

The Millennium Development Goals Report



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Transitioning from MDGs to post-2015 development agenda

GOAL 1: ERADICATING POVERTY AND HUNGER IS CENTRAL TO THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Although the MDG targets of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and hunger have been met or almost met, the world is still far from reaching the MDG goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. In 2015, an estimated 825 million people still live in extreme poverty and 800 million still suffer from hunger. Eradicating poverty and hunger remains at the core of the post-2015 development agenda.

Eliminating the remaining extreme poverty and hunger will be challenging. Many of the people suffering the most live in fragile contexts and remote areas. Access to good schools, health care, electricity, safe water and other critical services remains elusive for many people, and it is frequently determined by socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity or geography. For those who have been able to climb out of poverty, progress is often fragile and temporary; economic shocks, food insecurity and climate change threaten to rob them of their hard-won gains.

The post-2015 development agenda will pick up where the MDGs left off. The remaining gaps must be filled in order to eradicate poverty and hunger and promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, allowing people everywhere to thrive.

GOAL 2: THE UNFINISHED WORK ON EDUCATION MUST RANK HIGH ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Despite enormous progress during the past 15 years, achieving universal primary education will require renewed attention in the post-2015 era, just as the global community seeks to extend the scope to universal secondary education. Drawing on lessons learned from the MDGs, interventions will have to be tailored to the needs of specific groups of children—particularly girls; children belonging to minorities and nomadic communities; children engaged in child labour; and children living with disabilities, in conflict situations or in urban slums. Investing in the quality of education and ensuring a sustainable source of funding are also essential.

Stagnation in education progress has profound consequences for the children and adolescents who cannot go to school. As the world looks beyond 2015, it is crucial to reflect on and address the root causes of limited progress in youth literacy in some parts of the world. It is also necessary to explore new approaches to directly assess whether children have mastered the skills they are taught and whether they are being taught the skills they need in the 21st century.

GOAL 3: THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES OF INEQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN MUST BE RECTIFIED

While much progress has been made towards women's and girls' equality in education, employment and political representation over the last two decades, many gaps remain, particularly in areas that were not addressed in the MDGs. To achieve universal realization of gender equality and empowerment of women, it is critical to address the key areas of gender inequality, including gender-based discrimination in law and in practice, violence against women and girls, women's and men's unequal opportunities in the labour market, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, women's limited control over assets and property, and women's unequal participation in private and public decision-making. Gender perspectives should be integrated fully into all goals of the post-2015 development agenda.



GOAL 4: CHILD SURVIVAL MUST REMAIN AT THE HEART OF THE POST-2015 GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Reducing under-five mortality requires political will, sound strategies and adequate resources. The MDGs have led to dramatic and unprecedented progress in reducing child deaths. Effective and affordable treatments, improved service delivery and political commitment have all contributed. Yet every minute around the world, 11 children die before celebrating their fifth birthday, mostly from preventable causes. More work is needed to improve child survival rates.

Achievement of Goal 4 by a significant number of countries, even very poor countries, shows that it can be done. With millions of women and children still at risk of dying of preventable causes, maternal, newborn and child survival must remain at the heart of the post-2015 global development agenda.

GOAL 5: IMPROVING MATERNAL HEALTH IS PART OF THE UNFINISHED AGENDA FOR THE POST-2015 PERIOD

Goal 5 brought a concentrated focus on efforts to reduce maternal deaths and ensure universal access to reproductive health. Significant progress has been made, but it fell far short of the global goal and targets. This leaves an unfinished agenda to ensure that all people receive comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services. In-depth analyses reveal insufficient and greatly uneven progress.

Averages at the global, regional and even country level mask what can be profound health disparities among subgroups that are vulnerable, because of their level of education, place of residence, economic status or age. Large inequities remain in maternal health, along with gaps in access to and use of sexual and reproductive health services that must be consistently addressed and monitored. In addition, country capacity needs to be strengthened to help reduce inequalities in both the availability and the quality of health-related data, as well as registration of births and deaths. This information is crucial for establishing informed policy priorities, targeting resources more efficiently and measuring improvements in maternal health and universal access to sexual and reproductive health care.

GOAL 6: STRATEGIC EFFORTS ON HEALTH MUST BE EXPANDED IN THE POST-2015 ERA

Health is a precondition, an indicator and an outcome of sustainable development. As part of the post-2015 development agenda, robust efforts are needed to sustain gains made to date and integrate additional health issues into a broad health and development agenda. Vigorous efforts are needed to scale up care, intensify services and research, ensure bold policies and supportive systems, and improve prevention. This new health agenda also requires expanding the scope of health efforts to ensure access to services, prevent exclusion and protect people through the extension of universal health coverage. All of these are needed to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for people of all ages.

GOAL 7: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IS A CORE PILLAR OF THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Efforts to ensure global environmental sustainability have shown mixed results throughout the last 15 years. Much work remains for the post-2015 period, particularly given the acute environmental challenges the world is facing, such as climate change, food and water insecurity and natural disasters.

One theme emerging from the debate on the successor agenda to the MDGs is the importance of true integration of environment into development ambitions. Environmental sustainability is a core pillar of the post-2015 agenda and a prerequisite for lasting socioeconomic development and poverty eradication. Healthy, well-managed and diverse ecosystems and resources can play a strong role in mitigating future environmental challenges and improving livelihoods everywhere. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that the development agenda for the future reflects the links between socioeconomic and environmental sustainability and protects and reinforces the environmental pillar.



GOAL 8: GREATER FUNDING AND INNOVATION ARE CRUCIAL TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

As the post-2015 development agenda is being prepared for launch, its breadth and ambition need to be matched by adequate funding and renewed efforts to mobilize innovation, science and technology for sustainable development.

Official development assistance (ODA) remains critically important for countries with limited capacity to raise public resources domestically. It is important to pay greater attention to the potential of ODA to attract other financial flows, both by blending it with non-concessional public finance and by leveraging private finance and investments. Such market-like instruments may play an important role in financing the post-2015 development agenda.

The changing trade landscape will also demand innovative ways to improve market access and address non-tariff barriers, particularly as trade in services expands. Also, it will be crucial to strengthen the integration of developing countries into the multilateral trade system, as measured by their trade diversification and share in value-added.

Similarly, it will be essential to address the widening digital divide. Only then will the transformative power of information and communications technologies and the data revolution be harnessed to deliver sustainable development for all.

