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Next Development Agenda – World Bank / IMF Report says demographic change is the central challenge

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The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a common framework of development for international community set in 2001, will expire at the end of this year. At the UN Summit held on September 25th - 27th, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was determined as the next goal for development. Unlike the MDGs which put emphasis on achieving the specific target in developing countries, the SDGs which is based on the idea that “no one will be left behind”, is aimed to integrate and balance economy, society and environment which are “the three dimensions of sustainable development”. The SDGs will not only expand the previous initiatives such as eradication of poverty and improvements in the field of health, welfare, and education, but will also put effort on developing broader fields including natural environment and sustainable energy (See Chart). SDGs will be applied to all countries.

World Bank/ IMF’s “Global Monitoring Report” published on October 7 points out that demographic change is the central challenge of the SDGs era. Currently the world is aging in an unprecedented speed. The share of the working age population against the world’s total is declining after reaching its peak of 66% in 2012. However the report says that by effective measures that take into account demographic change, sustainable development can be achieved. At the country-level, the report proposes ‘pre-dividend’ countries to accelerate demographic change by decreasing fertility rates, ‘early-dividend’ countries to stimulate job creation by investment in human capital, ‘late-dividend’ countries to sustain productivity growth and ‘post-dividend’ countries to adapt to aging. At a global level, it proposes the enhancement of cross-border movement of goods, service, capital and people in order to adjust demographic diversity across countries.

Using the demographic change as an opportunity for development is far from easy. But as global economic growth is expected to slow down, success of SDGs depends on how seriously each country will take on this difficult task.

While one of the goal of SDGs is to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies”, the international community is still hesitant to confront the migrant crisis in Europe. World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim’s statement, “If countries with aging populations can create a

path for refugees and migrants to participate in the economy, everyone benefits”, made upon the release of the Report, seems to suggest advanced countries to take countermeasures. International community’s response towards the imminent situation of the immigrants from Africa and Middle East could be the touchstone of the SDGs.

Chart: Goals of the MDGs and SDGs

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2001-2015	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016-2030
1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger 2: Achieve universal primary education 3: Promote gender equality and empower women 4: Reduce child mortality 5: Improve maternal health 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases 7: Ensure environmental sustainability 8: Develop a global partnership for development	1 : End poverty in all its forms everywhere 2 : End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture 3 : Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages 4 : Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all 5 : Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls 6 : Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all 7 : Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all 8 : Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all 9 : Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation 10 : Reduce inequality within and among countries 11 : Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable 12 : Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns 13 : Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts 14 : Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development 15 : Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss 16 : Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels 17 : Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

(Source: UN Foundation, UNCTAD)

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