



PRESS RELEASE

Launching new report, MDG Advocates outline challenges and opportunities for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by end of 2015

Led by the Prime Minister of Norway and President of the Republic of Rwanda, the MDG Leaders praise successes of improving people's lives and demand more action

New York, 25 September 2014—The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for an end to the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals while speaking to 300 global leaders gathered at a high level event convened by the MDG Advocacy Group.

“The Millennium Development Goals have been the greatest anti-poverty push in history,” Mr. Ban said. “New partnerships have been established. New actors have been engaged. Now we must finish the job.”

The lives of millions of people worldwide have improved due to concerted efforts – at the global, regional, national and local levels – to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs are eight broad goals with targets ranging from eradicating extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by 2015.

During the past two decades, the likelihood of a child dying before the age of five has been nearly cut in half, which means about 17,000 children have been saved every day. The maternal mortality ratio dropped by 45 per cent. Antiretroviral therapy for HIV-infected people has saved 6.6 million lives. An estimated 3.3 million deaths from malaria were averted due to a major expansion of simple preventions, such as bed nets, and treatments. Efforts to fight tuberculosis have saved an estimated 22 million lives.

With many MDG targets already met – including reducing poverty, increasing access to clean drinking water, improving the lives of slum dwellers, and achieving gender parity in primary school – many more targets are also within reach by the end of 2015.

Global leaders call for action

The MDG Advocates convened a high-level event to showcase the successes of the eight MDGs to deliver a healthier, equitable and more sustainable future, and launched the MDG Advocates' [Leaders Report](#), which was presented by MDG Advocate Graça Machel.

The report, entitled *“Accelerating Action: Global Leaders on Challenges and Opportunities for MDG Achievement.”* features a range of contributions from 37 world leaders, including by the Secretary-General, MDG Advocacy Group Co-Chairs and members, Heads of State and Government, UN leaders, experts and champions of the MDGs, such as girls education champion Malala Yousafzai.

Invest in education, health, sanitation and agriculture

“All of us, whether in government, business, or civil society, have to keep pushing, not just to December 2015, but beyond,” write Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, and Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda. “The MDG deadline, after all, is not the finish line of the race, and there will be neither medals nor rest.”

The unfinished business of the MDGs remains the focus of the MDG leaders who underlined the need to invest in education, adolescent girls and women’s empowerment, scaling up efforts to fight child and maternal mortality and investing agriculture as well as water and in sanitation to end open defecation.

One way to accelerate progress is to share innovations by learning from the experiences of others,” Prime Minister Solberg and President Kagame write. “We have to cultivate cross-sectorial efforts and broad partnerships in the year ahead so that we can accelerate synergies, including between education and health as well as gender equality. Our experience as leaders is that it is a common sense that often requires the most sustained advocacy.”

The gains derived from investing in the MDGs were underlined by experts, and MDG leaders such as Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser who stressed that “getting all children into basic education could boost economic growth by 2 per cent in low-income countries.”

Contributors to the report and MDG Advocates Jeffrey Sachs and Graça Machel write that, “African countries such as Malawi and Rwanda have shown how effective public-private investments in agriculture can multiply yields.”

“The UN's Millennium Development Goals have allowed for unprecedented progress against some of our most pressing development challenges. Our efforts against malaria have helped to drive many of these advances,” said Executive Director of Roll Back Malaria, Dr. Fatoumata Nafou-Traore “Sustained commitment and collaboration is essential to ensure continued progress and stands to yield incredible dividends -- the global economic benefits from sustained malaria-control efforts alone between 2013 and 2035 have been estimated at US \$207 billion.”

Innovative data analytics

As part of the United Nations ongoing efforts to highlight the tremendous progress made on the MDGs, an initiative to map official UN data in partnership with Microsoft was initiated. This new visualization, which can be seen at www.mdgleaders.org, represents an innovative approach to communicating

progress made toward poverty eradication and galvanizes momentum for the final 500 days for MDG realization.

By using Microsoft's Power View to demonstrate data in an accessible and digestible format, the aim is to tell the story of the progress made toward eradicating global poverty, and inspire continued global efforts.

About the Secretary-General's Advocacy Group

To galvanize support for the Millennium Development Goals, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in June 2010 established an Advocacy Group of eminent personalities who have shown outstanding leadership in promoting the implementation of the Goals -- in such fields as education, food security, health, environment, and the empowerment of women. The Group supports the Secretary-General in building political will and mobilizing global action for the benefit of the poor and most vulnerable, aiming for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015 target date.

For more information, see

www.mdgleaders.org

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