

# The Millennium Development Goals Report



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## Strong progress for women leads way in CIS effort to meet Millennium Development Goals

*UN progress report on Millennium Development Goals highlights successes and challenges facing the region in lead-up to September Summit*

(Moscow, 23 June) Continued progress on women's educational opportunities and representation in the work force, and recent gains in their political leadership, are advancing progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), according to a UN report released today.

The *Millennium Development Goals Report 2010* finds that the CIS is the only region where women outnumber men in paid, non-agricultural employment, with 51 per cent. Women of CIS countries are at parity with men when considering all occupations as a whole, and are represented at 37 per cent among senior officials and managers. The number of girls enrolled in tertiary education in CIS countries is the highest of all regions, with 131 girls for every 100 boys enrolled in colleges and universities. In addition, between 2000 and 2010, the proportion of seats held by women in single or lower houses of parliament doubled, from 7 to 15 per cent – but still short of the MDG target of gender parity.

Generally, the societal position of women has been found to have an important 'multiplier effect' on the advancement of all other anti-poverty goals. Some of this effect may be visible in progress within the CIS on childhood and maternal health rates, albeit at different rates of advancement within its Asian and European regions.

While the European CIS countries have the lowest rate of child mortality among developing regions, the Asian CIS members have the fourth highest. Nevertheless, these Asian countries were able to bring mortality rates for children under five years of age down from 78 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 39 in 2008.

Child and maternal health are strongly affected by assistance that pregnant women receive during delivery. In the Asian CIS countries, 96 per cent of women received ante-natal care during pregnancy in 2008, an improvement on 90 per cent in 1990. Birth rates among adolescent women have been almost halved since 1990.

The Asian CIS countries are experiencing sharper challenges in other areas of health, related to MDG Goal 6. After an initial decrease in tuberculosis prevalence rates in the early 1990s, progress has stalled in Asian CIS countries and mortality rates have levelled. HIV prevalence continues to rise in these nations.

## FINANCIAL CRISIS INCREASES VULNERABILITY

The contrast between the two parts of the region also extends to the rates of extreme poverty, benchmarked as persons living on less than \$1.25 a day. The rate in Asian CIS countries was at 19 per cent in 2005, while in the European CIS countries, it had fallen to virtually zero.

The economic crisis is likely to have increased the percentage of workers engaged in vulnerable employment – characterized by inadequate earnings, substandard working conditions and a lack of formal work arrangements and benefits – particularly in Asian CIS countries, with 44 per cent of workers estimated to be in positions of vulnerable employment in 2009, compared to 41 per cent in 2008. The crisis also led to a decline of labour productivity in 2009, with the largest fall in output per worker in European CIS countries.

At a September UN summit, world leaders will seek agreement on an action agenda to build on successes and close the gaps in achieving all the MDGs by the target year of 2015. More than 100 Heads of State and Government are expected, along with leaders from the private sector, foundations and civil society organizations.

The *Millennium Development Goals Report*, an annual assessment of regional progress towards the Goals, reflects the most comprehensive, up-to-date data compiled by over 25 UN and international agencies. Produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the report has been designated by the UN General Assembly as an official input to the MDG summit. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at <http://mdgs.un.org>

For more information, press materials and inter-agency media contact list, see [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

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