

# The Millennium Development Goals

## Background

In September 2000, at the UN Millennium Summit, all the countries of the world, including the United States, affirmed a set of international development goals in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), they have helped focus the energy and resources of the nations of the world on a common strategy to address the issues of poverty, hunger and health. Specific, achievable targets for the year 2015 have been set, and include:

## The Millennium Development Goals: By 2015...

### 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

#### Targets:

- Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day
- Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

### 2. Achieve universal primary education

#### Target:

- Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

### 3. Promote Gender equality and empower women

#### Target :

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

### 4. Reduce child mortality

#### Target:

- Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five

### 5. Improve maternal health

#### Target:

- Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio

### 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

#### Targets:

- Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

### 7. Ensure environmental sustainability

#### Targets:

- Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs; reverse the loss of environmental resources
- Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation
- Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020

### 8. Develop a global partnership for development

#### Targets:

- Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory
- Address the least-developed countries' special needs
- Address the special needs of landlocked and small-island developing states
- Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems
- Develop decent and productive work for youth
- Provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- Make available the benefits of new technologies



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(updated 2/20/2008)

**The MDGs are achievable.** In recent decades, many countries made tremendous strides in improving the livelihoods of their people. But much remains to be done:

- 854 million people suffer from hunger.
- 9.7 million children die every year of preventable causes. In developing countries, on average more than 10% of children die before the age of 5. The goal is to reduce this to 3.4%.
- Each year, half a million women continue to die during pregnancy or childbirth, almost all of them in sub-Saharan Africa or Asia.
- Tuberculosis and malaria are on the rise. In 2005, 1.6 million people died from TB. There are 300-500 million cases of malaria each year; 89% of all malaria deaths are in sub-Saharan Africa.
- HIV/AIDS has reduced the life expectancy of some countries in sub-Saharan Africa to under age 40.
- The world is on track to meet the Millennium Development Goal on water but not sanitation. Under current rates of progress, the world will miss the sanitation target by more than half a billion people.

The MDGs provide a framework for designing and implementing development programs. International institutions, such as UN agencies, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization, as well as governments, the private sector, private voluntary organizations and citizen groups recognize their importance and usefulness. The MDGs are a valuable tool for raising citizen awareness, coordinating action and evaluating progress in the global effort to provide basic living conditions to hundreds of millions of poor and hungry people.

### **Additional Resources:**

**Millennium Campaign:** The Millennium Campaign encourages people's involvement and action for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. An initiative of the United Nations, the Campaign supports citizens' efforts to hold their government accountable for the Millennium promise. (<http://endpoverty2015.org/>)

**UN Millennium Project:** The Millennium Project was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2002 to develop a concrete action plan for the world to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people. The Millennium Project is an independent advisory body. It released a report called *Investing in Development*, which brings together the core recommendations of the UN Millennium Project and outlines practical investment strategies and approaches to financing them. (<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/>)

**World Bank:** The World Bank helps developing countries and their people reach the goals by working with developed countries to alleviate poverty. The World Bank has also released an Online Atlas of the Millennium Development Goals entitled "Building a Better World" that allows users to explore maps that chart worldwide statistics relevant to the eight goals of the UN Millennium Project. (<http://devdata.worldbank.org/atlas-mdg/large.html>)

**MDG Monitor:** The MDG Monitor is designed as a one-stop-shop for information on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), globally and at the country level. It is intended as a tool for policymakers, development practitioners, journalists, students and others interested in learning about the Goals and tracking progress toward them. (<http://mdgmonitor.org>)



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