

Journal of Social and Political Sciences

Cangara, A. R. (2022). The UN MDGs in Indonesia: Analyzing Its Failure in Eradicating Poverty in Indonesia. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 5(1), 117-126.

ISSN 2615-3718

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.05.01.340

The online version of this article can be found at:
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Social and Political Sciences* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of Social and Political Sciences, which include, but are not limited to, Anthropology, Government Studies, Political Sciences, Sociology, International Relations, Public Administration, History, Philosophy, Arts, Education, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of Social and Political Sciences.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH
Connecting Scholars Worldwide



The UN MDGs in Indonesia: Analyzing Its Failure in Eradicating Poverty in Indonesia

Abdul Razaq Cangara¹

¹ Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Hasanuddin University.
E-mail: acacangara@unhas.ac.id

Abstract

The United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), an international development movement oriented towards human welfare and global poverty eradication with measurable goals and targets, had hit the deadline by 2015. Its implementation reaped various contestations and claims regarding its success and failures in eradicating poverty in Indonesia. The Indonesian government claimed to have succeeded (on the track) in meeting the MDGs targets in eradicating poverty by reducing half of the number of Indonesians who earn one dollar per day (purchasing power parity/PPP) for the period 1990-2015. Meanwhile, the reality on the ground showed the contrast. Many Indonesian people lived in poverty and had minimal access to public health and education facilities. UNESCAP reported that Indonesia was one of the countries in the Asia Pacific region, which was alarming to achieve the MDGs. Based on such contradictions regarding the MDGs' poverty eradication mission in Indonesia, this article aims to examine why the MDGs program had not been able to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia? This article employs norm life cycle (dynamics) theory to investigate the problem behind UN MDGs' inability to overcome poverty in Indonesia. UN MDGs were considered a global norm in this article, substantiating the poverty eradication mission. Using the norm life cycle theory theorizing the three stages of norm development, starting from norm emergence, cascade, and internalization, this article reviews and investigates how Indonesia had dealt and performed in each of those norm life cycle stages within the framework of global poverty eradication norm. Based on the theoretical approach used, this article argues that the inability of UN MDGs to resolve poverty in Indonesia was due to the excessive use of statistical and quantitative basis of poverty eradication efforts rather than a more qualitative and welfare building approaches. Moreover, a systemic problem existed upon MDGs' coordination and implementation on the Indonesian government and donor countries/institutions. It included the lack of commitment to official development aid (ODA) realization, renegotiation and elimination of Indonesia's foreign debt, and rampant corruption in the national development and poverty eradication funds.

Keywords: Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Indonesian Government, Global Poverty Eradication, Norms

1. Introduction

One of the current developments in international relations discourse is dominated by global development problems caused by global poverty and inequality. They mark the start of a new chapter in the international relations agenda. The problem is that global poverty and inequality cause various other threats to the appropriation of human rights fulfilment, where poverty causes a lack of access to education, health, politics, clothing, food, and housing. These

are a condition that mainly occurs in Africa and parts of Asia. Those problems cause a change in the focus of countries from political economy development and international security to human development and human security. To respond to these development issues, entering the new millennium era in 2000, world leaders agreed on a common goal in a millennium declaration that mainstreamed comprehensive development. The Millennium Declaration was an agreement by Heads of State and representatives from 189 countries at the Millennium Summit held by the United Nations in New York on September 14-16, 2000, confirming the primary concern of the world community to work together to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. The Millennium Declaration caused the heads of state and representatives to formulate and agree on the MDGs together. The goal of the MDGs was to place humans as the main focus of development which includes all components of activities whose ultimate goal was community welfare (Kemlu RI, 2011). The legal basis for issuing the MDGs declaration was United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 55/2 dated 18th September 2000 (A/Ris/55/2 United Nations Millennium Development Goals). Thus, the MDGs was a global development paradigm in the form of goals to eradicate global poverty (Kemlu RI, 2011).

Of the eight targets of MDGs, this article focuses more specifically on the first goal, namely tackling extreme poverty, with the target of reducing by half, from 1990 to 2015, the number of people with incomes below one dollar per day (PPP). Global poverty is a very complex problem for the global community as every country has an objective in solving it. Concerning the MDGs, Indonesia was also its signatory and committed to achieving MDGs' targets by 2015. The Indonesian government's commitment was a form of embodiment of the goal to provide welfare to its people under the constitution's mandate. As a developing country, Indonesia was still struggling with the problem of poverty. Based on the results of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS)¹ Poverty Survey for March 2013, the number of poor people was recorded at 28.07 million people or 11.37% of the total population of Indonesia (Republika, 2013). This number was based on the income standard of one dollar per person/day by BPS. Compared to countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia had the highest number of poor people. This fact was undoubtedly still a concern for the Indonesian people.

The manifestations of Indonesia's global commitment to the MDGs, especially in poverty eradication efforts, could be seen from the government's serious follow-up to integrating and mainstreaming the United Nations MDGs program into various national development planning programs and documents at the regional level, such as the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2005-2025, National Mid-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2004 – 2009, National Mid-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2010 – 2014, Regional Mid-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), as well as in the Government Working Plan (RKP) of the central and regional governments (Bappenas, 2010, p. 12). Indonesia President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) had also issued Presidential Instruction No. 3 of 2010 concerning equitable development. One of its mandates was that each Ministry/Agency, Governor, and Regents/Mayors took appropriate steps required according to their respective duties, functions, and authorities in the context of implementing equitable development programs, including the program to achieve the MDGs (Bappenas, 2011, p. 3). Based on the government's seriousness in mainstreaming the MDGs in various programs and national development planning documents, the government claimed that Indonesia had succeeded in achieving the first MDGs target, which was to reduce by half the number of people who earn one dollar (PPP) per day. Thus, the government had succeeded in reducing extreme poverty. To show the actual contribution of the Indonesian government in achieving the MDGs, it, through Bappenas, collaborated with the UNDP Indonesia in making a report on the Indonesian achievement on MDGs in Bahasa Indonesia and English. It was then reported to the UN Secretary-General Baan Ki-Moon so that Indonesia's progress on MDGs can be monitored from year to year and can be used as a basis for comparison with the achievements of the MDGs in other countries.

Concerning poverty alleviation in Indonesia, there were several debates in various circles about whether the MDGs helped and succeeded in alleviating poverty or not. The report on the MDGs achievement in 2007 stated that the Indonesian government was on the right track with claims of the government's success in reducing the number of people who earn one dollar (PPP) per day (Bappenas & UNDP, 2007, p. 11). Nevertheless, there were differences in the facts based on the UNESCAP report exposing that Indonesia was one of the countries in the Asia Pacific region which was in an alarming position or off the track in achieving the MDGs (INFID, 2009, p. 1). Furthermore,

¹ BPS stands for Badan Pusat Statistik or Indonesian Central Statistics Agency.

the fact showed that in the Human Development Report (HDR) 2009, Indonesia's Human Development Index (HDI) ranking was getting worse. The fact exposed that Indonesia was ranked 107th in 2006, slumped to 109th rank in 2007-2008 and then ranked 111th in 2009. This ranking was worse than Palestine (110th rank) and Sri Lanka (102nd rank), where they were countries that were still hit by political and armed conflict (INFID, 2009, p. 2). With these factual gaps, the problem arose then whether the MDGs program intended to eradicate poverty as a whole or only to reduce poverty as business as usual. Facts on the ground showed that many Indonesians lived in poverty where they did not have access to adequate clothing, food and housing, access to public facilities such as education, health, employment, and various other social needs. This article aims to address those gaps. Based on the background of the problems described previously, this article raises the following issue "why had the MDGs program not been able to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia?". In answering this question, this article employs the theoretical approach of norms life cycle (dynamics) theory, aiming to investigate and check the implementation of MDGs as the global poverty eradication norm in Indonesia's effort to mainstream MDGs to realize poverty eradication in Indonesia. The norms life cycle theory emphasizes three sequential norm development steps: norm emergence, cascade, and internalization. With such theory, this article analyzes the problem of MDGs implementation in eradicating poverty in Indonesia through each stage of the norm life cycle, aiming to find the problems that hampered the MDGs implementation in overcoming poverty in Indonesia.

2. Method and Methodology

In this article, the research method used was a qualitative research method with an argumentative explanatory research design, by explaining why the United Nations MDGs program had not been able to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia. It reviewed the development of global poverty eradication norms in international institutions (MDGs) based on the theory of norm dynamics theorized by Finnemore² and Sikkink³. Furthermore, the data collection technique used in this article was a literature review, by collecting data from the literature related to the problems to be discussed and then analyzing them. The data collected were primary and secondary. Primary data were collected by reviewing various government documents and international organizations related to the MDGs Program. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected by conducting library research. Data exploration was in the form of writings or other electronic references related to the article. It was done through searches on the internet, especially on official sites related to the MDGs. They were the official website of the UN, UNDP, World Bank, Indonesian National Development Agency (Bappenas), and Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS). Besides that, book reviews related to the UN MDGs Program in poverty eradication were also undertaken.

Related to the methodological approach of this article, it put liberalism/idealism nuance at the front as the norms promoted in the MDGs, such as poverty eradication, which are closely related to upholding human rights and human dignity. Liberalism is a perspective that advocates for human rights and dignity. It believes that the legitimacy of the states' domestic political order largely depends on upholding the rule of law and respecting the human rights of its citizens. The universal principles governing human behaviour and needs can be explicitly found in western law (Burchill et al., 2009, p. 68). The idea of universal human rights stems from the natural law tradition, debated in the Western world during the Enlightenment era about "the rights of man" and in the experiences of individuals who struggle against arbitrary state laws (Donnelly 2003), Magna Charta from 1215 to the Bill of Rights in 1689. It is also inseparable from the intellectual contributions of Grotius (the law of nations), Rousseau (the social contract), and Locke (popular consent and limits of sovereignty). Then, the legal articulation of human rights can also be found in the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. Some of its substance contains that all humans are created equal and endowed by their creators with certain inalienable rights, namely the right to life, liberty, and the right to pursue happiness (Burchill et al., 2009, p. 69).

The development of human rights occurred as a legal and cultural practice in the Western world. Liberals have a normative commitment to human rights and believe that specific values and standards should be universally applied. According to them, these human rights are rights that exist from birth and cannot be revoked at all and

² Martha Finnemore is University Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University in Washington, DC. Her research focuses on global governance, international organizations, cybersecurity, ethics, and social theory.

³ Kathryn Sikkink is the Ryan Family Professor of Human Rights Policy at HKS. Sikkink works on international norms and institutions, transnational advocacy networks, the impact of human rights law and policies, and transitional justice.

are universal and can be applied to all regardless of nationality, status, gender, or race. Applying these rights to all then becomes an essential basis in liberal thinking on foreign policy and international relations for two reasons. First, these rights create the legal foundation for human emancipation, justice and freedom. The denial by the state of these rights is an insult to the dignity of all human beings. Second, countries that treat their citizens ethically and provide opportunities to participate in the political process will at least behave less aggressively at the international level. Therefore, (Western) liberals have the task of developing and advancing these moral standards to get universal approval. Therefore, to develop and promote these moral standards or norms regarding universal human rights, these norms are translated into the rule of law and international institutions (Burchill et al., 2009, pp. 69–70). As poverty is a denial of human rights, thus, the liberal (western) thinkers and leaders developed global poverty eradication as an international norm institutionalized within the international institution of MDGs. MDGs per se consists of eight individual sub-norms substantiating human rights fulfilment. They are essentially interconnected with each other both as a norm and as an instrument. The global poverty eradication norm per se has been universalized and has become a global responsibility (Hulme, David., & Fukuda-Parr, 2009, p. 2). At this point, the MDGs as an international institution play an essential role in the internationalization of global poverty eradication norms. According to Keohane, institutions are essential variables in global politics since they can facilitate cooperation optimally (Keohane, 1988, pp. 6–9). Furthermore, he also explained that there are three essential points regarding the role of institutions, comprising of 1) providing information flow and opportunities for negotiation; 2) improving the ability of state governments to monitor compliance of other countries, as well as to implement their commitments; and 3) strengthening existing expectations for the solidity of international agreements (Jackson, Robert., & Sorensen, 2007, p. 111). To explain further how MDGs emerged, protected, internationalized, followed and implemented by other countries within the framework of international institutions, this article further utilizes the norm life cycle theory from Finnemore and Sikkink. The norm itself can be defined as a set of values and behaviours considered right in a community. They classify the three stages of norm formation in an international institution, consisting of norm emergence, cascade, and internalization. These stages consist of three variables, covering actors, motives, and dominant mechanisms (Finnemore, Martha., & Sikkink, 1998, pp. 887–917).

2.1. Norm Life Cycle

	Stage 1: Norm Emergence	Stage 2: Norm Cascade	Stage 3: Norm Internalization
Actor	Norm entrepreneurs with organizational platforms	States, international organizations, networks	Law, professions, bureaucracy
Motives	Altruism, empathy, emotional commitment	Legitimacy, reputation, esteem	Conformity
Dominant Mechanisms	Persuasion	Socialization, institutionalization, demonstration	Habit, institutionalization

Source: Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998.

To be specific, norm emergence is the initial stage of the emergence of a norm coming from the trust and attention of members of international institutions towards a value and that they want to fight for it. The norm emergence could occur internally or externally. There are actors who intensively and vocally fight for this norm and are called norm entrepreneurs. They devote themselves or their organizations to developing the norm based on sympathy or altruism and then persuade member states of international institutions to apply these norms. Suppose 1/3 of the member states of international institutions have recognized these norms. In that case, a critical mass can lead the process of the international norm life cycle to move to the next stage. The next stage is the norm cascade, where the state consciously adopts values and norms for reputational improvement and other motives. States adopting those norms will then tend to promote these norms to other states and actors in the international system (Finnemore, Martha., & Sikkink, 1998). The final stage is norm internalization. The active actions of each state indicate this stage to make regulations in their respective states to protect these norms. At this stage, usually, states that have not adopted the norm will adopt it based on conformity as a member of an international institution (Finnemore, Martha., & Sikkink, 1998). This article employs norm life cycle theory to identify and analyze the progression of

MDGs' global poverty eradication norm on each stage of the norm life cycle (norm emergence, cascade, and internalization). It aims to find why the MDGs program had not been able to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia. For this purpose, this article develops an analytical model and theory operationalization as exposed below.

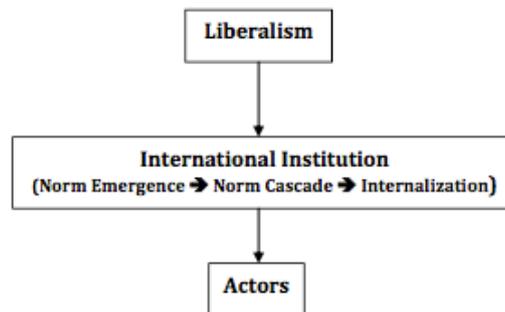


Figure 1: Analytical Model

Source: Own elaboration.

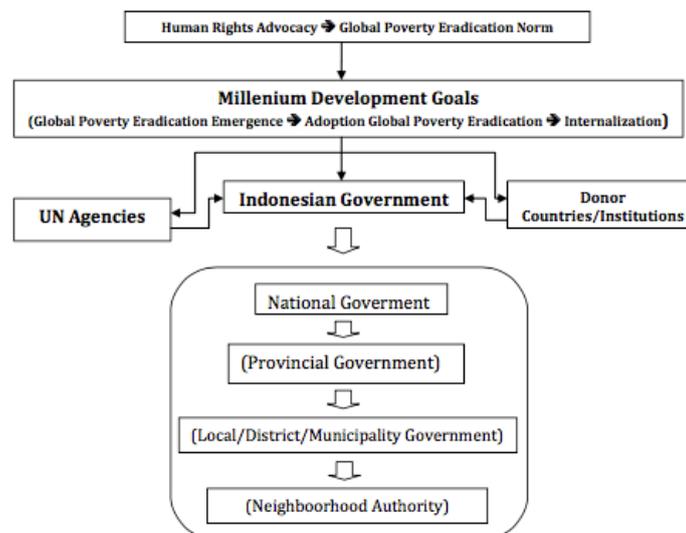


Figure 2: Theoretical Operationalization

Source: Own elaboration.

3. Results & Discussion

This section analyzes why the MDGs program had not been able to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia. This article employs the norm life cycle theory to scrutinize the process and progression of MDGs' global poverty eradication norm implementation in Indonesia, from its emergence down to its internalization in Indonesia.

3.1 Norm Emergence

The MDGs, particularly with its global poverty eradication norm, essentially did not just appear in the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000. This norm emerged and developed through the problem of human poverty, which initially became a central global issue since the 1990s when the United Nations initially brought the primary issue orientation of poverty within the issue of development and human prosperity into discussions, and agreements between countries. Several summits substantiating those issues, for instance, were Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994, and the Conference on Gender and Women's Empowerment in 1995. Then, the problem of poverty was explicitly

articulated at the Social Development Summit in Copenhagen. The main drivers in raising this issue were norm entrepreneurs personally motivated by a commitment to poverty eradication and human welfare.

The norms entrepreneurs of MDGs were the state leaders, UN agencies, and NGOs. For example, in that era, Jim Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, spent decades writing and campaigning for the "end poverty" movement, especially at the World Summit for Children in the 1990s attended by 159 countries with 71 heads of state and government. This summit produced The World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and its action plan. Its succession inspired other norms entrepreneurs to organize more effective global summits and direct the heads of state to set concrete and measurable goals. In addition, norms entrepreneurs also came from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the IMF, and the World Bank (Hulme, David., & Fukuda-Parr, 2009, p. 9).

The culmination of poverty issues centralization through the various summits mentioned above was the millennium declaration in 2000 with the MDGs adopting the global poverty eradication norm as previously explained. The problem that arose later was that the internationalization of the MDGs was followed by the establishment of a standard income of one dollar (PPP) per day as a benchmark for poverty eradication. The question and debate that arose then were whether reducing population proportion with one dollar income per day could solve the problem of poverty in Indonesia or not?. Moreover, could this international standard be applied in Indonesia? This article argues that such standard of MDGs application could not address poverty eradication optimally. Poverty eradication through the MDGs only aimed to meet the achievement of figures for poverty reduction (quantitative-based approach) without being based on seriousness to eradicate poverty, provide welfare, and improve the quality of life of the poor (qualitative based approach). It could be seen from the various double standards of poverty set by the government. If it was based on an income of one dollar per day, the Indonesian government, as a signatory of MDGs since 2001, claimed that the Indonesian government had succeeded in meeting the MDGs goals in 2008 by successfully reducing the poverty rate from 20.6 % in 1990 to 5.9 % in 2008 (Bappenas, UNDP, 2010, p. 1). Meanwhile, with poverty standards set with an indicator of 1.5 dollars per day, the Indonesian government claimed to have progressed with a gradual reduction in the number of poor people to 28.07 million people or 11.37% in March 2013. However, it still required hard work to achieve the target set in 2015 with a poverty reduction target of 8-10% in 2014 (BPS Indonesia, 2013). It was then different if the standard used was the World Bank standard of two dollars (PPP) per day, then the number of Indonesians in the poor category reached 105.3 million people or 45.2 per cent of Indonesia's total population of 236.4 million people in 2008 (Antaranews, 2011).

When viewed from the data above, there was a significant difference in the number of poor people between the measurement of income of one dollar compared to two dollars per day. It showed that the standard of one dollar was not appropriate enough to describe poverty in Indonesia and became a reference in poverty eradication efforts. The impression that emerged then was very populist, where the government had succeeded in eradicating poverty, even though such success was only limited to quantitative and statistical successes. In addition, there were also UN inconsistencies concerning poverty standards in the MDGs. Accordingly, there was a standard shift from one dollar to 1.25 dollars (United Nations, 2013). It confirmed that even the United Nations was not confident in the one-dollar standard set out in the MDGs' millennium declaration. Of course, such a shift required re-coordination between the United Nations and various other stakeholders, including the Indonesian government.

Amnesty International found that there were still discriminatory treatments by the state against the poor. It estimated that there were still 100 million people living in slum areas, where they did not have access to health, sanitation, proper education and were even more trapped in poverty. Even worse, it was predicted that as many as 70% of the people living in poverty were women (Amnesty International., 2010, p. 11). Therefore, based on Amnesty International observations and the facts of poverty on the ground, the Indonesian government needs poverty eradication with a qualitative approach focusing on improving the quality of life of the poor. The claims of success of poverty eradication with an income standard of one dollar per day were just positioned the Indonesian people vulnerable to poverty. It was not an optimal poverty eradication standard but only showed how the Indonesian people can meet their needs, from clothing, food, and housing on a limited basis. The Indonesian government should refer to Amartya Sen's conception of "development as freedom" (Amartya Sen, 2000, p. 3).

Based on Sen's conception, the government should measure poverty based on income alone and provide adequate public services to meet the basic needs of the poor in efforts to eradicate poverty. The universalization and adoption of the MDGs with its advocated norm of global poverty eradication in various countries essentially had good intentions and did not contain any debate on their normative approach. It was due to all countries having poverty problems and being interested in its eradication. However, setting one dollar income per day as the standard of achievement did not solve the problem since the qualitative standard of poverty in Indonesia was different from poverty in America, Europe, and Africa (Easterly, 2009, pp. 26–35).

3.2 Norm Cascade

In this stage, as explained in the previous theoretical framework, the countries in the United Nations, including Indonesia, adopted the global poverty eradication norm through the ratification of the MDGs. Accordingly, there were no significant problems and contestations in adopting and promoting it, considering that the global poverty eradication norm could be easily accepted by all countries, similar to the norm of anti-colonialism. All countries understood that poverty was a negation of human rights and must be eradicated. At this stage, countries, various UN agencies, and international NGOs had adopted the MDGs as a global norm for poverty eradication. Such comprehensive adoption was carried out to oversee the internalization and implementation of the national government of the MDGs adopting country. In the norm cascade stage, according to Finnemore and Sikkink, there were three motives for countries and international organizations to adopt global poverty eradication norms, covering legitimacy, reputation, and respect. Indeed, Indonesia's adoption of MDGs cannot be separated from those motives. It needed to create a good image in the international political constellation through the reputation and respect obtained by actively contributing and achieving the MDGs targets. However, such image-building orientation should not become a source of legitimacy and claim of the government's success in efforts to eradicate poverty. It emphasized the quantitative and statistical approaches; meanwhile, it was still weak in terms of quality-based poverty eradication efforts.

3.3 Norm Internalization

In the internalization stage, the problems arising from the Indonesian government and donor countries and institutions will be further reviewed and analyzed. This article argues that partial internalization of MDGs' global poverty eradication norm had existed. It resulted in the inability of the Indonesian government to optimally implement MDGs' global poverty eradication norm to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia. Hulme and Fukuda-Parr explained that its internalization had created rapid progress at the level of policy statements, various documents, and reports. With such internalization, it was institutionalized as development efforts. It also became a language in international development synonymous with poverty reduction endeavours. The MDGs had become a reference for policy documents from donor agencies/countries, national development planning documents, think tanks, and the media (Hulme, David., & Fukuda-Parr, 2009, p. 20).

Reflecting on the arguments of Hulme and Fukuda-Parr, the Indonesian government had internalized the global poverty eradication norm by integrating and mainstreaming the MDGs into national development planning programs and documents at the regional level (RPJPN 2005-2025, RPJMN 2004 – 2009, RPJMN 2010 – 2014, RPJMD, as well as in the central and local government RKP). President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) had also issued Presidential Instruction No. 3 of 2010 concerning equitable development related to the MDGs. At the UN level, its internalization was also demonstrated through its agency of UNDP Indonesia's commitment to monitor, evaluate, and build the capacity of the Indonesian government at various levels. The UNDP Indonesia and Bappenas also made a report on the progress of MDGs achievement every year reported to the UN Secretary-General. Furthermore, developed countries/donors and international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank, and ADB), which financially supported the implementation of the MDGs, had internalized the global poverty eradication norm into their policies. Those commitments were regulated through several follow-up consensus after the Millennium Declaration. These consensus were the Monterrey Declaration on Financing for Development 2002, the Rome Declaration on the Development Assistance Harmonization, and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness 2005 (Direktorat Pendanaan Luar Negeri Bilateral-Bappenas, 2007, p. 2). These consensus underscored developed countries' commitment and active participation to finance and provide

development assistance in developing countries in various forms, including Indonesia. Through these consensus, donor countries are targeted to spend 0.7% of their GDP for development assistance, including grants, soft and hard loans, and debt swaps. Its internalization had synergized multiple parties to achieve the MDGs goals of Indonesia's poverty eradication. However, what had been internalized to stakeholders was not a measure of success. According to Finnemore and Sikkink, the measure of success lies in how the state issues domestic policies that implement internalized norms.

Departing from such Finnemore and Sikkink point, this article found two levels of problems. The problems were the partial internalization occurring both in the Indonesian government and developed countries/donors, indicated by the lack of realization of development assistance from developed countries/donors to developing countries. The first problem lay at the government level, where the internalization of the global poverty eradication norm partially occurred as it was pretty elitist. Based on the research findings, its internalization through integration into various documents and development programs only occurred at the national, provincial, and district/city government levels but did not reach the sub-district government and neighbourhood/citizens association (RT/RW)⁴ level, which was still under government coordination chains to eradicate poverty (Bappenas, 2010, p. 12). The government at the sub-district and the RT/RW level were the closest and had direct daily contact with the poor and became proxy agents for the national, provincial, and city governments in distributing various aids to the poor community as well as in realizing and ensuring the implementation of various government programs related to the public facilities provided such as education, health, and other various poverty eradication programs. Internalization of global poverty eradication norms at the sub-district government and RT/RW levels would be vital since they know quantitatively, qualitatively, and rigidly about poverty in their surrounding environment. For sure, such norm internalization could facilitate efforts to eradicate poverty. Nevertheless, the expected norm internalization down to the sub-district and RT/RW level of government did not realize as expected and hampered Indonesian poverty eradication efforts. It confirmed that the Indonesian elites were more focused on measuring the ups and downs of poverty on a statistical basis rather than eradicating poverty to its roots. The second problem then lay upon the lack of actualizing donor countries/institutions' assistance to developing countries. Developed/donor countries only realized 0.3% of their GDP for development assistance to developing countries. It did not match their commitment in various consensus related to the MDGs to realize 0.7% of their GDP for development assistance purposes to developing countries. Such lack of development assistance realization had been reaffirmed by the Vice President of Indonesia Boediono at the Ministerial Regional Meeting on MDGs in Asia and the Pacific on 3rd August 2010 (Wapres RI., 2010, p. 2). The only countries that had realized their Official Development Aid (ODA) commitment were Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, Denmark, and the Netherlands (The Guardian, 2013). Indeed, this had become an obstacle to poverty eradication in Indonesia since foreign aid played an important role.

3.4 Beyond Internalization

According to Finnemore and Sikkink, to maintain norm existence and fully internalize it, it is necessary to make regulations and domestic policies and implement them to maintain the norm. Concerning domestic regulations and policies related to poverty eradication, the Indonesian government launched various poverty eradication programs to achieve the MDGs goals. However, apart from what had been described previously, several other things had been highlighted as the cause of MDGs' failure in eradicating poverty in Indonesia, particularly at the level of policy and regulation implementation. The first was the absence of follow-up negotiations on reducing or eliminating debt. The burden of foreign debt was one of the main problems for Indonesia and other developing countries to eradicate poverty and accelerate national development. At the beginning of President SBY's administration, President SBY at the Financing for Development Summit once stated that significant debt reduction was fundamental for Indonesia and other developing middle-income countries. Therefore, the President SBY administration promised to seek to eliminate Indonesia's debts (INFID, 2009, p. 3). Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani conveyed the same thing that one of the main difficulties for the government to achieve national development goals, including the MDGs, was foreign debt (Hadar A, 2013). Nonetheless, those promises were not fully realized and were not integrated into Indonesian economic policy. President SBY's call was only rhetoric and echoed at the UN headquarters. In contrast to those debt reduction promises, unfortunately, President SBY

⁴ RT/RW stands for Rukun Tetangga (Neighborhood Association) / Rukun Warga (Citizen Association).

administration had increased Indonesia's debt by around Rp 724.22 trillion. As of August 2013, Indonesia's total debt had reached Rp 2,177.95 trillion (Hadar A, 2013). Instead of negotiating debt reductions or debt relief, the President SBY administration had even done the opposite. The government policies were claimed to be pro-poor policies, but unfortunately, most of their financing strategies came from more foreign debt. The President SBY administration should be more careful in sorting out the methods of international development and foreign aid cooperation to achieve the MDGs in order to ensure that domestic policies crafted not under direction and control of or biased toward the interests of donor countries, and they were still under the interests and needs of the Indonesian people. To reaffirm the importance of having sound and solid government policies toward MDGs achievement, Daseking and Kozack (2003) predicted that a country like Indonesia would fail to achieve the MDGs of reducing poverty by half by 2015, unless Indonesia had high economic growth, succeeded in strengthening government institutions, implemented pro-low-income policies, and was not trapped in debt (Hadar A, 2013).

The next highlight was the issue of transparency, accountability, and corruption, which were inhibiting factors for the realization of global poverty eradication through the MDGs. Transparency International Indonesia (TII) stated that development financing was vulnerable to embezzlement. The absence of government transparency and accountability can cause development and poverty eradication funds to be easily embezzled. The government must ensure that anti-corruption measures and good governance are appropriately implemented since no matter how large the funds allocated for poverty eradication, it will not produce maximum output if corrupt practices are still rampant. It is inevitable that poor infrastructure and public services, especially in education and health, still exist due to corruption. One proof of the threat of corruption towards the achievement of MDGs and poverty eradication was the corruption committed by former Minister of Health Ahmad Sujudi, who embezzled funds to procure medical equipment for public health centres in remote areas. He was then sentenced to prison for two years and three months (Transparency International Indonesia, 2013). Such corrupt practice, of course, hindered efforts to eradicate poverty in Indonesia. Overall, the internalization of the MDGs' global poverty eradication norm at the government level was necessary. However, it was far more critical to strive for its successful implementation to realize poverty eradication in Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the UN MDGs program had not been able to overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia as the global poverty eradication norm that it carried was partially internalized by both the Indonesian government and developed/donor countries. It made the MDGs program only focused on statistical dynamics of reducing the number of poor people without an optimum effort to improve the poor's welfare and quality of life in Indonesia. Implementatively, the MDGs program to eradicate poverty in Indonesia had encountered various obstacles. These obstacles were 1) the applicability of the income standard of one dollar per day as a poverty standard; 2) the lack of coordination from the integration down to the implementation of poverty eradication policies from the central/national government to the local community-level of government; 3) the lack of commitment from developed/donor countries to realize their development assistance to developing countries; 4) the absence of governments' follow-up negotiations on reducing or eliminating Indonesia's foreign debt; down to 5) the issues of good governance such as the lack of government transparency and accountability as well as rampant corruption on the national development and poverty eradication funds. The UN MDGs had reached its expiration by 2015. It was problematic due to global poverty eradication standardization focusing on a quantitative approach concerning all of those obstacles. Therefore, shifting focus to a qualitative approach of poverty eradication (public services, health, education, sanitation, and capacity building for the poor) and internalization followed by implementation of global poverty eradication norms at various levels of government would be a game-changer to optimize the achievement of poverty eradication efforts in Indonesia. The MDGs per se needs to be transformed into development targets that were more down to earth rather than appear to be a too elitist program and involved the whole community in accelerating efforts to eradicate global poverty in general and eradicate poverty in Indonesia in particular.

References

- Amartya Sen. (2000). *Development As Freedom*. Anchor Books.
- Amnesti Internasional. (2010). *The MDGs Program is Threatened to Fail (Program MDGs Terancam Gagal)*. Media Indonesia.
- AntaraneWS. (2011). *World Bank: Indonesia's Poor Population Drops by 4.6 Million People (Bank Dunia : Penduduk Miskin Indonesia Turun 4,6 Juta Orang)*. AntaraneWS. <http://www.antaraneWS.com/print/83572/java-and-wales-music-combined-for-15th-year-by-gamelan-cardiff>
- Bappenas, UNDP, A. (2010). *Report on the Achievement of Indonesia's Millennium Development Goals 2010 (Laporan Pencapaian Tujuan Pembangunan Milenium Indonesia 2010)*.
- Bappenas. (2010). *Guidelines for Formulating Action Plans to Accelerate Achievement of MDGs in the Regions (RAD MDGs) (Pedoman Penyusunan Rencana Aksi Percepatan Pencapaian Tujuan MDGs di Daerah (RAD MDGs))*.
- Bappenas. (2011). *Report on the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Indonesia 2011 (Laporan Pencapaian Tujuan Pembangunan Milenium di Indonesia 2011)*.
- Bappenas, & UNDP. (2007). *Report on the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals Indonesia 2007 (Laporan Pencapaian Millennium Development Goals Indonesia 2007)*.
- BPS Indonesia. (2013). *Poverty Profile in Indonesia March 2013 (Profil Kemiskinan di Indonesia Maret 2013)*. BPS Indonesia. <http://www.bps.go.id/getfile.php?news=1023>
- Burchill, S., Linklater, A., & Devetak, R. (2009). *Theories of International Relations*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Direktorat Pendanaan Luar Negeri Bilateral-Bappenas. (2007). *Increased Harmonization of Bilateral Cooperation (Peningkatan Harmonisasi Kerjasama Bilateral)*.
- Easterly, W. (2009). *How the Millennium Development Goals are Unfair to Africa*. World Development, 37(1).
- Finnemore, Martha., & Sikkink, K. (1998). International Norm Dynamics and Political Change. *International Organization.*, 52(4).
- Hadar A, I. (2013). *Debt Elimination Promise (Janji Penghapusan Utang)*. Sindonews. <http://sports.sindonews.com/read/2013/10/17/18/795055/janji-penghapusan-utang>
- Hulme, David., & Fukuda-Parr, S. (2009). *International Norm Dynamics and "the End of Poverty": Understanding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (No. 96; BWPI Working Paper)*.
- INFID. (2009). *The Needs of Concrete Policies to Accelerate Achievement of the MDGs (Perlu Kebijakan Konkret Untuk Percepatan Pencapaian MDGs)*. INFID.
- Jackson, Robert., & Sorensen, G. (2007). *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Kemlu RI. (2011). *Indonesia Has Mainstreamed the MDGs in Development (Indonesia Telah Mengarusutamakan MDGs Dalam Pembangunan)*. *Tabloid Diplomasi*.
- Keohane, R. O. (1988). International Institutions: Two Approaches. *International Studies Quarterly*, 32(4).
- Republika. (2013). *The 2013 Poverty Rate will be Higher than the Government's Target (Tingkat Kemiskinan 2013 Akan Lebih Tinggi dari Target Pemerintah)*. Republika.Co.Id. <http://www.republika.co.id/berita/ekonomi/makro/13/08/18/mrpo4p-tingkat-kemiskinan-2013-akan-lebih-tinggi-dari-target-pemerintah>
- The Guardian. (2013). *UN general assembly 2013: current goals and future priorities on the agenda*. The Guardian. <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/Sep/23/un-general-assembly-2013-goals>
- Transparency International Indonesia. (2013). *Corruption May Derail 2015 Development Goals*. The Jakarta Post. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/09/17/corruption-may-derail-2015-development-goals-tii.html>
- United Nations. (2013). *We can end poverty, millennium development goals and beyond 2015*. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml>
- Wapres RI. (2010). *Speech of the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia at the Opening Ceremony of Special Ministerial Meeting for MDGs Review in Asia and The Pacific: Run Up to 2015 (Pidato Wapres RI pada Acara Pembukaan Special Ministerial Meeting for MDGs Review in Asia and The Pacific: Run Up to 2015)*. Kementerian Luar Negeri RI.