



**DESA**

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

**PROMOTING  
DEVELOPMENT  
FOR ALL**

# **The Millennium Development Goals**

## **A Snapshot**

**Prepared by DESA based on its annual  
Millennium Development Goals Report**

**New York, March 2010**



## 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

*Halve the proportion of people living in poverty and suffering from hunger*

### Achievements

- According to the World Bank's "dollar-a-day" international poverty line, revised in 2008 to \$1.25 a day in 2005 prices, there were still 1.4 billion people living in extreme poverty in 2005, but the number was significantly down from that of 1990 when there were 1.8 billion people living in extreme poverty. There was a dramatic fall in Eastern Asia and South-eastern Asia.
- If progress had continued uninterrupted (before the economic crisis hit the poorest so hard), the world was on track to cut into half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty — and two sub-regions in Asia have already met the target.

### Shortfalls

- In Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, poverty remains stubbornly high. The number of '\$1/day poor' went up by 100 million in Sub-Saharan Africa during 1990-2005.
- The declining trend in the prevalence of hunger observed since 1990-92, was reversed in 2008, largely due to reduced access to food because of high food prices and the global financial and economic crisis. The highest hunger prevalence in 2008 was in sub-Saharan Africa, where 29 per cent of the population was undernourished.



## Achieve universal primary education

### Achievements

- There has been remarkable progress towards achieving universal primary education in developing countries since 2000, with many countries having crossed the 90 per cent enrolment threshold.
- Enrolment in primary education has increased fastest in Sub-Saharan Africa, from 58 per cent in 2000 to 74 per cent in 2007.
- In five of the developing regions — CIS, South-Eastern Asia, Latin America & the Caribbean, Eastern Asia and Northern Africa - enrolment is 94 per cent or above.

### Shortfalls

- 72 million children of primary school age around the world — about half in Sub-Saharan Africa — remain out of school.
- Dropout rates remain high in many countries, implying that achieving 100 per cent primary school completion rates remain a challenge.



## Promote gender equality and empower women

### Achievements

- The gender gap in primary school enrolment in developing countries has narrowed in the past decade, as measured by a ratio of girls to boys' gross enrolment of 95 in 2007, compared to 91 in 1999.
- Latin America & the Caribbean and Eastern Asia have the highest women's political representation. Women's presence in parliaments has grown impressively in sub-Saharan Africa, doubling from 9 per cent in 2000, to 18 per cent in 2009.

### Shortfalls

- Five years after the deadline, the target of eliminating gender disparities in education by 2005 has yet to be achieved.
- Paid employment outside agriculture continues to grow for women, but only marginally.
- Women's political representation, with only 17 per cent of parliamentary seats held by women in developing regions, is still far from the 30 per cent target envisioned in the Beijing Platform for Action. Oceania, Northern Africa and Western Asia are the region with the smallest women's representation.



## Reduce child mortality

*Reduce by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate*

### Achievements

- Deaths among children under five have been reduced from 12.5 million per year in 1990 to 8.8 million in 2008.
- Significant progress was made in Northern Africa, South-eastern Asia, and Latin America and Caribbean, the only regions that, at current trends, are on track to meet the goal.

### Shortfalls

- The child mortality rate in developing countries fell from 99 deaths per thousand live births in 1990 to 72 in 2008. This is well short of the target of a two-thirds reduction (to 33 per thousand live births). Based on current trends, many countries are unlikely to achieve the MDG health targets by 2015.
- Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest child mortality rate—for every 1,000 births, 145 children die before their fifth birthday. The rate is also high in Southern Asia and Oceania, at 77 and 59 deaths per 1,000 births, respectively.



## Improve maternal health

*Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015*

### Achievements

- Deliveries attended by skilled health workers in the developing regions have increased since 1990, from 53 per cent in 1990 to 61 per cent in 2007.

### Shortfalls

- There has been little progress in reducing maternal deaths – in developing regions, maternal mortality only declined marginally from 480 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 450 in 2005. At this rate, the target of 120 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2015 cannot be achieved.
- Half of all maternal deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa and another third in Southern Asia. Together, these two regions account for 85 per cent of all maternal deaths.



## Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria & other diseases

*To have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases*

### Achievements

- The number of new HIV infections was 2.7 million in 2008, a decline of 30 per cent from the peak of 3.5 million in 1996. The number of people in low and middle-income countries receiving antiretroviral therapy for HIV increased ten-fold in five years (2003-2008).
- The global incidence of tuberculosis appears to have peaked in 2004, and is now falling slowly in most parts of the world, except African countries with a high prevalence of HIV.
- Major progress in scaling up key malaria control interventions with a proven impact on the number of cases and deaths has been documented in many countries/ areas. Malaria endemic African countries have received enough nets to cover more than half their at-risk populations.

### Shortfalls

- The progress has not yet been enough to reverse the trajectory of the HIV epidemic because needed interventions on prevention and treatment often fall short in coverage: for every two persons starting anti-retroviral treatment, there are five new HIV infections.



## Ensure environmental sustainability

*Halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation*

### Achievements

- Most regions have achieved major gains in providing access to safe water, and the world is well on its way to meeting the target.
- There has been extraordinary progress in protecting the ozone layer. Parties to the Montreal Protocol have achieved a 97 per cent reduction in the consumption of all controlled ozone-depleting substances.
- The net deforestation rates have come down.

### Shortfalls

- The rate of growth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions has been much higher during 1995-2004 than during 1970-1994, and the trend has not changed so far.
- The target to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 has not been met. Some 13 million hectares of the forests are lost by deforestation each year, only partially compensated for by afforestation. Worldwide, around 7 million hectares of forest cover is lost every year.



## Develop a global partnership for development

*Global cooperation on aid, trade, debt, access to affordable essential medicines and new technologies and addressing the special needs of the least developed, landlocked and small island states*

### Achievements

- Net disbursement of official development assistance (ODA) in 2008 increased 10.2 per cent to \$119.8 billion.
- The proportion of total developed country imports from developing countries admitted duty free has improved significantly in 2007, due mostly to tariff elimination under MFN rather than an extension of true preferential treatment.
- Substantial progress has been made with regard to debt relief.
- Considerable progress had been made in access to information and communications technologies, especially in cellular telephony, in recent years.

### Shortfalls

- Donors are falling short by \$35 billion per year on a pledge made in 2005. The share of ODA in GDI was 0.3 per cent in 2008, far from the agreed target of 0.7 per cent to be reached by 2015. Distribution of ODA remains highly skewed. Iraq and Afghanistan received about a sixth of country allocations from DAC countries, but account for less than 2 per cent of the total population of the developing countries.
- Failure to reach agreement in the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations represents a major gap in strengthening the global partnership to achieve the MDGs.
- Gap in access to internet between the developed and the developing world remains large. In 2007, there were only 13 users per 100 people in the developing regions, as compared to 64 in the developed regions. The digital divide also remains wide, both among and within countries.
- On average, people in developing countries now pay three to six times more than international reference prices for the cheapest generic medicines.