

The Millennium Development Goals Report



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With three MDGs achieved, global partnership for development is key to 2015 success

Current economic crisis must not be allowed to reverse progress in reducing poverty

New York, 2 July: Three important targets on poverty, slums and water have been met three years ahead of 2015, says this year's Report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), launched today by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Meeting the remaining targets, while challenging, is possible — but only if Governments do not waiver from their commitments made over a decade ago.

In his foreword to the 2012 MDG Report, Mr. Ban says that further success depends on fulfilling MDG-8 – the global partnership for development. “The current economic crises besetting much of the developed world must not be allowed to decelerate or reverse the progress that has been made. Let us build on the successes we have achieved so far, and let us not relent until all the MDGs have been attained”, said Secretary-General Ban.

Progress

The MDG Report says that, for the first time since poverty trends began to be monitored, both the number of people living in extreme poverty and the poverty rates have fallen in every developing region—including sub-Saharan Africa, where rates are highest. Preliminary estimates indicate that in 2010, the share of people living on less than a \$1.25 a day dropped to less than half of its 1990 value. Essentially, this means that the MDG first target—cutting the extreme poverty rate to half its 1990 level—has been achieved at the global level, well ahead of 2015.

The MDG Report also notes another success: reaching the target of halving the proportion of people without access to improved sources of drinking water by 2010. The proportion of people using improved water sources rose from 76 per cent in 1990 to 89 per cent in 2010, translating to more than two billion people currently with access to improved sources such as piped supplies or protected wells.

And the share of urban residents in the developing world living in slums has declined from 39 per cent in 2000 to 33 per cent in 2012. More than 200 million have gained access to either improved water sources, improved sanitation facilities, or durable or less crowded housing. This achievement exceeds the target of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, also ahead of a 2020 deadline.

The MDG Report 2012 also points out that the world has achieved another milestone: parity in primary education between girls and boys. Driven by national and international efforts, many more of the world's children are enrolled in school at the primary level, especially since 2000. Girls have benefited the most. There were 97 girls enrolled per 100 boys in 2010—up from 91 girls per 100 boys in 1999.

The report says that enrolment rates of primary school age children have increased markedly in sub-Saharan Africa, from 58 to 76 per cent between 1999 and 2010. Many countries in the region have succeeded in reducing their relatively high out-of-school rates even as their primary school age populations were growing.

At the end of 2010, 6.5 million people in developing regions were receiving antiretroviral therapy for HIV or AIDS, constituting the largest one-year increase ever. Since December 2009, more than 1.4 million people were being treated.

“These results”, said Mr. Ban “represent a tremendous reduction in human suffering and are a clear validation of the approach embodied in the MDGs. But, they are not a reason to relax. Projections indicate that in 2015 more than 600 million people worldwide will still lack access to safe drinking water, almost one billion will be living on an income of less than \$1.25 per day, mothers will continue to die needlessly in childbirth, and children will suffer and die from preventable diseases. Hunger remains a global challenge, and ensuring that all children are able to complete primary education remains a fundamental, but unfulfilled, target that has an impact on all the other goals. Lack of safe sanitation is hampering progress in health and nutrition ... and greenhouse gas emissions continue to pose a major threat to people and ecosystems”.

Persistent Inequality

The MDG Report states that persisting inequalities are detracting from these gains, given that achievements were unequally distributed across and within regions and countries. Moreover, progress has slowed for some MDGs after the multiple crises of 2008-2009.

Important improvements in maternal health and reduction in maternal deaths have been achieved but progress is still slow. Reductions in adolescent childbearing and expansion of contraceptive use have continued, but at a slower pace since 2000 as compared to the decade before.

Nearly half of the population in developing regions—2.5 billion— still lacks access to improved sanitation facilities. By 2015, the world will have reached only 67 per cent coverage, well short of the 75 per cent needed to achieve the MDG target.

Opportunity to achieve more and shape the agenda for the future

While bullish on the success recorded, the MDG Report warns that the 2015 deadline is fast approaching and in order to achieve outstanding goals, Governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector need to intensify their contributions.

Gender inequality persists and women continue to face discrimination in access to education, work and economic assets, and participation in government. Violence against women continues to undermine efforts to reach all goals. Further progress to 2015 and beyond will largely depend on success on these interrelated challenges.

The report says a new agenda to continue efforts beyond 2015 is taking shape. With its successes as well as setbacks, the MDG campaign provides rich experience for this discussion to draw on, as well as confidence that further success is feasible.

“There is now an expectation around the world that sooner, rather than later, all these goals can and must be achieved. Leaders will be held to this high standard. Sectors such as government, business, academia and civil society, often known for working at cross-purposes, are learning how to collaborate on shared aspirations,” said Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang.

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. The report is produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at <http://mdgs.un.org>.

For more information and press materials, see www.un.org/millenniumgoals

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