

The Millennium Institute: You cannot solve the problems with the same thinking that created them (Einstein)

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Millennium Institute is a not-for-profit development research and service organization headquartered in Arlington, Virginia specialized in capacity and institution building for integrated and dynamic planning for government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Training is complemented by computer models and modeling services in support of holistic and sustainable development planning, incorporating economic, social, and environmental considerations. MI envisions a world that is sustainable, equitable, and peaceful for the present and future generations; and believes that creating a global community of people, institutions, and corporations that understand the dynamics of whole systems and the consequences of their actions will help mobilize and attain this future.

MI believes that modern technologies must be used to improve the welfare of all people and spent close to 20 years researching a suite of system dynamics-based models that support integrated analysis and visualization of development and business issues. With the support of MI, newly trained experts in developing countries are customizing the base models and using them in multi-stakeholder fora to visualize new development path and define informed policies that will support the agreed way forward. To this end, MI has built strategic collaborations with governments, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, bilateral development agencies, corporations, private organizations and universities to raise awareness about the benefits of integrated planning, promote organizational change, and bring information technology tools into their planning, monitoring and evaluation processes.

MI's flagship model, Threshold 21 (T21) supports comprehensive, integrated planning, by performing comparative analyses of different policy options, to enable users determine the set of policies that lead towards a desired goal. To date, over thirty custom national T21 models have been developed, and are being used to plan sustainable development in countries around the world, both developed and developing. The models are helping countries like Mali, Mozambique, Malawi, Ghana, and Jamaica to prepare poverty reduction strategies, determine the most cost efficient approach to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and engage with confidence in negotiations with bilateral and multilateral development partners thus fulfilling the key condition to full

ownership of the development process. In the wake of climate change needs for new policies, MI has developed a T21 for the USA, which emphasizes the energy sector and its broader links to the economy, environment and society. The T21 USA model can be modified to suit other industrialized countries and regions to play out alternative energy scenarios and draft informed and supporting adaptation and mitigation policies.

MI has also developed specialized models for corporations, such as the M3 for General Motors, which is used for analyzing the vehicle market in 10 countries. Similarly, MI has developed a Multi-Entity Gaming (MEG) model, designed for use in post-conflict countries and regions to assist with visioning and scenario-building. Local government representatives in the Southwestern Balkans are currently using the MEG model to articulate a development vision and policies that promote cross-border cooperation, human security and economic growth.

MI's goal for the coming years is to create a critical mass of systems thinkers in national institutions of all countries by 2035. A "critical mass" is the level of human capacity, institutional memory, institutional integration and coordination, and broad stakeholder participation sufficient for a country to be using, customizing, and updating the T21 model independently. To achieve this goal, MI will implement activities in the following three areas: comprehensive (global, regional and national levels) modeling projects; capacity and institution building and communications; and partnerships and decentralization.

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