approach (Thomas 2006: 647). From an international institutions perspective, the mainstream approach to poverty encompasses poverty alleviation through economic means, as discussed above. According to the proponents of this school of thought, poverty issue can be tackled by

providing for the basic economic needs of individuals. In contrast, the critical approach contends that there is a need to incorporate marginalized and more complex or multidimensional views on poverty in order to cope with the development challenge properly. It is not surprising that wealthier countries generally assign a privileged position to the IMF and the World Bank (Sachs 2005: 286-7), institutions which support the dominant/orthodox approach to poverty and negate the critical approach. According to Sachs, in order to get the most benefit from the global governance framework, rich countries favor these financial institutions since they operate on the “one dollar, one vote” basis. In contrast, the UN, which generally operates on the basis of “one country, one vote,” has made greater efforts to adopt a more critical approach towards poverty and human development, especially beginning in the 1990s. The UN’s awareness of the rising inequality between and within countries as well as its call for a new focus on poverty through its *Human Development Reports* clearly demonstrates its endorsement of the critical approach (Noël 2003:6).

In the late 1990s, the Asian crisis represented a milestone in demonstrating the limitations of orthodox approaches and inspiring a change in the perception of poverty among global institutions (Noël 2003:18). Financial crises in East Asia as well as in Latin America pushed the World Bank to acknowledge a need to pay attention to “the social consequences of adjustment and to the importance of poverty alleviation” (Noël 2003:6). The subsequent production of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers is a proof of the new and more comprehensive approaches of the WB and the IMF. This growing awareness of the need to include a social policy dimension in predominantly financial institutions has not been without some internal tension and debate, which resulted in the resignations of Joseph Stiglitz (the WB’s Chief Economist) and Ravi Kanbur (the Cornell University economist in charge of producing the World Bank’s 2000 *World Development Report- Attacking Poverty*) (Noël

2003:6). In Porter and Craig's analysis of the period, such internal tension may indicate "a good deal of institutional embedding of liberal reforms going on" instead of simply the "roll out" of more neo-liberalism (2005: 228).

Despite this shift, there remain clear distinctions between UN and WB approaches to poverty alleviation and the MDGs. The WB's development strategy, which is transferred through its *Global Monitoring Reports* (GMR), diverges from the UN's development strategy, conveyed through UN Millennium Projects (UNMP) and *Investing in Development – A Practical Plan to Achieve the MDGs Report* (Gore 2005: 2). Gore explains this difference as follows:

The UNMP argues that achieving the MDGs depends critically on breaking the country-level poverty traps in which the poorest countries, particularly African countries, are enmeshed... the GMR (2005), in contrast, rejects the idea that there are country level poverty traps and focuses more fully on measures to promote economic growth (2005:3).

Since its establishment in 1945, UN has been intimately involved in solving many of humanity's most pressing problems. The UN's institutional structures, available resources, decades of experience, and expertise in global governance make it an indispensable actor in the global arena. Numerous governmental and non-governmental agencies and networks (including states, international institutions, and transnational networks) have since gathered around the UN's global governance framework in order to have an impact on the governance of international affairs (McGrew 2006: 30). As such, when discussing the pervasive nature of poverty and an urgent need to address it, the UN assumes a role at the forefront. According to Sachs, "the UN Secretary-General is the best placed officer in the world to help to coordinate the various stakeholders" involved in the efforts to achieve the global development agenda and "UN agencies offer vitally important expertise in every aspect of development" (2005: 285). Taylor and Curtis likewise explain the UN's role in the global arena as follows:

Paradoxically, despite the shortage of funds, the changes in the economic and social machinery of the UN have been promising, and the UN's role in economic and social areas has been largely positive. The UN has acquired skills and resources with regard to key economic and social problems, such as rebuilding failed states, supporting democratization, promoting human development, and addressing HIV/AIDS, poverty, and disease. These skills have made the UN an indispensable resource (2006:418).

In addition to its skills and resources in a number of development and security domains, other significant international institutions, such as the IMF and the WB, need UN expertise to operate (Sachs 2005: 287). Sachs calls the IMF and WB generalist institutions, meaning that while the IMF deals with macroeconomic issues, such as budgets and exchange rates, the WB deals with development issues. The UN is different from these generalist institutions in that it has a number of specialized institutions and so accumulates knowledge and expertise that sheds light on the paths and work of other international bodies. In terms of the UN approach to global poverty, the MDGs illustrate the UN's awareness of current challenges in poverty alleviation (Thomas 2006: 646). The UN MDG approach demonstrates a need for a multi-layered perspective on poverty alleviation rather than assuming that poverty is solely a financial or economic matter. Various topics, including health, education, gender and the environment, are taken into consideration in the MDG framework.

3.2. The Evolution of the MDGs

The United Nations has initiated many development related projects pertaining to poverty, youth, gender equality, education, and health since its establishment in 1945. Likewise numerous meetings and conferences have been convened on development issues by different UN agencies. The historical evolution of the MDGs actually positions the inception of the development targets in the 1960s. Notions of development were pushed to the forefront of the UN agenda at this time when seventeen recently-independent countries acquired UN

membership (Jackson 2007: 7). Reducing hunger became a central focus of the newly-composed UN and in this respect the UN launched the “Freedom from Hunger” campaign and proclaimed the 1960s to be the “United Nations Development Decade” (Jackson 2007: 7). Two prominent UN agencies, namely the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), were established in 1964 and 1965 respectively (Jackson 2007: 8). Unfortunately, the UN failed to recognize that for the new member states the problem went beyond hunger and so despite its efforts, the UN was still far from meeting its development targets. Moreover, there had actually been an increase over the development decade, rather than a decrease, in the needs of developing countries.

The General Assembly, then, decided to proclaim the 1970s as the “Second United Nations Development Decade” in order to accelerate efforts to achieve development targets, but the collapse of the Gold Standard, the oil crisis and a lack of the political will among developed nations again hindered progress (Jackson 2007: 8-9). Shortly thereafter, the UN decided to review the goals and objectives of the Second Development Decade and set out a new agenda for the Third Development Decade (1981-1990) (Jackson 2007: 9). In the end, despite 30 years of efforts, the UN consistently failed to meet its development targets and the gap between developed and developing countries kept growing. Clearly, there was a need for better diagnoses of the shortcomings of previous development agendas. As one of the most prominent global governance bodies, the UN was still responsible for determining a more appropriate way to cope with global poverty and hunger. In this sense, the “Fourth Development Decade (1991-2000)” was important in that it highlighted important challenges to development through various conferences and declarations, leading to the proclamation of the “United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (Jackson 2007: 43).

The Millennium Summit in 2000 sought to bring together all of the lessons and efforts of the preceding four decades. Each meeting held throughout the 1990s set the ground for discussion of a specific development issue and laid out steps towards achieving sustainable development as agreed upon by signatory states to the UN. The Millennium Summit of 2000 constituted a unique experience in that it more clearly specified the outcomes of various development conferences and meetings in the 1990s and established a development agenda to be implemented by all member states. As Peter Jackson notes “the MDGs were not part of a new agenda, but an attempt to refocus years of debate, efforts and struggle to advance the economic and social development of the world’s poorest nations” (2007: 7).

The Millennium Summit undoubtedly laid the foundation for the eight MDGs. The eight MDGs consist of 21 targets to be met by the year 2015 and 60 indicators to measure the progress made prior to 2015.⁸ Some critics suggest that these targets have existed in the UN for decades (ODI Briefing Paper 2008:3) and thus the MDG project is essentially old wine in a new bottle. However, the MDG targets diverge from previous UN projects in that they represent the largest gathering of world leaders in history,⁹ and that all signatory states agreed upon each MDG and to combine their efforts to make “real” progress in combating human suffering and poverty. Hence, the Millennium Project, which has since received much global recognition, is unprecedented in its ambition.

Keyzer and Wesenbeeck suggest that UN efforts to set such targets and establish the MDGs are instrumental in reviving development issues on the international agenda as the UN constitutes a channel for keeping donor countries committed to their promises and recipient

⁸ See Appendix 1 and visit the web site of the UNDP: <http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics.shtml>

⁹ For further information please visit the UNDP website: <http://www.undp.org/mdg/resources2.shtml>

countries committed to their development goals (2006: 445). The authors go on to specify two important reasons for MDG-optimism: (1) the UN's global project makes a simple calculation of the transaction needed between the haves and have-nots; and (2) the goals and targets offer a very simple or concrete assessment of how nation states can achieve development objectives (2006: 446). As such, the MDGs are a significant project that brings the most pressing problem of humanity to the forefront of the international agenda while continuously pressuring nation states to keep their attention focused on this project. As world-wide attention has turned to the MDGs, national, international, regional and local activities have emerged tied to the objectives of the MDGs, including the very successful "Make Poverty History" campaign.¹⁰ This campaign has reinvigorated the commitment of the 189 nation states and their citizens as they rallied around the slogan and its intent.

3.3. The Content of the MDGs

The MDGs established the basis for common development targets and collective action on development-related issues. In this respect, all states and global multinational institutions who signed on to the MDGs are expected to integrate these goals into their development plans and strategies. As Akram-Lodhi notes, it is not only the UN but also bilateral donors that are expected to structure the implementation of projects and funding in a way that is consistent with the MDGs (2009: 12). National governments increasingly integrate the MDGs when framing their own development policies and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB), who regularly collaborate with the UN, have made it an obligation to develop policies in line with the MDGs. Hence, there has been great significance attributed to the MDGs as both an ambitious and a broadly endorsed development project.

¹⁰ For further details about the "Make Poverty History" campaign, see the web site: <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/>.

The MDGs consist of quantitative targets to be met by the year 2015 and concern areas of development including poverty and hunger, maternal health, child mortality, primary education, clean water and sanitation, HIV/AIDS, and gender equality.¹¹ In addition to these broad development topics, the last goal (MDG Eight) seeks to mobilize partnerships to achieve the first seven goals (See Figure 4 and Appendix 1).



Figure 4: Millennium Development Goals
Source: UNDP website < <http://www.undp.org/mdg/> >

As each of these goals is complex and requires unique and extensive understanding on its own, the main focus of this thesis is the explicitly poverty-related MDG, MDG One. Yet, given the mutual interdependency of the goals, MDG One will be examined with references to other MDGs. As Fried points out, “multiple deprivations reinforce one another” (2009: 10) – as poorer people and poorer nations often encounter extreme discrimination, they regularly find themselves in a disadvantaged position in terms of receiving proper education, finding adequate and meaningful employment and “earning their way out of poverty” (2009: 10).

¹¹ The information on the UN MDGs is taken from the official MDGs web site and for further details see <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

Poverty is a multi-layered concept that encompasses a variety of other concerns. As such, it is possible to argue that without significant progress on MDGs two to seven, there is very little hope for the success of the first MDG. In other words, the poverty-related MDG, while treated separately, will be examined in relation to the other MDGs in this thesis, so as to ensure a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction, since all of the MDGs are related to empowerment and reducing the vulnerability of the poor.

With regards to the MDG One, although it initially consisted of two targets which are (1) “halving, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day;” and (2) “halving, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion people who suffer from hunger”, a third target was added in 2008, “achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.”¹² These three targets of MDG One are accompanied by nine indicators that allow nation states and the international community to observe the progress being made in the fight against poverty. By using these indicators, the World Bank can map poverty all over the world and by using World Bank data it becomes possible to observe the progress made since the inception of the Millennium Project¹³. According to the 2000-2001 *World Development Report* (WDR), the number of people living on less than \$1 a day in 1990 was 1,276.4 million (p. 23, Table 1.1). This number declined to 1,198.9 million in 1998¹⁴, the equivalent of a four per cent reduction in the proportion of the people living in absolute poverty.

¹² For further details, please visit the International Labour Organization (ILO) website: http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/lang--en/WCMS_114244/index.htm

¹³ ‘The Millennium Project was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2002 to develop a concrete action plan for the world to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people.’ as stated in the official web site of the Millennium Project. For further details, see <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/>.

¹⁴ The calculations are made by using the 1993 PPP.

When these numbers are adjusted for 2005 PPP (Purchasing Power Parity), they provide a more optimistic picture of the decline in world poverty. According to the World Bank's 2009 *Global Monitoring Report*, 1,816.6 million people were living below the international poverty line of \$1.25 (2005 PPP) in 1990 (page 49, Table 1.6). This number dropped to 1,373.5 million in 2005; a decline largely related to the hyper growth of China and India.¹⁵ The decline in world poverty was not so dramatic in 2008 and 2009, with 1,202.8 million people and 1,183.6 million people living in absolute poverty in each of these years. Although the PPP adjusted numbers add greater hope to the prospect of achieving MDG One by 2015, there is still too much to be done. When the collective poverty alleviation progress of all countries is taken into account over the last twenty years, it seems unlikely that the MDG targets will be met by the year 2015 (See Figure 5, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).¹⁶

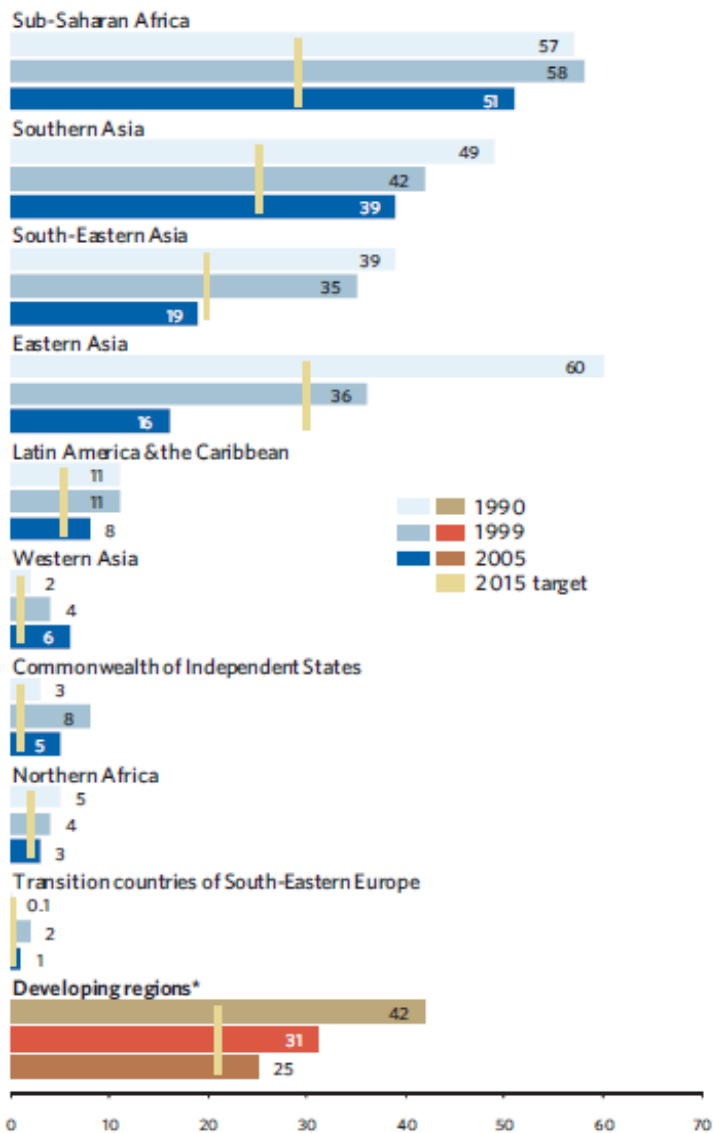
¹⁵ Further details about the hyper growth cases of China and India will be provided in the following chapters of the thesis.

¹⁶ See the World Bank web site for further details about the progress in halving the world poverty:
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/0,,contentMDK:20104132~menuPK:250991~pagePK:43912~piPK:44037~theSitePK:29708,00.html>

Figure 5: Progress against Poverty

Source: Millennium Development Goals 2009 Report

Proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day, 1990, 1999 and 2005 (Percentage)



*Includes all developing regions, the Commonwealth of Independent States and transition countries of South-Eastern Europe.

3.4. The Actors Involved in Achieving the MDGs

There are multiple actors involved in the MDG process, including both state actors (i.e. national governments), and non-state actors (i.e. UN agencies). Without either partner there would be no hope of making progress in the alleviation of global poverty. In terms of the role of the UN, it operates “as an important site for the construction and dissemination of transnational research and policy ideas embracing a wide range of contemporary issues” (Mahon and McBride, 2009:3).¹⁷ The UN and the MDGs can be viewed, in Mahon and McBride’s terms, as “purveyors of ideas” in the sense that ideas contain significant elements of transnational governance in addition to the interests and institutions of nation states, IOs and society. In order to disseminate these ideas, the UN aims to shed light on the preferred paths of the national governance by providing guidance, policy analysis, country specific priorities/targets, and by channeling resources.

In contrast, understanding the role and function of nation states in this picture is a bit more complex. While the dynamics of transnational governance mostly operate beyond the boundaries of nation states, IOs need the cooperation of nation states in the implementation of global projects. Consequently, the transnational governance system does not necessarily mean the irrelevance of the state, but instead that it is part of a lucrative transnational governance mechanism comprised of multiple and interdependent social networks. From Clark’s perspective, while the role of the nation state has been transformed in recent decades as globalization has changed the nature of the state as well as state-society relations (2006: 739), it remains important. He adds that these changes have “led us to think in terms, not of the demise or the retreat of the state, but about its changing functionality: states still exist but do

¹⁷ The quotation of Mahon and McBride was taken from their analysis on OECD and adapted to the UN discussion.

different things less well than they used to, but also have taken on new responsibilities in exchange.” In recognizing the changing yet vital role of nation states within the MDG framework, the UN often remarks on the importance of so-called “national ownership” in its official country reports.¹⁸ According to Sachs, government support in the fight against poverty is crucial (2005). Despite the significance of donor aid in achieving the MDGs, “aid by itself cannot ‘buy’ the MDGs” if the UN ignores national policies of participating countries (Herfkens: 2008).

In order to achieve the MDGs, there is a need for complementary political action at both national and international levels. Increasing awareness of the MDGs at the local level and the support of the citizens, in terms of reminding governments of their MDG commitments, make a significant contribution to the achievability of the MDGs (Herfkens 2008). As these actors become more involved in the spread and strengthening of MDG ideas, they are at the same time directly or indirectly shaping and changing the project: “carriers are active in structuring flows and patterns of diffusion but they are also translating the ideas they mediate, reflecting in the process their own projects and interests” (Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson, 2006). Thus, both the successes and failures in meeting the MDG targets belong to multiple actors, among whom the UN and nation states remain the most prominent. As such, when discussing the MDGs, it is crucial to examine the actions of the UN and nation states both independently and collaboratively to along the MDG path.

¹⁸ See <http://www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports2.shtml>

3.5. The MDGs and Their Discontents

The success of capturing media headlines across the globe aside, the MDGs must still contend with a number of important criticisms. There are many questions related to the MDGs which remain unanswered including “Is this shift in priorities genuine and important, or is it simply a new packaging for old ideas, the policy flavor of the day? Is a renewed concern for poverty politically significant? Does it correspond to a reorientation of social policies, or is it merely an expression of a broader acceptance of neo-liberal ideas and of the constraints of permanent austerity?” (Noël 2003:3). In addition to these questions, the MDGs have been criticized for failing to capture the scope of contemporary poverty, applying a “one-size-fits-all” approach to a complex and multidimensional problem, representing a Northern rather than a Southern perspective on global poverty, excessive dependence on the commitment of donor countries, fashioning a far too ambitious time frame for the achievement of the goals, assuming that China and India can be taken as representative of development trajectories, neglecting the human security element of development, and inconsistencies between human rights and the MDGs. These eight criticisms will be explored in greater detail below.

The first criticism is that the quantitative MDG targets fail to capture the reality or scope of poverty in the world today in that they fail to encompass dimensions of political empowerment and social change (Braunholtz-Speight 2007: 4). Although the UN adopts a multidimensional approach to poverty and generally defines poverty according to various economic and social indicators, the MDGs are accused of being overly simplistic. While the 2008 *MDGs Report* indicates that MDGs acknowledge and employ an expanded definition of poverty with goals for health, education, and water and sanitation (2008: 17), the poverty concept itself still needs to be dealt with more comprehensively. Although the UN developed

the Human Development Index (HDI) to include a multidimensional approach for calculating development, MDG One is based on the US\$1 a day international poverty line and targets are based on quantitative methods that concretize world poverty in statistics (because of changing economic indicators, the international poverty line was recently adjusted to \$1.25 a day according to 2005 PPP). Consequently, the targets and indicators remain very narrow, since they ignore the social justice aspect of the development discussion. In Saith's view, discussions of inequality, socio-economic exclusion, and redistribution of income, assets and land "find no reflection at all in the goals or targets or indicators" (2006: 1184-5).

As Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen and development economist Sudhir Anand (1996) point out, poverty cannot simply be calculated on the basis of income and economic indicators alone. In more social-oriented definitions, poverty is always greater than the sum of a lack of food, health care, education, clean water, sanitation, shelter, and clothing.¹⁹ Likewise, Fried argues that the poverty concept can be best crystallized in the poverty definitions of the poor themselves: "It is a sense of powerlessness, frustration, exhaustion, and exclusion from decision-making, not to mention the relative lack of access to public services, the financial system, and just about any other source of official support" (2009: 10). Hence, a combination of economic and social indicators will help to create the most accurate assessment of poverty. In this respect, this thesis highlights the significance of developing a multi-dimensional approach which is a combination of social and economic policies in the fight against poverty. Indeed, this thesis acknowledges that the MDGs are likely to fail in encompassing different dimensions of poverty while simplifying the issue as a lack of material resources.

¹⁹ For further details regarding the definition of poverty, see http://library.thinkquest.org/05aug/00282/over_whatism.htm .

A secondary or sub-critique closely related to questions about poverty definitions and measurement, concerns the availability of data to measure MDG progress. Besides assessing poverty in an overly simplistic manner, Saith argues that the \$1 a day poverty line, which is used internationally to determine world poverty, is not internationally comparable and there are “substantial gaps in required statistics” on a country-by-country basis (2006: 1175). This “practicality and availability of data” means the potential failure to accurately capture the reality of global poverty levels (Saith 2006: 1189).

As a side note to this discussion, and based some of the criticisms received, the UN decided to introduce new targets and indicators in 2006 with respect to decent work and wages, and made revisions to the list of MDG targets (Braunholtz-Speight 2007: 5).²⁰ Through this attempt, the UN aimed to develop a more comprehensive approach that acknowledges social change and rights.

The second criticism of the MDGs is that the development project consists of a set of goals based on a “one-size-fits-all” approach to development. It is crucial to remember that the needs of individual countries vary and as such the MDG framework may fail to penetrate certain national domains (Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum Paper 2003: 9). This criticism points to a need for local solutions in the guidance of global goals. If the goals are “localized and customized to country circumstances” and if the priorities are likewise determined locally, the MDGs are more apt to be achieved (Herfkens 2008). For the MDGs to be truly prioritized in national and local domains they have to be incorporated into the traditional knowledge of the society and the society must be informed of the Millennium Project’s

²⁰ Note that Appendix 1 is the updated version of the MDG targets, containing all the revisions in the MDG list.

purposes and implementation plans. In doing so, there may be a need, in some cases, to adjust the general framework to better fit into national development strategies.

The international community and MDG governing bodies do seem to be moderately aware of this fact. In the case of the UN, it has regional and national offices around the world working in accordance with national and local policy frameworks. Similarly, it is possible and somewhat surprising to observe a World Bank awareness of country-specific peculiarities: in a WB publication, it is explicitly noted that, “over the past 60 years, we have learned that development solutions need to be designed by countries to suit their own circumstances – one size does not fit all” (World Bank Group Working for a World Free of Poverty 2007: 3). Unfortunately, this thesis aims to show that this awareness in the international governance platform has not changed the Millennium Project’s negation of country-specific characteristics. Hence, one-size-fits-all approach of the MDGs weakens the plausibility of the Project.

Third, the MDGs are often viewed as a Northern project that neglects the realities of the South. Exclusion of Southern governments from the goal-setting process is a clear manifestation of this divide (Claiming the MDGs Report 2008: 5). In this context, the North refers to developed nations which favor neo-liberal values, while the South refers to developing and least developed countries, which are comparatively less integrated into world markets. Amin supports this criticism by noting that the MDGs were drafted by Ted Gordon, a CIA consultant, and developed by a small committee in backrooms (2006: 2). That is to say, “international discourse about development may sometimes seem far removed from grassroots realities” (Braunholtz-Speight 2007: 4). Keyzer and Wesenbeeck similarly contend that the MDG initiative is stuck in the usual vicious cycle of a utopian and top-down planning

approach to development (2006: 445). The consequence of this is that the MDGs place a considerable emphasis “on the mobilization of financial resources and technical solutions” while neglecting the need for transforming global power relations (Claiming the MDGs Report 2008:4). The MDGs also disregard the importance of expanding “people’s capabilities and freedoms to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives” (Claiming the MDGs Report 2008: 11).

This Northern approach to development has meant the foundational inclusion of neo-liberal principles and theories of growth and development. Despite the spread of pro-poor efforts, “there has been very little audible out-of-the-neo-liberal-box thinking or argumentation on offer from the UN family of agencies” (Saith 2006: 1179). Consequently, according to the *ODI Briefing Paper*, with reference to the 2008 *Chronic Poverty Report*, there are about 443 million chronically poor people who are doomed to stay poor with no chance to benefit from international efforts to reduce poverty (2008: 2). Similarly, Akram-Lodhi, with reference to the *MDG 2009 Report*, suggests that the world is not on track to achieve the MDGs and adds that this can be seen as a predicted outcome of the macroeconomic framework of the MDGs:

This macroeconomic orthodoxy has policy objectives that replicate those that pre-dated the MDGs: macroeconomic stability based upon budgetary balance; an ‘enabling’ environment for the private sector based upon internal de-regulation and external trade liberalization; a ‘realistic’ exchange rate; and export-led growth. Thus, 25 years of disappointment in many countries, and in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa, has not led outsiders to reconsider the basic macroeconomic framework used to understand development and developing countries (2009:12).

The comparison offered by Derviş between farmers in the developing world and the developed world in regards to the importance of agriculture recalls these sentiments. He argues that “there is no way they [the farmers of the developing countries] can compete with the products of rich countries that receive massive subsidies. On top of this, most goods from

developing countries face tariffs three or four times higher than goods from developed countries. A much fairer system of trade is needed” (2005: 5). Although developing and least developed countries most need global support in competitive market sectors, such as agriculture and trade, the developed world largely seems to neglect their needs and exclude those who are less equipped to fully engage in the neo-liberal marketplace. In Amin’s words, the MDG campaign, as evidenced by this systemic neglect of the needs of the South, is essentially an “ideological cover for neo-liberal initiatives” (2006: 1). This thesis supports the argument advanced by Amin and it purports a concrete example of how MDGs contribute to the neo-liberal rhetoric instead of fundamentally criticizing it.

In support of this argument, Hiranandani points out that the number of people suffering from chronic hunger has increased from 800 million in mid-1990s to 830 million in 2004. According to Hiranandani, “the paradigm of market economics views food as a commodity rather than a right” (2009: 7), and so the structural causes of poverty and hunger are routinely neglected. Ideally, the MDG targets should have been designed not only to help people escape from food insecurity, but to provide food sovereignty to those suffering from hunger (2009: 8). After highlighting that hunger and poverty are political issues, Hiranandani concludes that unless the political economy of poverty and hunger is adequately assessed and the structural causes are examined, there is very little hope for the realization of the MDGs. As an alternative model to this orthodoxy, Herfkens suggests focusing attention on trade and aid to support “home grown and owned country strategies” in the North and “on holding governments to account for their efforts to achieve the MDGs, particularly for citizens who are most likely to need them: the excluded and most vulnerable” in the South (2008).

Noël furthers this argument by noting without doubt “the rediscovery of poverty is intimately associated with the dominant policy paradigm of our times” (2003:16). Thus, the MDGs not only neglect the interests of the South, but constitute a mechanism to serve the interests of the North. Amin agrees, contending that some countries, such as the United States, those in Western Europe, and Japan, have used this UN project to promote their own neo-liberal values and to create new markets for themselves in different parts of the world (2006:1). Critics of the MDGs on this level suspect that these neo-liberal values may be very harmful to the immature economies of the LDCs. Brauholtz-Speight argues that the lack of capacity, resources and information in Southern states may mean less engagement with the MDGs in national and local domains and indeed that these externally-imposed goals and targets may “interfere with domestic processes of accountability and policymaking” (2007: 5). Thus, while the project aims to rescue developing countries and LDCs from human suffering it seems to ignore them and instead attend to the interests of developed states.

Although the world is undoubtedly moving towards a more integrated and interconnected network, regional and nation-based differences must be considered if real progress in meeting the MDGs is to be made by 2015. The UN Millennium Declaration states “we believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people” (2000, Article 5). However, as Dervis has noted “globalization creates winners and losers” (2005: 5). The pressure from the “North” on the “South” continues to suggest that globalization favors those developed countries who lead and follow the dictates of the Bretton Woods Institutions, namely the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, while neglecting countries not immediately capable of competing in world markets.

The fourth critique contends that the project's success is highly dependant on the commitment of donor countries. Saith poses the following question in this respect: "if all the world leaders are so full of good intentions, and express them collectively in some form in some city every five years, why does Planet Earth continue to be the way it is?" (2006: 1168). The Millennium Project does have the potential to succeed if financial commitments are followed. As a result, the partnerships between the developed countries and rest of the world are crucial for concrete development results. The least developed countries, in lacking the resources needed to make development progress, cannot afford significant investments in poverty reduction that will in turn bring greater prosperity. Given this, the UN has sought partnerships among world nations on the MDG Eight. The UN is responsible for ensuring that the signatory parties adhere to their commitments through progress reports, conferences, and campaigns, such as "Make Poverty History." Unfortunately in some circles this partnership has been interpreted as an attempt to integrate developing and least developed countries into global markets so as to impose neo-liberal measures on the whole world for the benefit of developed nations.

Amin criticizes the expectations that the developed world will keep its promise for Official Development Assistance (ODA) (2006:5). He calls this proposal a "comedy" and reminds readers of the last five decades of the struggle for development and the chronically forgotten promises of the developed world, which date back to the beginning of the development debates. He argues that if the developed world was actually committed to reaching concrete results in the fight against poverty, they would have paid the bill by now. On the whole the global economic system does not favour the already disadvantaged and developed nations have generally been content not to disrupt this situation. The Millennium Declaration (Article III-13) states, "success in meeting these objectives depends ... on good governance at the international level and on transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems. We are

committed to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system.” The very important word “equitable”, however, has been dropped from the MDG targets (Claiming the MDGs Report 2008: 5; Langford 2009: 2).

In relation to this critique of the MDGs, the ODA Program itself has also been strongly criticized. Examples from less developed country contexts suggest that development efforts of rich countries through the ODA Program essentially create a smoke screen. In Kenya, for instance, ODA donor support is approximately \$100 million, roughly one fifteenth of the amount actually needed (Sachs 2005: 236). Indeed, Kenya is paying \$600 million per year in debt payment to the developed world, five times more than it receives in assistance. In such a situation, the efficiency of the development assistance can surely be questioned. In terms of the amounts of development assistance promised, donor countries are consistently failing to meet their promises of 0.7% of their GNP with current levels averaging 0.25% (Herfkens 2008). Under these circumstances, it is not likely that the least developed countries will prosper and catch up with the rest of the world. Rather they stand only to retain their economic dependency on the developed world as the status quo global economic order is protected above everything else.

Although Herfkens argues that donors endorse the idea that “they are part of the problem and, as such, are willing to become part of the solution” (2008), this rhetoric is not manifested in the real world of governance. With regards to aid transfers, for example, interactions between donor and recipient countries remain problematic. Donor aid tends to have a binding element to it, meaning that when rich countries or international institutions provide aid to poorer countries, they often demand to know where and how the money is spent. Dolowitz and Marsh refer to this in the context of coercive versus voluntary policy transfer: “When aid

agencies are making loans it is likely to lead to coercive policy transfer. At the same time, when these same organizations hold conferences or issue reports it is more likely to lead to a form of voluntary policy transfer” (2000: 16). Although poor nations need donor aid to gain a step on the development ladder and although they are obliged to receive the guidance of the rich countries as well as the international institutions in order to achieve this aid, it should not mean that poor nations have to give up from their decision-making sovereignty.

For the sake of this discussion, it is also crucial to acknowledge the impact of economic crises that cause fluctuations in the amount of donor aid as well as in the amount of aid required by worsening the existing economic environment in recipient countries. These crises tend to hinder the achievement of the MDGs. Thomas highlights market reversals in various parts of the world and emphasizes that 33 countries ended the 1990s more heavily indebted than they were in the previous two decades (2006:651). These crises in effect push many more people into absolute poverty and increase the burden on donor countries by urging them to compensate for the costs of the crisis in developing countries. Tension necessarily increases when donor countries implement aid-cuts as a result of their own economic crises.

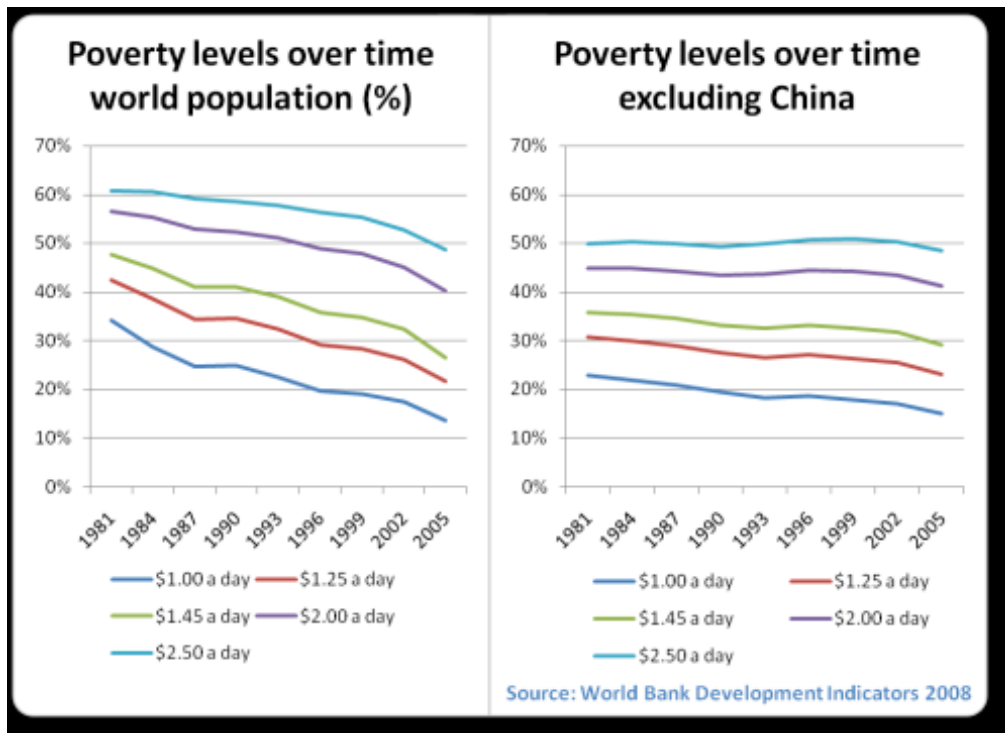
The fifth critique contends that the time period granted to nation states for achieving the ambitious MDG targets seems to be quite short. Keyzer and Wesenbeeck point to the Asian experience of growth and development to demonstrate that it is not possible to conquer humanity’s most serious problem, poverty, in such a limited amount of time (2006: 463). Poverty reduction requires a multidimensional approach, including parallel efforts in governmentality, physical and social infrastructure, transparency, human rights and so on; an approach that cannot be fully implemented in a mere twenty-five years. This rigid application of global targets and timelines in local contexts stands to cause more harm than good

(Braunholtz-Speight 2007: 4). As this critique will find reflections in the Turkish case in the fourth chapter, poverty alleviation efforts need to encompass a variety of policies and implementations in the social and economic spheres of life. Hence, in order to achieve progress in terms of poverty alleviation and development, the plans and programs need to be expanded through a longer time period in country contexts.

Sixth, the hyper-growth cases of China and India cannot be taken as representative. When these cases are removed from the calculations, assessments of the MDGs show that very little progress has in fact been made in reaching the targets. Figure 6 shows that there is no sharp decline in poverty levels once China is removed from the analysis. Although the world has been witnessing an overall decline in poverty levels, this was due largely to the economic growth and successes experienced in China. With its dense population, changes in Chinese economy and poverty levels have a considerable impact on world socio-economic indicators. It is also important in this context to note the persistent income gap in Chinese society. In other words, despite achieving considerable progress in terms of economic growth and poverty alleviation, China is still a very divided place. Kitching explains this situation as follows:

... there is a tendency, as accounts develop, for authors to fall into conflating rich countries with rich people and poor countries with poor people; countries getting richer or poorer with people getting richer or poorer; income or wealth gaps between countries opening or closing with income or wealth gaps between people opening or closing. But it is important to remember the complex ways in which such confluences can confuse. For example, the fact that China is currently closing the per capita income gap on (say) the United States, because it is growing economically almost twice as fast as the United States, does not imply that the majority of Chinese people are closing the income gap on the majority of American people, because (again) the benefits of growth are being very unequally distributed in China (2001:133).

Figure 6: Poverty Levels over Time²¹



In the case of China, the emergence of the populated middle-class has influenced the global consumption distribution (Edward 2006: 1677). This situation “explains why overall global inequality has not risen much despite dramatically rising inequality in China and a rise in inequality across the rest of the world.” In Edward’s analysis, when China is taken out of the picture, “the rich-poor gap is seen to persist so that the rich get richer while the poor, especially those in the low-income and lower-middle income countries, get more numerous” (2006:1681). Thus, while economic growth has benefited China, the majority of those in developed countries, a small portion of rich countries in the rest of the world (predominantly the richest 10% in Latin America), the rest of the world has remained in the poverty trap, where people continue to struggle to earn a living (Edward 2006: 1681). Under these circumstances, it is irrational to assume that the Chinese miracle could extend to the rest of the world (Edward 2006: 1680) and “the rising tide lift all”.

²¹ The figure is taken from <http://www.globalissues.org/print/article/26>

Although growth did trigger development in both China and India, it is misleading to make a similar direct link in all cases. Growth is an undoubtedly significant factor in supporting development however, the discussion cannot be oversimplified to assume that growth automatically brings development. Authentic development is not possible based only on growth in a country's economy, as social and human aspects must also be considered on the path to sustainable progress.

As a side note to this critique of the hyper-growth cases, it is important to remember as well that that above-mentioned successful growth cases do not match the “conventional economic advice of IMF and the WB,” meaning that some of these countries were following an economic path that was different from the recommended macroeconomic management, including the slow liberalization of capital markets, slow removal of trade barriers, and high levels of social spending (Claiming the MDGs Report 2008: 18).

Like China and India, the Millennium Villages of Southern Africa cannot be taken as representative of a general progress pattern in Africa. The overall picture shows that Sub-Saharan Africa has made very little progress within the MDG framework (See Appendix 3). Ann Weston points out in the foreword to *Development Forum Spring 2009*,²² that despite achievements in some parts of the world, there are serious doubts about meeting the MDG targets by 2015 because of poor progress in certain key areas, namely maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS reduction. She also refers to estimations by the World Bank in early 2009 that 100 million more people are likely to fall below the poverty line. Given this, specific cases will

²² Development Forum 2009 is a publication of CASID (Canadian Association for the Study of International Development)

not only be misleading in understanding the overall picture of progress, but may also prevent the development of feasible new approaches to alleviating global poverty.

The seventh critique pertains to the absence of the security component in the MDGs. Among all criticisms of the MDGs, this lack of an integrated human security approach, is perhaps among the most important factors for the achievability of the MDGs. As academic and UN scholars consistently point out, global development and security agendas need to be addressed together. This is especially critical given that the main motivation for the establishment of the UN was the promotion of peace and security and the prevention of war and conflict in the wake of two World Wars although many other topics have since been added to the broad UN agenda. In this context, Caroline Thomas finds it surprising that the UN Security Council, in its 10th January 2000 meeting, discussed only the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa (2001: 159) as this goes far beyond the traditional concerns of the UN Security Council, which are generally restricted to military threats to regional and global order.

As the definition of human security demonstrates this concept necessitates examination at various levels. When discussing human security, material needs, such as basic income, health care, education, shelter, non-material needs, such as ensuring an environment for individuals to build on their strengths, and a secure environment free of conflict and war all need to be elaborated on and examined together. An approach that deals with these multiple dimensions will enable improvements in human security at both national and international levels. When the MDGs are examined in this context it is possible to see how each goal and sub-target can contribute to a broader security purpose. Sufficient income, shelter, access to education and health services, for example, will indirectly contribute to providing a more secure environment for human beings. While meeting these material needs will help individuals to

achieve “freedom from want”, some action still needs to be taken to ensure “freedom from fear.” Although the UN rhetorically proclaims that there is an urgent need to integrate global development and security agendas, this approach remains absent in the Millennium Project. Since development cannot be achieved without security and vice versa, failure to integrate these two agendas may constitute one of the main reasons for the current failure to meet MDG targets.

The eighth criticism of the MDGs concerns the human rights dimension of the MDGs. *Claiming the MDGs Report* of 2008 offers examples of this inconsistency between the MDGs and a human rights-related approach to development:

Goal 2 ignores the requirement of free primary education, essentially reducing it to a strategy. Goal 3 sets women’s empowerment as the objective but the related target 3.A is narrowly concerned with education. Target 7.D focuses on improving the lives of 100 million slum-dwellers but a human-rights based approach would put greater focus on basic security of tenure for all, which may actually be more affordable (2008:4)

In addition, the Report criticizes the Millennium Project for having the potential to violate human rights. Despite the fact that the main motivation behind the Millennium Project is reducing human suffering, the Report states that implementations in this regard may be harmful to the same people it seeks to help (2008: 13): While construction of a large dam in a poor region, on the one hand, has the potential to provide water to a water-scarce region, decrease reliance on carbon-producing coal, and provide wage employment opportunities, on the other hand, it has the potential to violate the right to livelihoods and food, housing and prohibition against forced eviction, and finally the right to environmental health. As a result, the initial good intentions of MDG projects may end up worsening human conditions and violating human rights.

In an environment where the seeming impossibility of the MDGs is widely articulated, it is fundamental to listen to the critiques of the project carefully. While some accuse the MDGs of setting far too ambitious quantitative benchmarks, others critique the mindset and power of developed nations. As noted above, several global reports and scholars explicitly argue that reaching the MDG targets by the year 2015 no longer seems possible. According to reports of the UN and the WB, for example, despite considerable progress, if these targets stand any chance of being met, there is still a lot to do (See Appendix 2 and 3).

Among all criticisms pertaining to the MDGs, the third critique arguing that the Millennium Project is a continuation of the neo-liberal project seems very convincing. In a similar vein, assuming that a set of development targets will fit to all country cases lessens the plausibility of the project. Considering the diversities among the social, economic and political contexts of the countries, this thesis supports the criticism regarding the MDGs failure on integrating the Southern states in the global decision making; hence this thesis argues that there is a big contradiction between the aims and the implementations of the MDGs. Despite the fact that the Millennium Project stands for the development of the least developed and developing countries, ignoring these states during the decision making process curtails the cogency that the Project will save billions from inhumane conditions. This thesis acknowledges that a project that is ignorant to the local and national peculiarities tend to fail meeting its premises.

By outlining the criticisms directed towards the MDGs, this thesis aims to set up the framework in which the process of nationalization/localization of the MDGs will be discussed. Despite the fact that each and every criticism is worth considering while discussing the achievability of the Project, this thesis indicates that the Turkish case proves the validity of the the first, second and fifth criticisms as serious impediments for the

achievability of the Millennium Project at local and national contexts. The fourth chapter will provide the details concerning these criticism with references to country specific examples.

CHAPTER 4:
NATIONALING/LOCALIZING THE MDGS:
LESSONS FROM THE TURKISH CASE

Subsequent to examining the details of the MDGs and the critiques directed at the MDGs, it is crucial to assess the process of MDG nationalizing/localizing. As such, this chapter will focus on Turkey as representative of the developing country context. The Turkish case will help to carry the present analysis from the macro to the micro level and so will show the other side of the coin. Turkey will be examined in terms of its emerging role in the international governance framework, its national development strategies, its poverty rhetoric, its compliance with the MDGs, the impact of globalization on the Turkish socio-economic structure, the actors responsible for nationalizing the MDGs and the successes and failures of this process.

4.1. Background: The Interplay between Economic Growth and Human Development in Turkey

This section does not aspire to outline and explain Turkey's poverty reduction methods.²³ Rather it aims to explain the required framework for discussing how the MDGs penetrate national and local development agendas. Consequently, this analysis will allow us to observe

²³ The Social Assistance and Solidarity General Directorate is one of the main state agents involved in social assistance and protection in Turkey. In addition to the General Directorate located in Ankara (the capital of Turkey) the Social Assistance and Solidarity General Directorate operates through GONGOs (government operated non-governmental organizations) at the local level (Yılmaz and Yakut-Çakar 2008:3). The Social Assistance and Solidarity General Directorate has been preparing reports since its establishment in 2006 under the supervision and consultancy of the SPO in accordance with national strategic plans and programs (Yılmaz and Yakut-Çakar 2008:6). Despite the significance of this state agent in poverty alleviation, its examination is beyond the scope of this thesis. This thesis will mainly refer to the SPO as the responsible state institution in the MDG context.

the effectiveness of Turkey's national development strategy and the transformative role of the MDGs in poverty reduction.

As noted in previous chapters, the Millennium Project targets the developing world as this is where poverty exists in its absolute, moderate and relative forms. The Millennium Project positions nation states in two main categories: developed and developing and sets up the framework for developing countries to achieve greater progress and prosperity under the guidance of the developed world. Arguably, this categorization is overly broad in that the developing world is fragmented in terms of GDP, human development levels, and other economic and social indicators. Turkey, despite being among the twenty largest economies in the world, continues to experience considerable poverty and has not successfully addressed its complex human development challenges. When compared with African countries, Turkey seems to be far ahead in terms of achieving development targets. Yet, when compared with its European neighbours, Turkey still has a great deal of progress to make. The historical institutional parameters of this structure could be approached when the political economy of poverty in relation to Turkey's urbanization trajectory is taken into consideration. One of the crucial dimensions of this consideration is how historically and globally the relation between poverty and urbanization is administered. The case of Turkey is quite unique in the sense that this administration has its own anomalies such as the role of the nation state in managing the dynamics of economy and society, encounter between the market and the individual, capitalist bourgeoisie and the labor, so and so forth.

As Buğra contends, contemporary poverty is rooted in the 16th century emergence of capitalism in Europe (2007: 75). During that century, as agricultural modes of production were replaced by industrialization, people in rural areas were forced to migrate to urban

centers in search of employment. Upon their arrival it became evident that the urban infrastructure was insufficient in terms of meeting the employment, shelter, transportation, and production needs of the increasing population and this imbalance in supply and demand came to constitute the beginnings of modern poverty (Buğra 2007:75). As those accustomed to living in rural areas were detached from their land and forced to adapt to urban lifestyles, they were also confronted with the weakening or cessation of traditional social bonds (in addition to their own unemployment).

Along with these changes occurring in the social and economic modes of living, social policy in Turkey has been diverging from social policy in the West (Yalman 2007: 70). This diversion is largely a result of the narrow Turkish approach to social policy when compared with the welfare provisions and approach of Western countries. Yalman contends that the Western welfare state emerged as a result of 20th century capitalism in order to address some of the challenges of capitalism (2007:71). Its objectives were to eliminate poverty, ensure a minimum income that would enable the poor to survive and live in dignity and ensure social benefits in the case of unemployment. However, since Turkey did not have a welfare state tradition, social policy developed around employer-employee relations and regulations related to the right to unionize. While this arrangement does not mean that there are no poverty problems or redistribution policies (Yalman 2007:70), it has meant a scattered social policy approach that ignores many central facets of poverty and inequality. In recent years, this traditional employer-employee related poverty rhetoric has undergone an arguably positive transformation (beginning in the 1980s) largely as a result of the influence of global institutions like the World Bank and United Nations. These institutions pushed poverty to the forefront of the global agenda and consequently poverty has been discussed more intensively

at the national level as well and within the national institutional structures responsible for the development of social policy (Yalman 2007:70-71).

These institutions developed a framework for future discussions of social policy and the fight against poverty in Turkey. Yalman highlights that most modern anti-poverty efforts in Turkey fell in line with the World Bank approach to poverty and focused on “risk management” rather than a permanent solution to poverty (2007: 72). The intention was to provide poor people with the basic survival needs, basic health and education services, and basic infrastructure. Policies focused on creating market-mechanisms that would allow poor people to become more self-sufficient, in other words, “empowering people through market mechanisms” (Yalman 2007: 71). This market-based approach fit well with the neoliberal paradigm at the time. There was no consideration given to the redistribution of income or wealth in the fight against poverty, since redistribution countered the basic premises of neoliberalism (Yalman 2007: 71). As a side note, this does not necessarily imply the elimination of the state, but a transforming the role of the state in a way that strengthens market mechanisms in dealing with social problems.

In the meantime, throughout most of the modern era, poor people in Turkey have been accused of being lazy, illiterate, irresponsible and confined to the assistance and opportunities offered by the state and non-state actors (Buğra 2007: 76). In this respect, the state has not been seen as the main actor in the poverty discussion. However, the European Union accession process, which has had a significant impact on the internal affairs of the country, has also had an impact on the transformation of the state’s role and has led to a more involved state (through the extension of otherwise limited social services and social assistance) and a multi-dimensional approach to poverty. As Buğra notes, “for the first time in Turkish history,

combating poverty and social exclusion unambiguously appears as a matter of concern to the political authority” (2007:47; Buğra and Keyder 2006: 213, 225).

In accepting market-driven philosophies on poverty reduction it was easily overlooked that both “the illness and the cure” could have been related to the neoliberal paradigm. In Buğra’s words, “contemporary social-policy measures attempt to deal with poverty within the constraints imposed by a capitalist market economy” (2007: 36). Thus, while the Turkish state was attempting to cope with poverty using neoliberal market mechanisms, it was ignoring the fact that the situation of the poor was worsening as a result of increasing income gaps and inequalities, by-products of globalization and the neoliberal economic system.

In the report entitled “New Poverty and the Changing Welfare Regime in Turkey,” Buğra and Keyder point out the changes in the structure of the economy and employment since the 1980s with references to the “new forms of social stratification, urban residential segregation as well as new types of cultural dynamics” (2003:21). While describing the decreased employment opportunities, declining possibility of irregular settlement, limited social protection, cessation of traditional support mechanisms, risk of social exclusion, weakening informal solidarity networks and the increasing threat to social cohesion and political stability, the authors foray the radical changes in socio-economic conditions of individuals in the society. What is more striking is that, Buğra and Keyder reveal that unlike earlier forms of poverty and societal deprivations during times of economic downturns and crises, the most astonishing characteristic of the new poverty is the disappearance of informal solidarity networks. In other words, while non-state forms of social cohesion that existed to prevent radical versions of social exclusion-poverty-inequality cycle, now, the losers of neoliberal globalization cannot even benefit from familial, societal, co-local, kinship based, religious,

sectarian or similar alternative forms of inclusion. Furthermore, from the perspective of Buğra and Keyder, this social silhouette causes the loss of “hope” and puts extra tension on the poor. Correspondingly, the authors introduce the “new poverty” concept while explaining the changing dynamics and modes of poverty in Turkey and encouraging an approach to poverty that goes beyond the basic survival needs and saving them from social exclusion. They define “new poverty” as;

“... a product of conditions that for the most part destroy the probability of being integrated into the urban society. People in this situation are not going to complete the transformation process from being villagers, or from small production and informal employment, to being more integrated members of urban economies. The income they obtain from precarious jobs cannot establish a basis for accumulation; indeed it is not even sufficient for the reproduction of the family by paying for children’s nutrition and education.” (2003: 23-24)

After making the definition of new poverty, Buğra and Keyder denotes that the social policies developed to cope with the temporarily arising problems fall short in solving the “newly arising structural problems” (2003:21) and they propose a “minimum income support” which has the potential to provide people a life in dignity. However, their approach is prone to many criticisms from scholarly circles. For instance, Yalman criticizes this concept arguing that poverty is not new; what is new are the lack of social and employment opportunities both in rural and urban areas when compared with previous eras (2007: 73-4). Despite the fact that their approach receives many scholarly criticisms, this thesis acknowledges that Buğra and Keyder make a valuable contribution to the poverty literature by explaining how the definition and the perception of poverty is changing over time and promoting policy changes that will enable the individuals not only survive but also live in dignity as an integral part of the society.

In this context, the following quotation from Keyman and Koyuncu makes a significant contribution to the discussion (2005: 120):

“...since the 1980s and especially in the 1990s, the emergence of new actors, new mentalities and the new language of modernization, as well as democracy as a global point of reference in politics, has made culture and cultural factors an important variable in understanding political activities. It has become apparent that in the 1990s the strong state faced a serious difficulty to respond to the new societal problems and demands, especially those articulated of identity-terms and asking for the protection of social and political rights, as well as the recognition of the ethnic and religious differences. The strong state turned out to be too strong in its attempt to impose itself on society, and too weak in governing its society effectively (Kramer, 2000).”

The authors further add that “there is a need in Turkey to transform the strong state tradition into an effective, accountable and post- developmental state that governs societal affairs in a democratic and caring way” (Keyman and Koyuncu 2005:124).

Another crucial topic that warrants elaboration in this context is the role of informal charities which are used as complementary to the state’s anti-poverty program. In Buğra’s analysis, charity activities have largely lost their religious meaning while retaining their importance in the secular and modern world (2007:76). On the whole, political authorities in the country have preferred to solve the poverty problem through charity mechanisms, rather than developing sound social and economic policies. Although charity activities are one way of redistributing wealth and ameliorating suffering, overdependence on charitable activities in poverty reduction can be problematic in three ways: (1) it is an informal way of fighting poverty in which the state has little or no control; (2) it may lead to selective distribution which favours certain segments of society; and (3) it is not a long-term solution to poverty since this mechanism does not necessarily empower the poor. Although charities can be a good complement to formal anti-poverty programs which combine social and economic pro-poor policies, they cannot solve the poverty problem.

In a similar vein, Buğra and Keyder suggests that “a locally administered, but centrally funded system of welfare provisioning which follows centrally set guidelines, appears to

constitute a viable model” which can eliminate some of the more problematic aspects of an over-reliance on charities (2005: 35). It may be that the dependence on charity-based poverty alleviation is linked to political authorities who wish to underemphasize the extent of poverty in the country so as to paint an optimistic and vote-capturing picture of national progress and achievement. For instance, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has placed a great deal of emphasis on positive national improvements and states in the forward of the 2009-2013 Strategic Plan that the impacts of economic growth levels, the increase in the GDP per capita, and the decline of inflation levels to one-digit numbers have been very positive for society as a whole and have helped the poor to feel more hopeful and confident in their future. Clearly, while political authorities in Turkey may be attuned to the existence and proliferation of poverty in the country they are content to rely on informal mechanisms to deal with this very serious national issue.

In addition to examining the evolution of modern poverty rhetoric in Turkey, it is also crucial to assess economic growth statistics (as a potential poverty alleviation instrument), human development index trends and national poverty levels. This section aims to demonstrate the extent of the existing poverty problem in the country and to question the government’s treatment of poverty as a secondary issue. Throughout the section, social and economic indicators will help to demonstrate the nature of poverty and poverty trends over time in the Turkish territories. The impact of globalization on the Turkish economy is also worth considering here. The impacts of globalization are evident in a number of different spheres such as the increasing impact of international bodies on national governance and the penetration of global policies into national domains. These impacts which began in the 1980s have been felt even more acutely since the 1990s. In terms of developments in the economic sphere, Turkey has become considerably more integrated in the global economy. In other

words, there has been an “increasing political and ideological dominance of the neoliberal restructuring of the Turkish economy and its exposure to the world economy” (Keyman 2005:53). As Keyman notes:

The site where the impacts of globalization on Turkish society are most visible is in economic life, the scope and the organizational structure of which has been increasingly extended beyond national and territorial borders. In fact, in the 1990s, the Turkish economy has been (1) exposed to the process of the globalization of capital and trade and (2) organized on the basis of the primacy of the global market over the domestic one, which has led economic actors to realize (3) that market relations require rational and long-term strategies and (4) that in order to be secure and successful in (globalized) economic life, it is imperative to gain organizational capabilities to produce or maintain technological improvement and strategic planning for production and investment (Öniş 2003). As a result, in the last decade we have seen the increasing importance of market liberalization as a linkage between Turkey and the globalizing world (2005:57).

In terms of economic performance, the Turkish economy has grown considerably in recent years. This growth is closely associated with the Turkish neoliberal experience, which began in 1980 with the January 24 program in collaboration with the WB and the IMF (Öniş and Bayram 2008:6). This program rendered successful outcomes for Turkey by “reducing inflation, achieving higher growth rates, and taking steps towards trade and financial liberalization” (Öniş and Bayram 2008:6). Nonetheless, it is not possible to argue that this change was a stable one as the following decade witnessed macroeconomic instability accompanied by lower growth rates, high inflation, weak budgetary performance and severe distributional problems (Öniş and Bayram 2008:7; Şenses 2008:65). Subsequent to the neoliberal-induced fluctuations of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s (especially the 2001 economic crisis), significant improvements were again experienced due to higher growth rates, fiscal discipline, single-digit inflation, large inflows of foreign direct investment, and a wave of regulatory reforms (Öniş and Bayram 2008: 3, 10). Figure 7 and 8 outline economic growth trends from 2000 to present. The year 2000 was chosen as a starting point for examining Turkish economic and human development as these figures and their significance are being assessed in the context of the Millennium Project.

Figure 7: Real GDP Growth Rate in Turkey²⁴

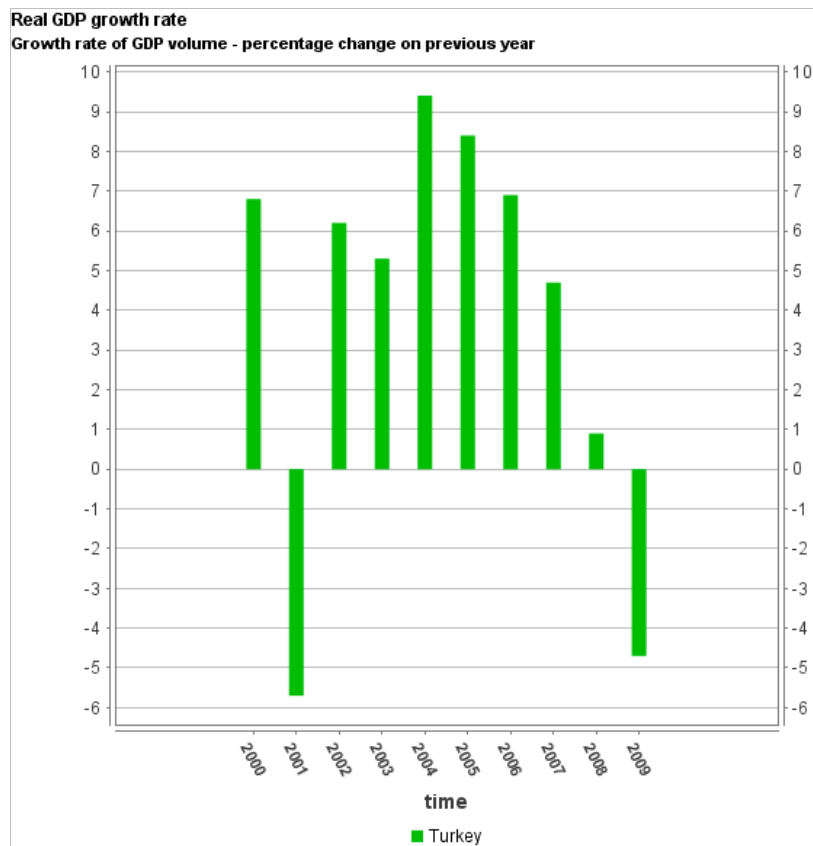
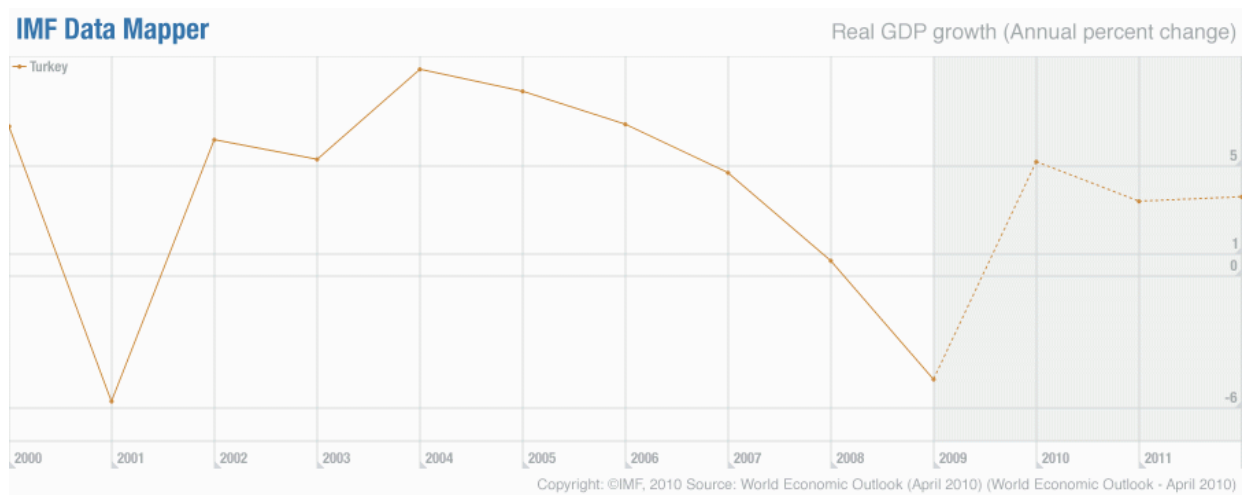


Figure 8: Real GDP Growth of Turkey²⁵



²⁴ Source: Eurostat (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>)

²⁵ Source: www.imf.org

As Figure 7 and 8 demonstrate, the 2001 economic crisis represented a crucial rupture in the Turkish economy. This crisis was followed by a significant improvement in GDP growth which endured up until the most recent economic crisis. Although the Turkish economy has been prone to both internal and global economic crises, the economy has undoubtedly been expanding. Table 2 shows the percentage change in Turkish GDP and the change in GDP in U.S. Dollars (both of which are crucial macroeconomic indicators). As the Table demonstrates, the GDP of Turkey reached 730.318 billion (USD) prior to the recent global economic crises.

Despite the overall economic growth trend, when the Turkish economy is comparatively analysed, some of the resulting indicators are not that positive. When Turkey is assessed against other emerging markets, its performance on some indices (particularly inflation) remains weak and “Turkey appears to be the worst performer among the key emerging markets, followed by Russia, Argentina and Indonesia” (Öniş and Bayram 2008:26). The last column in Table 2 supports this argument and shows that Turkey has not been performing well in terms of the inflation levels where there have been many fluctuations and instability when compared with the aggregate inflation levels of other developing and emerging countries. Thus, despite significant improvement in terms of economic growth in the country, the Turkish economy is far from perfect and it is inappropriate to expect that the moderate economic improvements will lift the poor out of poverty.

Despite improvements in Turkey’s economic performance, “the transformation of the Turkish economy into an outward-market economy went hand in hand with the economic crisis and a dramatic increase in the problem of inequality/poverty” (Keyman 2005:59). Clearly, both Turkish integration in the world economy and globalization carry positive and negative

consequences. On the one hand, Turkey has been able to benefit from increased economic interactions and achieve greater economic growth. On the other hand, Turkey has experienced increased income inequalities and deeper disparity between the rich and the poor. Poverty and development challenges in the Turkish context should be addressed with reference to these benefits and challenges of globalization. At this juncture, three points are worth emphasizing: (1) fluctuations in the Turkish economy are also a factor in higher poverty levels in the country, threatening those people living just above the moderate and relative poverty lines; (2) the poor are becoming increasingly prone to social injustices triggered by further globalization; and (3) the poverty problem cannot be solved simply through market-based mechanisms because of the extent and complex nature of the problem.

Table 2: Selected Macroeconomic Indicators Compared - GDP Growth and Inflation²⁶

Year	Subject Descriptor			
	Gross domestic product, constant prices (percent change)	Gross domestic product, current (U.S. Dollars, billions)	Inflation, average consumer prices (annual percent change)	Inflation, emerging and developing economies (annual percent change)
2000	6.774	266.439	55.035	8.615
2001	-5.697	195.545	54.246	7.856
2002	6.164	232.28	45.134	6.853
2003	5.265	303.262	25.338	6.702
2004	9.363	392.206	8.598	5.938
2005	8.402	482.685	8.179	5.873
2006	6.893	529.187	9.597	5.588
2007	4.669	649.125	8.756	6.464
2008	0.659	730.318	10.444	9.231
2009	-4.743	615.329	6.251	5.235

²⁶ Source: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2010

Much like GDP figures, poverty levels over time in a country reveal a great deal about the health of an economy and its people. TurkStat is a comprehensive source for data concerning moderate and relative poverty levels in Turkey. Table 3 outlines poverty levels in Turkey from 2002 to 2008.²⁷ The most optimistic part of the table pertains to people living below the 1\$ a day poverty line. In fact, in 2006, this data reached zero, meaning that no one recorded as living below the \$1 a day poverty line. However, the same table shows a considerable number of people still living on \$1 a day to \$2.15 a day (0.47 percent of the population) and \$2.15 a day to \$4.30 a day (6.83 percent of the population). These latter figures offer an idea about the extent of moderate poverty levels in the country and merit consideration when discussing the social and economic policies of the country.

When analyzed comprehensively, the data on poverty levels in Turkey becomes both more complex. As noted in previous chapters, poverty should be discussed in its many forms and it can be misleading to interpret poverty as only the lack of food items. From this perspective, the poverty level, which is shown as “complete poverty” in the Table, warrants additional consideration. When complete poverty in Turkey is calculated by including the food as well as non-food items, the percentage of the people living in poverty is quite high. As of 2008 it encompassed 17.11% of the population or 11,933 thousand individuals (TurkStat Press Release No: 205). While the complete poverty level had fallen somewhat in recent years (from 17.81% in 2006 and 17.79% in 2007) the picture is still far less optimistic than the zero absolute poverty figure would suggest.

²⁷ This data is available from 2002 onwards, therefore the table starts from 2002 instead of 2000, which is the year of origin in MDGs analysis.

Table 3: Poverty Rates According to Poverty Line Methods, 2002-2008

Source: TurkStat Press Release No: 205 (Dec 1, 2009)

Methods	Percentage of poor individuals (%)						
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007(*)	2008
	TURKEY						
Food poverty	1,35	1,29	1,29	0,87	0,74	0,48	0,54
Complete poverty (food+nonfood)	26,96	28,12	25,60	20,50	17,81	17,79	17,11
Below 1 \$ per capita per day ⁽¹⁾	0,20	0,01	0,02	0,01	0,00	0,00	0,00
Below 2,15 \$ per capita per day ⁽¹⁾	3,04	2,39	2,49	1,55	1,41	0,52	0,47
Below 4,3 \$ per capita per day ⁽¹⁾	30,30	23,75	20,89	16,36	13,33	8,41	6,83
Relative poverty based on expenditure ⁽²⁾	14,74	15,51	14,18	16,16	14,50	14,70	15,06

(1) Here, 618 281 TL, 732 480 TL, 780 121 TL and 0.830 TRY, 0.921 TRY, 0.926 TRY and 0.983 TRY which are the equivalents of 1 \$ purchasing power parity (PPP), are used for 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively.

(2) Based on the 50% of equivalised median consumption expenditure.

(*) Figures were revised according to new population projections.

In addition to these year-based comparisons of poverty levels in Turkey, there is one other dimension that helps to illustrate the extent of poverty in Turkey: a comparison of Turkey with European Union member and candidate countries. After explaining the indicator used to calculate poverty levels in the EU, the percentage of people living on less than 60% of the median income of the country, Buğra notes that Turkey shows very high levels of poverty (approaching 26%), when compared with EU member and candidate countries (Buğra 2007: 75; Buğra and Keyder 2005:20). Likewise, Atılgan and Çakar argue that although 15% of the EU population is facing poverty and social exclusion, this percentage increases to 26% in Turkey, approximately twice the EU levels (2007: 69). Both the high percentage of the population living in poverty in Turkey and their vulnerability to social and economic changes, which may push them deeper into poverty, demand attention by the country's social and economic policymakers. At the same time, poverty must be discussed using a multi-dimensional approach that includes both the economic and social manifestations of the issue.

Just as there are various ways to measure the extent of poverty in Turkey, there are various actors involved in the poverty alleviation process. They range from government agencies and regional offices of international governing bodies to local municipalities, civil society actors and the private sector. Among the state and non-state actors, the Turkish government and its agencies continue to assume the most prominent role. The government's poverty alleviation implementations have been delivered through the following public institutions (MDG Report Turkey 2005: 16):

- a. General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity Fund (GDSAS)
- b. The Social Services and Child Protection Institute (SSCPI)
- c. The Ministry of Health
- d. The Ministry of National Education/Loans and Student Hostels General Directorate
- e. The Civil Servants Pension Fund (application of Law 2022)
- f. The General Directorate of Foundations

Despite the range of actors involved in poverty reduction efforts in Turkey, these actors are not unified by a national poverty reduction strategy (Şenses 2008: 72). As the Turkey MDG Report suggests, there is "lack of cohesion and capacity on the part of the agencies responsible for implementing the related policies" (2005: 19). In addition to this lack of effective coordination, the Report also criticizes the lack of norms and standards across anti-poverty programs (2005:16). Thus, despite the importance of the poverty issue for the individuals involved and for society as a whole, progress on the issue stands to be undermined by this fragmentation and division (Atılğan and Çakar 2007: 68). In Keyman's words, "in a time when the world in which we live is increasingly defined by starvation, suffering, insecurity, and lack of access to basic capabilities, the problem of inequality/poverty can no longer be put aside, nor can it be reduced to a derivative problem" (2005:55).

When Turkish poverty data is analysed with reference to growth levels, it is clear that recent economic growth has failed to sweep away the problem of poverty. While the impacts of the 2001 crisis declined significantly, especially after 2003, subsequent prosperity in Turkey has not led to a notable decline in poverty levels (Atılgan and Çakar 2007: 68). As this situation shows, high growth levels in a country do not necessarily mean that everyone is benefiting equally. When adopting a comprehensive approach to poverty and its alleviation, it should be noted that there are various interrelated factors influencing human conditions, only one of which is economic. Recognizing the need for such a comprehensive approach, the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) provides an opportunity to assess poverty and human development on a broader basis. In the case of Turkey, HDI assessments offer new insights into the country's complex poverty problem. Figure 9 and Table 4 outline Turkey's HDI scores and trends and show that there is an increase in HDI values over years. Thus, human conditions in Turkey have been improving. On a comparative basis, however, when Turkish human development progress is assessed against that of OECD, CEE and CIS countries, Turkey lags considerably behind (See Figure 10). Consequently, further concerted efforts are needed to ensure that Turkey closes the human development gap between itself and its neighbours (Öniş and Bayram 2008: 29-30; Demir 2006:13-14).

Figure 9: Changes in Turkey's HDI Scores: 1960-2002²⁸



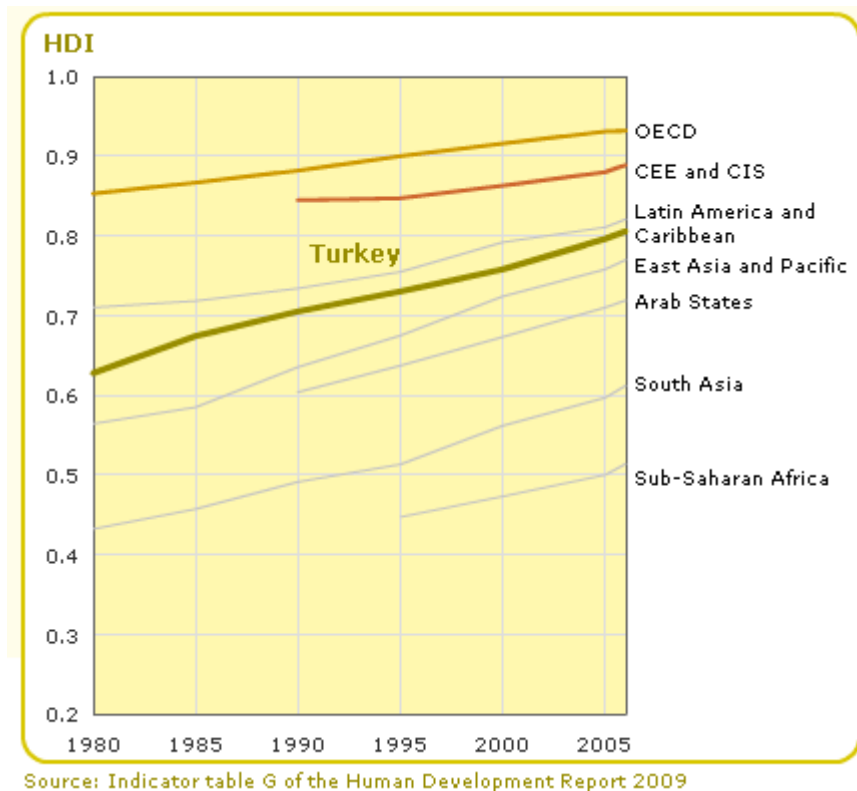
Table 4: Changes in Human Development Index Values and Rankings for Turkey²⁹

Year	Human Development Index Value*
1980	0.628
1985	0.674
1990	0.705
1995	0.73
2000	0.758
2005	0.796
2006	0.802
2007	0.806

²⁸ Source: UNDP Human Development Report Turkey 2004 (p.10)

²⁹ Source: Human Development Report 2009

Figure 10: HDI Trends in Comparison³⁰



Although poverty and hunger have both been central topics on the global agenda in recent decades, Turkey has not considered these topics to be of great importance. The extent of poverty in the country has largely been ignored and those solutions proposed have revolved around market mechanisms and economic growth indicators. As poverty has not been an issue of national discussion, the country and its administration have failed to advance a poverty discourse centred on the combination of sound social and economic policy. As the above discussion has shown, there is an urgent need for such a complimentary policy approach. The depth of the problem needs to be acknowledged in order to ensure progress towards ending poverty. Although the HDI concept has contributed to the development of a multi-dimensional analysis of poverty, this perspective alone leaves one important aspect of poverty alleviation unaddressed: the distribution of income among different quintiles of the

³⁰ Source: <http://undp.org>

population. Turkey's failure to deal with significant national income disparities is further evidence of its need for sound an integrated economic and social poverty aimed at poverty alleviation. As Table 5 demonstrates, wealth is distributed unevenly in Turkey. There is a significant gap between the richest and poorest in the country and clearly the wealthiest have benefited far more from Turkey's recent period of economic growth. As Keyman highlights (2005:61);

While the exposure of the Turkish economy to global capital has created economic liberalization and technological development since the 1980s, the problem of inequality/poverty has also worsened, which has placed "Turkey nearer to the Latin American cases of severe inequality rather than the so-called developmental state in East and Southeast Asia" (Şenses 2003: 94). Today, "Turkey is one of the 20 countries in the world that have the utmost unequal distribution of income" (Sönmez 2001). The monthly income of the richest in Turkey is 236 times more than the poorest. Furthermore, the upper-middle-class segment of the society, constituting 16 percent of the population, uses 25 percent of the gross national product (GNP), whereas the lower-middle-income groups (lower-middle class and the poor) constitute 80 percent of the population and utilize only 42 percent of the GNP.

Under these circumstances of relative poverty and income inequality, the Millennium Project has the potential to guide Turkish policymakers towards higher levels of development. As such, the following section will examine the extent to which the MDGs, particularly Goal One, are penetrating national and local domains in the Turkish context.

Table 5: Distribution of household annual disposable income by quintiles for Turkey³¹

Quintiles	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
First quintile ⁽¹⁾	6.0	6.0	6.1	5.1	5.8
Second quintile	10.3	10.7	11.1	9.9	10.6
Third quintile	14.5	15.2	15.8	14.8	15.2
Fourth quintile	20.9	21.9	22.6	21.9	21.5
Fifth quintile ⁽²⁾	48.3	46.2	44.4	48.4	46.9
Gini Coefficient	0.42	0.40	0.38	0.43	0.41
⁽¹⁾ It has lowest share of total income					
⁽²⁾ It has highest share of total income					

4.2. To what extent are the MDGs integrated into the Turkish national development strategy?

After the Millennium Summit, the UNDP Turkey Office fostered efforts to prepare an initial country report in June 2003 (MDG Report Turkey 2005: 10). This report comprises the main source of information on how MDGs were nationalized and implemented at the national level. While the UNDP Office provided the template and guidance, the Turkish Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of State Planning Organization (SPO) gathered the data and information required for the preparation of the Report; hence the SPO became the lead actor in the reporting process. (As a side note, since SPO is a political institution, it does reflect the perspective and priorities of the Turkish Government on development issues). The Report deems the process to have been “highly participatory” as complementary contributions were made by the Bosphorus University Human Development Center, the Hacettepe University

³¹ Source: Income and Living Conditions Survey 2006-2007 and the Results of Income Distribution 2004 and 2005 by TurkStat

Institute of Population Studies, and the State Institute of Statistics (SIS) (2005:10). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretariat of the Treasury, Ministry of Health, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of the Environment and Forests, General Directorate of Women's Status and General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity also contributed to the reporting process through their revisions of the draft report (2005:10).

The Report notes that “the SPO ... established the links between national policies and MDGs” (2005:10) and “the link between the MDGs and Turkish national policies will be more visible in the next development plans and programs in which the MDGs will be referred strongly” (2005:11). Hence, Turkey's national development strategies constitute the main source for locating reflections of the MDGs and understanding the integration of the MDGs. These strategies include the Long-Term Strategy (2001-2023), the Eighth Five-year Development Plan (2001-2005), the Ninth Five-year Development Plan (2007-2013), the Medium-Term Program for 2006-2008, the Medium-Term Program for 2007-2009, the Medium-Term Program for 2008-2010, the Medium-Term Program for 2009-2011, and the Medium-Term Program for 2010-2012. The foreword of the Turkey MDG Report notes that “the development tools of our country namely Long-Term Strategy 2001-2023, the Eight Five-Year Development Plan, Preliminary National Development Plan and the Medium-Term Program for 2006-2008 are in line/make references to the Millennium Development Goals” (2005:4). Furthermore, the 2010 Turkey MDG Report states that (2010:13);

“Following the first Millennium Development Goals Report on Turkey issued in 2005, Turkey's Ninth Development Plan, covering the period 2007-2013, was prepared. In the process of drafting the 9th Development Plan, the aim of achieving the MDGs was taken into consideration, and Turkey's development goals were designed in line with MDG targets. National policy documents prepared within the framework of the 9th Development Plan can also be seen to be in line with the Millennium Development Goals. It is clear that in the period ahead as well, MDG targets will continue to serve as a guide and reference source for Turkey in her development planning.”

Nevertheless, it is surprising that there is no single place in each of the above mentioned plans and programs where the MDGs are directly discussed.

This situation enables the question “is Turkey ahead of the MDGs, so that the strategic planners neglect the rhetoric of the MDGs?” As the data in the previous section on Turkish poverty and inequality demonstrates, poverty remains a serious issue in Turkey and serious efforts must be made by both state and non-state actors to ensure its amelioration. The Turkey MDG Report reiterates this sentiment “Turkey does not have a huge amount of extreme poverty; however, a considerable portion of the population is living close to the food and non-food poverty line” (2005:13) and “there are still pockets of deep poverty in the country, with significant domestic structural inequality particularly based on gender and geography” (2005:11). Although poverty is an ongoing and critical challenge for Turkey, it appears that the national development strategies and plans would suggest that Turkey prefers not to utilize the MDG framework in combating poverty and other development-related problems. This necessarily contradicts the expressions of commitment to the MDGs included in the foreword of the Report. Based on these reports alone it is unclear why Turkish authorities do not integrate or rarely refer to the MDG framework.

Such a national context, where there is no or very sparse reference to the MDGs, gives rise to the following question: is it the United Nations or the nation state (Turkey) who is failing with respect to the implementation of the MDGs? Both the UN and the nation state (as discussed in previous chapters) have an indispensable role to play in the MDG implementation process. If the UN adequately informs the national government and provides guidance throughout the process, and if the nation state has the willingness and the capacity to implement the agreed targets and programs, there should be no major obstacles to the nationalization of the MDGs.

Since the UN lacks enforcement mechanisms, its power to unilaterally penetrate the national domain remains weak. Thus, while the UN takes the lead in terms of establishing the framework for implementation and providing guidance based on its years of experience and expertise, it is national governments which must actually implement the program and retain control over all development agents and objectives. This latter component can be referred to as taking a sense of “national ownership” of the MDGs. The MDGs cannot be achieved without the full cooperation of either party.

As a country with an emerging market, Turkey does come out ahead of many other developing countries participating in the Millennium Project. When Turkey is compared to African countries, for instance, where there are high levels of absolute poverty Turkey performs relatively well on social and economic development indices. Perhaps Turkey does not feel obliged to refer frequently to the MDGs since its national development strategy consists of more advanced development goals and targets. While it is likely that a Sub-Saharan African country feels obliged to mention the MDGs and UN efforts in the region, due in part to significant UN contributions and aid, Turkey, as one of the world’s twenty largest economies, may feel less bound to do so. The MDG Report Turkey states that “in the preparation period of the Report, it is observed that existing policies of Turkey are in line with the MDGs. MDGs, in general, are overlapping with the current economic and social development plans and programs” (2005:11). Despite this possibility, however, the almost complete exclusion of any reference to MDGs does remain questionable.

Interviews with the key officials in the State Planning Organization as well as the UN Turkey Office indicated that the state officials are aware of the content as well as the significance of the Millennium Project as it occupies the headlines in the global agenda. These interviews

also illustrated that the officials do not have an intention in ignoring the MDGs terminology while preparing the national development plans and programs. However, these interviews prove to be a great venue to understand that the European Union accession process has been of great importance and grabbed the most of attention while preparing the development plans and programs. While Turkey has been decisively moving towards the EU accession, the Millennium Project has suffered an eclipse of the ambitious EU enforcements. This policy focus may be the reason for Turkey's undermining of the global development goals and so the exclusion of the MDGs terminology may be the result of this policy overlap with the EU accession agenda. Despite the overlaps in the implementations for the EU accession and the Millennium Project to achieve the global development goals, this thesis advocates that even a mention of the MDGs could have made a significant change in terms of recognizing the importance of this global project on the Turkish side. Indeed, this thesis acknowledges the competition between the global and regional institutions in penetrating national/local domains and furthermore recognizes the competitive disadvantage of the UN (as an institution lacking incentives) as opposed to the EU (with strong enforcement mechanisms).

According to the interview conducted in the UN Turkey Office, Turkish case represents a good example of the collaboration between the UN regional office and state institutions as such the State Planning Organization has supported the UN Turkey Office in providing the data required for the MDGs Report as well as in preparing the initial country report that explains Turkey's progress towards achieving the MDGs. However, another important point to be mentioned is that UN Turkey Office is aware of the fact that they could not promote the Millennium Project as much in 2000s and could not spread the basic premises of the Project within the Turkish society. In this regard, not only the State Planning Organization undermines the importance of the Millennium Project by excluding this terminology in the

national development plans and programs, but also the UN Turkey Office tends to fail in raising awareness in the public sphere. As mentioned above, the success of the Millennium Project lies on the implementations of both the state and the non-state actors. This thesis conveys the idea that in the case of Turkey, both the nation-state and the UN could have done more in promoting the Millennium Project in order to make it visible at the national and local levels.

What are the joint implications and meanings of both interviews within the framework of this thesis? First of all, the SPO arguments support the main argument of this thesis in a way that nationalization/localization of MDGs suffer from institutional backlashes and impediments, as Turkey's engagement with the EU overshadows the MDG agenda significantly. Even though the claim raised by the SPO officials point out that this has been the case in Turkey, it should be noted that there are significant differences between the EU accession process and the UN's institutional framework for the implementations of the MDGs. As for the main difference between the EU and the UN in terms of their ability to penetrate national/local contexts, the UN has a disadvantageous position since it recognizes the notion of "national ownership" and lacks incentives for achieving the ultimate goal of development. Therefore, the claims made by the SPO officials should be approached in a more critical fashion. This thesis suggests that considering the differences between the institutional settings of the EU and the UN, a possible competition between these supranational institutions tend to limit the ability of the UN in penetrating national/local domains and even marginalizes the UN's transformative role in the current era.

Indeed, the interview findings from the UNDP officials reveal that, rather than the EU as an institutional blockage for the penetration of the MDG terminology, emphasis could be paid

more on the public perceptions towards the MDG agenda. In this respect, it is evident that the SPO and the UN Turkey Office have different perceptions and reflections in answering the question of “why the MDGs are falling short in successfully penetration national and local development strategies.” These two prominent actors, which are responsible in carrying the MDGs to national and local contexts, obviously diverge from each other in their approaches to the MDGs process. Therefore, this thesis sheds light into this impasse by arguing that MDGs fall short in penetrating national and local domains due to the lack of national ownership and the UN efforts.

As a side note, the Millennium Project consists of multiple phases, including establishing and implementing the MDGs and launching progress reports to monitor country-based, regional and overall progress. In light of this (the incredible amount of work and dedication required for MDG success at the national level), it becomes clear that the whole process inevitably deteriorates when confronted with a lack of national will or national ownership. Regardless of the efforts of the global community and international institutions, national commitment is at the heart of the implementation process. Likewise, the Millennium Project is destined to fail if the UN removes itself too much from the process and neglects assisting national and local development actors in their efforts to meet the MDGs.

The Turkey MDG Report (2005), the main source for monitoring the MDGs and Turkish compliance with them, indicates that Turkish MDG implementation and reporting still stands to be much improved. Table 6 was prepared by the SPO and consists of an evaluation of the Turkish performance on the MDG process from various perspectives. While legal and framework response, law enforcement, data collection capacity, and the disaggregation of data are evaluated as fair, Turkey’s performance has been rated as “weak but improving” in

six other categories. For instance, weakness in policy and strategy response demonstrates the Turkish attitude towards nationalizing the MDGs. This evaluation also exposes weaknesses in data collection and analysis as well as public awareness. The latter suggests that the MDGs are not known well in Turkey despite having been a significant priority on the global agenda for the last decade.

Table 6: Turkish Performance in Monitoring the MDG Process³²

Monitoring Capability *				
Elements of Monitoring Capability	Valuation			
	Strong	Fair	Weak but improving	Weak
Policy and Strategy Response			x	
Legal and Framework Response		x		
Law Enforcement		x		
Availability of Financial Resources	x			
Data Collection Capability		x		
Quality of Information			x	
Statistical Follow-up Capability			x	
Statistical Analysis Capability			x	
Disaggregation Level of Data		x		
Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms			x	
Public Awareness			x	

* The evolution is done by the SPO experts

For the sake of this discussion, it is crucial to make note of the MDG + 10 Regional Conference which was held in Istanbul on June 8-9 2010. This conference was a significant event as it offered a platform where the best national MDG practices could be shared and was a forum for the presentation of national MDG Reports (including Turkey's). Furthermore, in an environment where there is a lack of available data and information concerning the nationalization of the MDGs, the new MDG Country Report introduced at this conference constitutes a significant new resource when researching and discussing the MDGs.

³² Source: MDG Report Turkey 2005 (p.18)

4.3. To what extent are the MDGs integrated into the local context?

In addition to collaborative efforts with national authorities, the UNDP Turkey Office has been initiating and advancing development and anti-poverty programs on a regional and local basis. The UNDP initiates and executes these projects with the involvement of civil society and the private sector. The engagement of civil society in these projects is critical in the MDG local integration process and in ensuring that the issues addressed by the projects remain a priority on the government's agenda. On the UNDP website, the UNDP programs are categorized under four main headings, "policy advice and capacity building", "regional development and small-medium enterprises", "South-South cooperation", and "joint programs." Table 7 lists the current projects of the UNDP as well as several recently completed projects and their time frames.

Despite the general lack of public awareness and the failure to integrate the MDGs on a national level, local UNDP projects continue to make clear references to the MDGs. The highlighted (yellow) parts of the Table show UNDP poverty reduction projects aimed at implementing the MDGs locally. In each of the descriptions, the relationship of the project to the MDGs and the ways in which the project contributes to overall MDG progress is explained. For instance, in the "Eastern Anatolia Tourism Development Project", it is noted that "UNDP support both promotes the region and improves the response capacity of the local stakeholders to make maximum and sustainable use of tourism potential" so as to improve the socio-economic indicators in the region.³³ Likewise, in "Growth with Decent Work for All: A Youth Employment Program in Antalya", it is noted that the project directly contributes to

³³ The information is taken from the UNDP Turkey web site:
<http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=883>

efforts to achieve Target 1.B.6 (reducing poverty among the vulnerable in the labour market) and Target 3.2 (promoting women’s participation in the labour force) (See Appendix 1).³⁴

Table 7: Poverty Reduction Projects of the UNDP Turkey Office³⁵

	Main Categories	Title of the Project	Time Frame
ONGOING PROJECTS	Policy Advice and Capacity Building	Swiss-UN Fund for Youth Project	April 2008-April 2010
		Innovations for Women’s Empowerment in the GAP Region	March 2008-March 2011
	Regional Development and SME	Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia	November 2008-December 2010
		Industrial Restructuring of Şanlıurfa Project (Technical Assistance Component)	August 2008-November 2010
		Competitiveness Agenda for Southeast Anatolia	18 months
		Eastern Anatolia Tourism Development Project	2007-2009
	South – South Cooperation	Bridging South-South Cooperation and Emerging Donor Roles	March 2008-March 2011
	Joint Programmes	Growth with Decent Work for All: A Youth Employment Program in Antalya	October 2009-September 2012

³⁴ The information is taken from the UNDP Turkey web site:

<http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=2300>

³⁵ Source: <http://undp.org.tr>

RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS	Policy Advice and Capacity Building	Promotion of Cooperation in the Area of Social Assistance	October 2005-December 2006
		Localizing the UN Millennium Development Goals in Turkey through the Local Agenda 21 Governance Network	December 2006-December 2009
		Microfinance Sector Development	March 2005-March 2006
		Linking Human Rights to Turkey's Localizing MDG's Programme	January-December 31 2007
	Regional Development and SME	LEAP – Linking Eastern Anatolia to Progress	January 2001-May 2006
		Reduction of Socio-Economic Differences in the GAP Region	Phase II: December 2004-November 2007
		GAP – GIDEM – Small Medium Enterprise Development in Southeast Region	May 2002-November 2007
	South – South Cooperation	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries Phase II	1998-2006

The “Bridging South-South Cooperation and Emerging Donor Roles” Project, another ongoing UNDP project with a different scope and purpose but still within the MDG

framework, emphasizes the changing role of Turkey in South-South relations.³⁶ Since Turkey has shifted very recently from an aid recipient country to a donor country, this project aims “to strengthen national capacities for the Government of Turkey as an emerging donor.”

Two of the recently completed UNDP poverty reduction projects emphasize the MDGs in their titles: “Localizing the UN Millennium Development Goals in Turkey through the Local Agenda 21 Governance Network” and “Linking Human Rights to Turkey’s Localizing MDG’s Programme.” The project description for the former states that:³⁷

...the project strategy rests on participatory local governance as the basic means for the civil society and citizenry to mobilize local level action for achieving the MDGs and rendering account for shortcomings; advocating the critical role of local authorities in promoting gender equality, and engaging broader segments of the society, including the private sector, in localizing the Government’s MDG commitments.

This project was an effort to prioritize the MDGs in local action while creating a space and opportunities for youth and women, two of the more vulnerable segments of Turkish society. The latter project was also directly related to strengthening the MDG process. “Linking Human Rights to Turkey’s Localizing MDG’s Programme” was an attempt to integrate a human rights dimension into the MDG planning and implementation process. The program description indicates that “in the light of the positive impacts of linking human rights to the MDGs, the ultimate beneficiaries of the Project will be the local communities at large, with particular repercussions upon the capacity building of women and youth.”³⁸

In addition to these two projects with explicit MDG references, “Microfinance Sector Development” and “Promotion of Cooperation in the Area of Social Assistance” mention the

³⁶ The information is taken from the UNDP Turkey web site:

<http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=1439>

³⁷ For further information please see <http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=956>

³⁸ Please see <http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=996>

MDGs in their program descriptions. The “Microfinance Sector Development” description notes that “with this high-level recognition and UNDP's priorities in line with government priorities, UNDP focuses on achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty through local poverty initiatives, including microfinance, and pro-poor policies for achieving the MDGs.”³⁹ The description for the “Promotion of Cooperation in the Area of Social Assistance” states that “Turkey's Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR) in 2005 identifies poverty as a key challenge of national development. The MDGR also further identifies of coherent policy and institutional capacity need for effectively addressing poverty in Turkey.”⁴⁰

It should be noted as well that as Turkey lacks a concrete national poverty reduction strategy these local UNDP efforts suffer from the lack of a larger framework within which to operate. MDG implementation at the local level alone is not strong enough to create nationwide MDG action, awareness and integration and so the MDGs tend to remain isolated within the boundaries of local administrations. Thus, despite the implementation of a variety of UNDP local MDG anti-poverty projects, there is still something missing at the national level in terms of the MDG process.

Ban-Ki Moon contends that “the right policies and actions, backed by adequate funding and strong political commitment, can yield results” (2009 MDG Report: 3). If the Turkish performance is examined with reference to this quote, Turkey is not performing well in terms of its willingness to nationalize the MDGs and develop social and economic policy that contributes to the MDGs. If one acknowledges Turkey’s shift from a recipient country to a donor country and the evidence presented in Table 6, which positions Turkey as “strong” in terms of the availability of financial resources, it is not possible to link Turkey’s

³⁹ Please see <http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=28>

⁴⁰ Please see <http://www.undp.org.tr/Gozlem2.aspx?WebSayfaNo=29>

unwillingness to a lack capital. Indeed, unless the mindset of the national government changes in terms of integrating the MDGs into the national development strategy, the outcomes of local implementation efforts are bound to be quite limited.

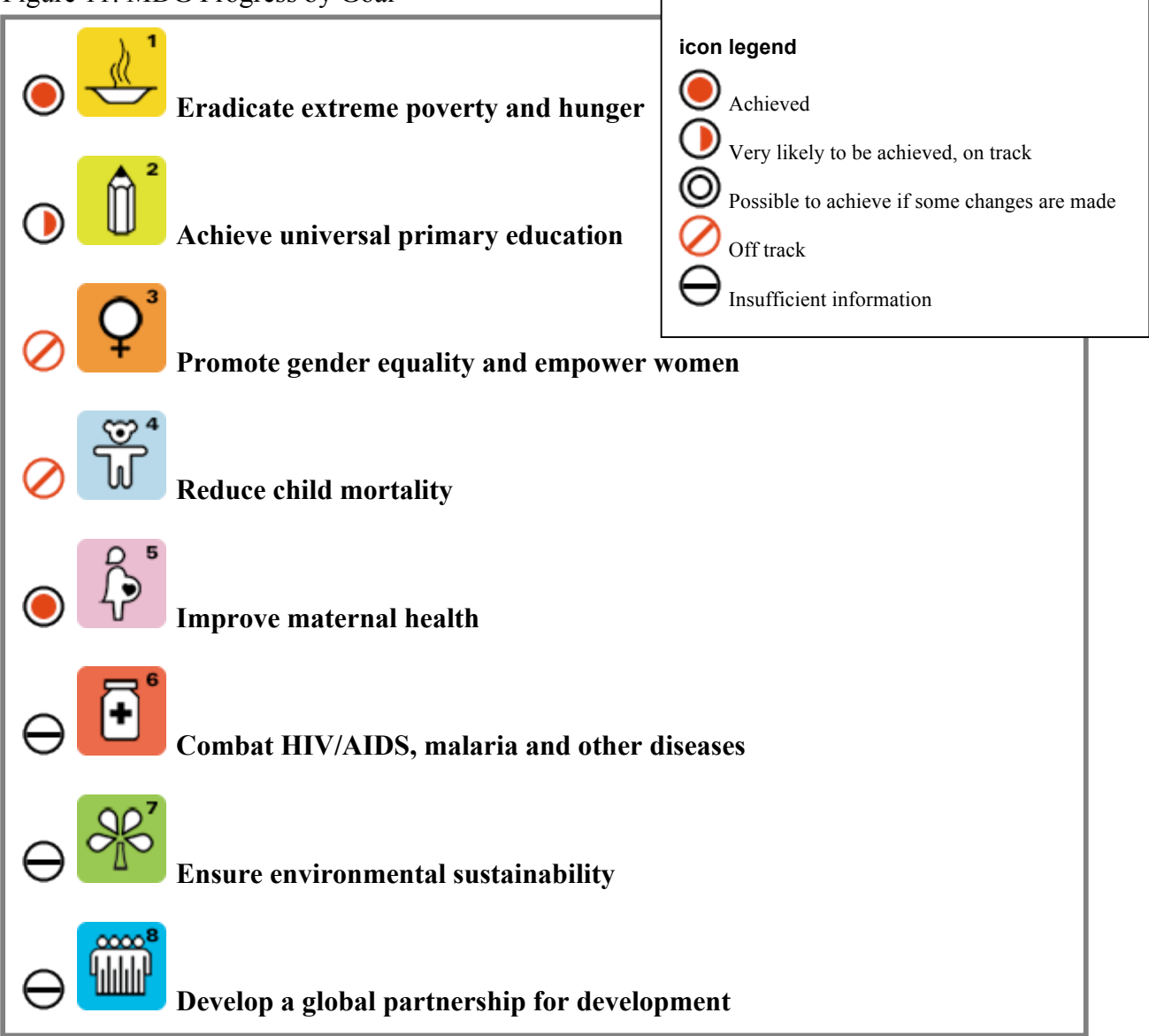
4.4. MDG Critiques Revisited

After assessing Turkish attempts to nationalize and localize the MDGs, it is also important to assess the previously-explored MDG critiques in the Turkish context. The MDGs have been subject to a number of criticisms pertaining to their targets and the general philosophy of the global development agenda.

As noted earlier in this thesis, MDG One is comprised of targets related to poverty, hunger and unemployment. Some of the targets articulated in this Goal do not fit well with the Turkish economic and social context. The target of halving the proportion of people living below \$1 a day is inappropriate in the Turkish case as absolute poverty was eliminated in Turkey as of 2006. It is evident that we should not over focus on this measurement but we need a nuanced approach to poverty, such as unemployment levels among youth and women and also the working poor. Likewise, the sub-targets concerning employment are too narrow to fully capture the unemployment problem in the country. While it focuses on the proportion of employed people in the population, it neglects the importance of the quality of employment and the unemployment rates of youth and women. According to Keyman, “women and unemployed youth constitute the most vulnerable segments of society” (Keyman 2005:61). Figure 11 outlines the MDG progress by goal in Turkey. Goal One is represented as having been achieved although the extent of relative poverty in Turkey is ignored as well as regional disparities and the importance of the empowerment of the poor.

Figure 11 also illustrates problems pertaining to available data and the reporting process. Three out of the eight goals are not assessed due to insufficient data. This situation is worrisome and may lead to data analysis gaps or errors (Şenses 2008: 70-71) or may lead to a false sense of progress. If a lack of data is a concern in Turkey, then this challenge is likely to be felt even more acutely in less developed countries and regions of the world. This lack of data could be related to the general “one-size-fits-all” approach of the MDGs – countries with unique or complex poverty problems may not be able to collect the data requested or specified in MDG templates.

Figure 11: MDG Progress by Goal⁴¹



⁴¹ Source: http://www.mdgmonitor.org/country_progress.cfm?c=TUR&cd=792

The MDGs also fail to capture country-specific characteristics of poverty, such as the spatial and gender aspects of poverty and regional disparities in terms of distribution of income and poverty. According to the Turkey Joint Poverty Assessment Report prepared by the World Bank and TurkStat, understanding the household size and consumption, household head characteristics, spatial characteristics, non-income aspects of poverty, inequality and regional differences will shed light on the discussion regarding the political economy of poverty in Turkey. For instance in Turkey, “larger households are poorer than smaller households, and this result is driven primarily by the fact that additional household members are more likely to be children, which have a higher poverty rate” (2005: 25). Regarding the household head characteristics, the report indicates that poverty risk is 32 percent when the household is female headed when compared to the 26.6 percent risk of poverty if the household is male (Joint Poverty Assessment Report 2005: 29). Besides the gender and the employment aspect of determining the household head characteristics in Turkey, the education of the household head makes the most striking difference as such illiterate heads without even a primary school diploma are twice more likely to fall in the poverty trap when compared to the country average (Joint Poverty Assessment Report 2005: 30). Furthermore in terms of the spatial characteristics in determining poverty in Turkey, the report depicts poverty according to the urban-rural composition, which is 35 percent for the rural population when compared to 22 percent for the urban population (Joint Poverty Assessment Report 2005: 31). The report also rightly points out the non-income aspects of poverty (such as material items, assets, or services that are obtained through income) and states that “only 6.5 percent of the apartment dwellers are poor, while 36 percent of those who live in houses are poor” (Joint Poverty Assessment Report 2005: 34). Finally, regarding the inequality and regional differences, the report indicates that the inequality is higher in urban areas when compared to the rural areas and the east-west divide is very apparent in Turkey (Southeastern and Eastern parts of the

country lagging behind in terms of economic and human development) (Joint Poverty Assessment Report 2005: 38).

Further examination of regional disparities makes a significant contribution to understand peculiarities of the Turkish case regarding persistent poverty. Poverty does not affect all regions equally (Buğra 2007: 75) and in Turkey there remains a considerable gap in terms of the regional distribution of income. While Istanbul and Marmara comprise 38% of the GDP, this percentage is only 4.5% for the South-eastern region (Keyman 2005:61). The Turkey MDG Report recognizes this gap and notes, “according to the 2003 survey, while the western part of Turkey has a higher income, 39.7%, in terms of its population (28.1%), the East and South-eastern Anatolian Regions have a lower income, 13.4%, than their share of the population (23.5%) warrants” (2005:19). A case discussed in the 2006 UNDP Human Development Report further exemplifies this disparity. The case, an illustration of the human development levels of two regions, comparatively examines the Turkana pastoral area and Nairobi (Kenya). The report concludes that large differences in human development levels may occur in different regions of a country: while Nairobi has a HDI value of 0.75 (which is very close to Turkey’s HDI value), Turkana scores only 0.29 (2006: 271). The report states that “if Turkana were a country, it would be off the current HDI scale by a considerable margin, reflecting the region’s recurrent droughts, poor access to health and water infrastructure and high malnutrition rates.” (2006: 271). Thus, in addition to the aggregate data on a country, disaggregated regional data will help to develop sound policies in the fight against poverty. As Keyman points out in the case of Turkey:

In a society where the gross national income per capita is US\$2,160, and this amount is reduced to US\$700 in the southeast region (and in certain provinces, such as Hakkari, to around US\$300), no economic program for structural adjustment can gain legitimacy and accountability without presenting itself as a reform program that is strong enough to cope effectively with inequality and poverty. (Keyman 2005: 64-5)

It is evident that it is unlikely to alleviate the persisting poverty without addressing all the above mentioned aspects of poverty that are Turkey specific. This thesis argues that the MDGs are confined to fail in penetrating the Turkish national and local contexts unless they are prone to the country specific factors that are impediments to solve the poverty problem in the country.

Unlike some of the other critiques, it would appear as though the critique regarding the MDG's neglect of the realities of the South may not apply to Turkey. While Turkey is now a donor country it nonetheless continues to engage in South-South relations. However, it is worth noting here that Turkey may be falling into the trap of this critique with its reliance on the neoliberal paradigm to solve its poverty problems. The more that Turkey embraces market-driven programs and philosophies the less likely it will be able to understand the complex realities of other southern nations.

The MDGs tend to assume that donor countries will be able to act as a source of guidance for recipient countries (in addition to be a source of capital). As noted above, Turkey has recently become a donor country. However, Turkey's role as a source of guidance remains in question given Turkey's own failure to integrate and nationalize the MDGs. At the same time, as the world continues to struggle to overcome the most recent financial crisis, the donor-recipient lines are not yet firmly drawn and it is possible that Turkey, among other countries, may slip back to the recipient side of the equation.

In terms of critiques pertaining to the inappropriate/inadequate amount of time for countries to achieve the MDGs, as is the case in almost all target countries, fifteen years is not a sufficient amount of time to enable Turkey to meet the program targets and even begin in some areas to

make the early structural and institutional changes needed to satisfy the MDGs in the long run. As Şenses states, it is necessary:

... to open up the development debate beyond the short term issues of macroeconomic stabilization, towards medium and long term structural problems such as rapid and sustained growth through industrial structuring, employment creation, structural changes in exports, as well as poverty alleviation. Such a reorientation of approach would also take the debate on poverty beyond short term explanations and palliative solutions (2008: 74).

With regards to hyper-growth and the statistical distortions it can engender, Turkey demonstrates that despite national economic growth and its contributions to the overall development of the country, economic growth does not guarantee the elimination or alleviation of poverty. In the Turkish case, despite the high growth levels, a large proportion of the population continues to live in poverty. Indeed, despite Turkey's growth figures, human development index levels in Turkey are not improving as fast as those of its European neighbours.

The final critique of the MDGs pertains to the generally neglected human security and human rights dimensions of poverty. In terms of the human security aspect, Turkey does not have a welfare state tradition and so social protection mechanisms are very limited. Although conditions, such as the advent of modern social assistance schemes, are improving as a result of the EU accession process (Buğra and Keyder 2005: 36), the social policy targeting the poor continues to largely neglect the critical human security dimension of the discussion. Directing people towards market mechanisms as a means of dealing with poverty and attempting to solve the poverty problem through a reliance on charities fails, on the whole, to empower people affected by poverty. Human security is not sufficiently discussed as part of the poverty rhetoric in the country. Likewise, in a country where poverty is discussed only as a secondary

or peripheral issue, it is not surprising that poverty is addressed without reference to the human rights dimension of the issue.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION

Given the severity of poverty and the number of people suffering its effects across the globe, it is nearly impossible for international institutions in the global arena to remain unresponsive to these alarming developments. For this reason, the prominent international organizations assume significant responsibility in terms of taking an action to alleviate human suffering and achieve development. However the mode of the plans to achieve development in the global agenda has changed over time. Until very recently, poverty, especially absolute/extreme poverty, was understood essentially as a lack of sufficient income. Hence, both nation states and international organizations assessed and addressed the issue through an economic lens. Accordingly, with globalization, it has come to be accepted that increasing economic interactions and economic growth will benefit all nations - that the “rising tide will lift all.” However, recent reports from prominent IOs and NGOs clearly indicate that the most underdeveloped regions of the world are not benefiting enough from global economic growth.

Recognizing the insufficiency of over reliance on the economic means in the fight against poverty, The UN took the lead in urging world leaders to agree on common development targets, which goes beyond a narrow approach to poverty, at the 2000 Millennium Summit. This summit represented a valuable attempt to include various dimensions of development, including gender, health, education and environment, on the global development agenda.

This thesis explored the context in which the MDGs should be discussed. At the initial stage, this thesis aimed to explore the interplay among globalization, social justice, and development, with particular reference to the shortcomings of globalization in fostering the

economic and social development. Economic growth indicators in recent decades, as well as the distribution of economic benefits in different parts of the world, were discussed in relation to the changes in absolute poverty ratios in a number of regions and nation states.

As noted in the second chapter, the divide between the developed and developing world has increased significantly over time. In terms of the different or unique actions taken by the developed world to achieve progress, the market-based trading system takes centre stage. As a side note, it is important to remember that using globalization interchangeably with the global free market economy is still a widespread phenomenon.

The developed nations have benefited the most from economic globalization and it was evident that the globalization was creating “winners and losers.” Despite the fact that the prominent international governance bodies have been expecting to cope with the poverty problem through free market mechanisms, the failure of this expectation came as a surprise to the international community. Indeed the growing gap between the developed world and the developing/least developed world has been striking.

This thesis attempted to show that, while global economic growth is a necessary condition for development, it is not the sole and adequate condition in alleviating world poverty. In recognition of this fact, the UN introduced the MDGs which combined different aspects of development. Hence, the UN has played a significant role in developing this multi-dimensional approach to poverty. Despite being portrayed as the “old wine in new bottle,” the renewed commitment of the world leaders on an agreed global development agenda has been significant in terms of saving millions of people from suffering.

Consequently, the third chapter focused on efforts of the UN, and the appropriateness of its attempts to alleviate poverty. As discussed in the third chapter, while the UN is making valuable efforts to convene member states around the fight against absolute poverty and ending global suffering, there are many criticisms of the MDGs that should be taken into consideration. Given that many countries continue to lag behind MDG targets, an understanding of these critiques is essential.

The third chapter also comprised of the exploration of the critiques directed towards the MDGs and especially the MDG One since all of the MDGs are related to empowerment and reducing the vulnerability of the poor. After explaining the critiques pertaining to the MDGs, the fourth chapter of this thesis assessed the ways in which the MDGs (specifically focusing on MDG One) are nationalized/localized in Turkey, as well as the strengths and failures of the Millennium Project in the Turkish case. Turkey was examined in terms of its emerging role in the international governance framework, its national development strategies, its poverty rhetoric, its compliance with the MDGs, the impact of globalization on the Turkish socio-economic structure, the actors responsible for nationalizing the MDGs and the successes and failures of this process. This analysis allowed us to observe the effectiveness of Turkey's national development strategy and the transformative role of the MDGs in poverty reduction.

In this respect, the fourth chapter initially demonstrated that the Turkish integration in the world economy and globalization carry both positive and negative consequences. Economic growth has been going hand in hand with increasing inequality and poverty problems. Given these circumstances, MDGs could be a great venue to cope with the poverty problem in the country. However, it is surprising that there is no single place in the national development plans and programs where the MDGs are directly discussed. In a similar vein, the Turkey

MDG Report (2005) indicates that Turkish MDG implementation and reporting still stands to be much improved. Hence, the Turkish case was an illustration of the main argument in the sense that there have been certain backlashes in nationalizing/localizing the MDGs in Turkey.

In searching for the reasons of this situation, the fourth chapter provided the details concerning the criticisms with references to the Turkey-specific examples. Despite the fact that each and every criticism is worth considering while discussing the achievability of the Project, this thesis indicated that the Turkish case portrays that the first, second and fifth criticisms are serious impediments for the achievability of the Millennium Project at local and national contexts. In a nutshell, the Turkish case in this thesis demonstrated that (1) the MDGs are not sufficient to capture the poverty problem in Turkey, (2) one-size-fits-all approach of the MDGs does not fit in the country circumstances, (3) the MDGs ignore the country specific peculiarities, and finally (4) time frame is too limited to capture all scopes of the problem and make a real change in terms of development.

Besides all these criticisms, this thesis clearly illustrated that considering the notion of “national ownership” the UN lacks the capacity to enforce the implementation of the MDGs. Hence, the implementation process is expectation-driven instead of incentive-driven, which also means the weakening of the UN’s transformative role. Indeed, as explained with references to the EU accession process, in the existence of multiple actors which are penetrating national and local domains, the UN’s transformative role is further marginalized. Furthermore, under these circumstances even if the UN is willing to break with the neo-liberal orthodoxy to save poor people from suffering, it can be interpreted that the UN is confined to remain in its existing policy boundaries as it lacks transformative capacity. In that sense, the MDGs fall short in helping poorest nations break the chains and cycles of poverty.

Given all these criticisms and circumstances, I would like to point out that we still have five years to see (hopefully) positive developments pertaining to the achievement of the MDGs by 2015; however, the trend so far demonstrates that MDGs fall short in coping with the humanity's problem of poverty. Indeed, the global economic crisis, which we are currently experiencing, has the potential to (1) increase poverty worldwide, (2) tighten the available resources to fight against poverty, (3) push poverty/development issue forward in the agendas of various global institutions causing a competition among them in terms of availability of resources and the implementation of the projects and (4) end up with further marginalization of the UN's transformative power.

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APPENDIX 1: Official list of MDG indicators (*Effective 15 January 2008*)

Source: UN website <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/OfficialList.htm>

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Indicators for monitoring progress
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
Target 1.A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	1.1 Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) per day 1.2 Poverty gap ratio 1.3 Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including 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
Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people 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
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	
Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will 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
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	
Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably 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
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	
Target 4.A: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	4.1 Under-five mortality rate 4.2 Infant mortality rate 4.3 Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles
Goal 5: Improve maternal health	
Target 5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	5.1 Maternal mortality ratio 5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Target 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
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	
Target 6.A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/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
Target 6.B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it	6.5 Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs
Target 6.C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	6.6 Incidence and death rates associated with malaria 6.7 Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide-

	<p>treated bednets</p> <p>6.8 Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate anti-malarial drugs</p> <p>6.9 Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis</p> <p>6.10 Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course</p>
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	
Target 7.A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	<p>7.1 Proportion of land area covered by forest</p> <p>7.2 CO2 emissions, total, per capita and per \$1 GDP (PPP)</p> <p>7.3 Consumption of ozone-depleting substances</p> <p>7.4 Proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits</p> <p>7.5 Proportion of total water resources used</p>
Target 7.B: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss	<p>7.6 Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected</p> <p>7.7 Proportion of species threatened with extinction</p>
Target 7.C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	<p>7.8 Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source</p> <p>7.9 Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility</p>
Target 7.D: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	7.10 Proportion of urban population living in slums
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development	
<p>Target 8.A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system</p> <p>Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally</p> <p>Target 8.B: Address the special needs of the least developed countries</p> <p>Includes: tariff and quota free access for the least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction</p> <p>Target 8.C: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)</p> <p>Target 8.D: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term</p>	<p><i>Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.</i></p> <p><u>Official development assistance (ODA)</u></p> <p>8.1 Net ODA, total and to the least developed countries, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income</p> <p>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)</p> <p>8.3 Proportion of bilateral official development assistance of OECD/DAC donors that is untied</p> <p>8.4 ODA received in landlocked developing countries as a proportion of their gross national incomes</p> <p>8.5 ODA received in small island developing States as a proportion of their gross national incomes</p> <p><u>Market access</u></p> <p>8.6 Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duty</p> <p>8.7 Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries</p> <p>8.8 Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their gross domestic product</p> <p>8.9 Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity</p> <p><u>Debt sustainability</u></p> <p>8.10 Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)</p> <p>8.11 Debt relief committed under HIPC and MDRI Initiatives</p> <p>8.12 Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services</p>
Target 8.E: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries	8.13 Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis

Target 8.F: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of 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
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APPENDIX 2: World Reality about Poverty

Source: UNDP website <<http://www.undp.org/mdg/resources2.shtml>>

World Reality*

- ❖ Seventy-four countries, with more than one-third of the world's population, are not on track to halve income poverty by 2015.
- ❖ Nearly one billion people still do not have access to safe drinking water.
- ❖ Ninety-three countries, with 62 percent of the world's population, are not on track to reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds by 2015.
- ❖ About 900 million people are estimated to live in slum-like conditions characterized by insecure tenure, inadequate housing, and a lack of access to water or sanitation.
- ❖ Each year, roughly 15 million hectares of forest are cleared, generally in developing countries, resulting in increases in vector-borne diseases, declines in the quantity and quality of water, and more floods, landslides, and local climate changes.
- ❖ At a minimum, 1 million people die from malaria each year. Governments should promote the use of essential antimalarial intervention tools such as medicines, insecticides, insecticide-treated nets, and indoor residual spraying. Such public goods should be available free of cost to populations at risk for malaria. These efforts will require donor community participation to mobilize resources, as malaria-endemic countries cannot afford to implement these programs on their own.[Source: The Millennium Project]
- ❖ By the end of 2001, an estimated 13 million children under 15 had lost one or both parents to AIDS in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- ❖ The Millennium Project recommends that international donors should mobilize support for global scientific research and development to address special needs of the poor in areas of health, agriculture, natural resource and environmental management, energy, and climate. We estimate the total needs to rise to approximately \$7 billion a year by 2015.
- ❖ The Millennium Project recommends that high-income countries should increase official development assistance (ODA) from .025 percent of donor GNP in 2003 to around 0.44 percent in 2006 and 0.54 percent in 2015 to support the Millennium Development Goals. Each donor should reach 0.7 percent no later than 2015 to support the Goals and other development assistance priorities. Debt relief should be more extensive and generous. [Source: The Millennium Project]

APPENDIX 3: Fast Facts about the Millennium Development Goals

Source: http://www.millenniumpromise.org/site/DocServer/MDG_Fast_Facts_2009.pdf?docID=2322

FAST FACTS The Millennium Development Goals



The Millennium Development Goals are eight time-bound and quantified objectives that provide a framework for the world to significantly reduce extreme poverty by 2015. In many areas there has been unprecedented success; in other areas, greater effort is required. Here is a snapshot of facts from the *UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2008*:

GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

- » **Target:** Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.
- » **Progress:** Globally, this target is within reach due largely to the extraordinary economic success in most of Asia. In contrast, estimates suggest that sub-Saharan Africa is unlikely to meet the target at the present rate of progress.

- » **Target:** Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.
- » **Progress:** The proportion of the global workforce that earned a living through vulnerable employment has decreased slowly, but almost 1.5 billion workers remain in unstable, insecure jobs. Vulnerable employment is highest in sub-Saharan Africa, where it accounts for three quarters of all jobs.

- » **Target:** Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.
- » **Progress:** The proportion of undernourished children under five declined from 33% to 26% between 1990 and 2006, but the number of underweight children in developing countries still exceeded 140 million in 2006. The majority of countries making the least progress in reducing child malnutrition are in sub-Saharan Africa.

GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

- » **Target:** Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.
- » **Progress:** In almost all regions, the net enrolment ratio in 2006 exceeded 90%, and many countries were close to achieving universal primary enrolment. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, the net enrolment ratio has only recently reached 71% - around 38 million children of primary school age are still out of school.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

- » **Target:** Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.
- » **Progress:** Girls' primary enrolment increased more than boys' in all developing regions between 2000 and 2006. As a result, two out of three countries have achieved gender parity at the primary level. However, girls still account for 55% of the out-of-school population. Oceania, sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia have the largest gaps in primary enrolment.

GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

- » **Target:** Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.
- » **Progress:** In 2006, for the first time since mortality data have been gathered, annual deaths among children under five fell below 10 million. However, between 1990 and 2006, about 27 countries made no progress in reducing childhood deaths. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for about half of the deaths of children under five in the developing world.

FAST FACTS

The Millennium Development Goals



GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

- » **Target:** Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.
- » **Progress:** At the global level, maternal mortality decreased by less than 1% between 1990 and 2005 – far below the 5.5% annual improvement needed to meet the target. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest level of maternal mortality.
- » **Target:** Achieve by 2015, universal access to reproductive health.
- » **Progress:** In almost all developing regions, adolescent fertility dropped between 1990 and 2000, then stagnated or slightly increased between 2000 and 2005. Adolescent fertility is especially high in sub-Saharan Africa, where fertility remains high among all women of childbearing age.

GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

- » **Target:** Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- » **Progress:** The number of people newly infected with HIV declined from 3 million in 2001 to 2.7 million in 2007. The vast majority of people living with HIV are in sub-Saharan Africa.
- » **Target:** Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it
- » **Progress:** The number of people living with HIV who received antiretroviral therapy increased by about 950,000 in 2007. With the expansion of antiretroviral treatment, the number of people who die from AIDS has started to decline, from 2.2 million in 2005 to 2.0 million in 2007.
- » **Target:** Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.
- » **Progress:** The number of insecticide-treated mosquito nets produced worldwide increased from 30 million in 2004 to 95 million in 2007, leading to a rise in net distribution to prevent malaria. For tuberculosis, the incidence rate for developing countries fell by 0.7% between 2005 and 2006. If this trend is sustained, the target will be achieved well before 2015.

GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- » **Target:** Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.
- » **Progress:** Over 96% of all ozone-depleting substances have been phased out. However, carbon dioxide emissions, which are responsible for more than half of global greenhouse gas emissions, increased by 30% from 1990 to 2005.
- » **Target:** Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss.
- » **Progress:** About 21 million square kilometers of land and sea were put under protection by 2007. More forests are designated for biodiversity conservation, with an estimated increase of 96 million hectares since 1990. However, the number of species threatened with extinction is rising rapidly.
- » **Target:** Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

FAST FACTS

The Millennium Development Goals



» **Progress:** Since 1990, 1.6 billion people have gained access to safe water and the number of people using improved sanitation facilities has increased by 1.1 billion. Still, nearly one billion people today lack safe sources of drinking water and some 2.5 billion people – a half billion in sub-Saharan Africa – remain without improved sanitation.

» **Target:** By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

» **Progress:** In 2005, slightly more than one third of the urban population in developing regions lived in slum conditions. In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion was over 60%, with half of the slum households suffering from two or more shelter deprivations (a lack of access to improved water, improved sanitation, durable housing or sufficient living area).

GOAL 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

» **Target:** Address the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing states.

» **Progress:** Since 2000, official development assistance (ODA) to the least developed countries has grown faster than developed countries' gross national income, but still misses the target of 0.15-0.20% of GNI by 2010. Preliminary data show that bilateral ODA to Africa rose by 9% in 2007 (excluding debt relief), however a more rapid rise in aid is necessary to reach the Gleneagles projection to double aid to the region by 2010.

» **Target:** Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

» **Progress:** Excluding arms and oil, the proportion of developing countries' exports that have duty-free access to developed countries' markets has remained largely unchanged since 2004. Additionally, in 2006 developed countries support to their own domestic agricultural sectors remained more than three times higher than ODA.

» **Target:** Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt.

» **Progress:** By the end of June 2008, 33 of 41 eligible countries had qualified for debt relief and 23 had reached their completion point. For the average developing country, the burden of servicing external debt fell from almost 13% of export earnings in 2000 to 7% in 2006.

» **Target:** In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.

» **Progress:** Surveys in about 30 developing countries indicate that availability of selected drugs was only 35% in the public sector and 63% in the private sector. Additionally, less than three quarters of developing countries have generic drug substitution policies that would allow people to purchase drugs that are less expensive than brand-named medicines.

» **Target:** In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

» **Progress:** In Africa, over 60 million new mobile subscribers were added in 2006 and 22% of Africa's population had a mobile phone. In developed countries, 58% of the population was using the Internet in 2006, compared to 11% in developing countries and only 1% in the least developed countries.

Updated: January 2009

Source: *United Nations Millennium Development Goals Report 2008*