

# The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014



UNITED NATIONS



This report is based on a master set of data that has been compiled by an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, in response to the wishes of the General Assembly for periodic assessment of progress towards the MDGs. The Group comprises representatives of the international organizations whose activities include the preparation of one or more of the series of statistical indicators that were identified as appropriate for monitoring progress towards the MDGs, as reflected in the list below. A number of national statisticians and outside expert advisers also contributed.

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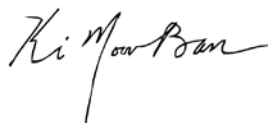
# Foreword

At the turn of the century, world leaders came together at the United Nations and agreed on a bold vision for the future through the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a pledge to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity, and free the world from extreme poverty. The MDGs, with eight goals and a set of measurable time-bound targets, established a blueprint for tackling the most pressing development challenges of our time.

This report examines the latest progress towards achieving the MDGs. It reaffirms that the MDGs have made a profound difference in people's lives. Global poverty has been halved five years ahead of the 2015 timeframe. Ninety per cent of children in developing regions now enjoy primary education, and disparities between boys and girls in enrolment have narrowed. Remarkable gains have also been made in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis, along with improvements in all health indicators. The likelihood of a child dying before age five has been nearly cut in half over the last two decades. That means that about 17,000 children are saved every day. We also met the target of halving the proportion of people who lack access to improved sources of water.

The concerted efforts of national governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector have helped expand hope and opportunity for people around the world. But more needs to be done to accelerate progress. We need bolder and focused action where significant gaps and disparities exist.

Member States are now fully engaged in discussions to define Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will serve as the core of a universal post-2015 development agenda. Our efforts to achieve the MDGs are a critical building block towards establishing a stable foundation for our development efforts beyond 2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ki Moon Ban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ki" and last name "Ban" being more prominent than the middle name "Moon".

BAN KI-MOON  
Secretary-General, United Nations

# Overview

Fourteen years ago, the Millennium Declaration articulated a bold vision and established concrete targets for improving the existence of many and for saving the lives of those threatened by disease and hunger. There has been important progress across all goals, with some targets already having been met well ahead of the 2015 deadline. All stakeholders will have to intensify and focus their efforts on the areas where advancement has been too slow and has not reached all.

## Several MDG targets have been met

- **The world has reduced extreme poverty by half**

In 1990, almost half of the population in developing regions lived on less than \$1.25 a day. This rate dropped to 22 per cent by 2010, reducing the number of people living in extreme poverty by 700 million.

- **Efforts in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis have shown results**

Between 2000 and 2012, an estimated 3.3 million deaths from malaria were averted due to the substantial expansion of malaria interventions. About 90 per cent of those averted deaths—3 million—were children under the age of five living in sub-Saharan Africa. The intensive efforts to fight tuberculosis have saved an estimated 22 million lives worldwide since 1995. If the trends continue, the world will reach the MDG targets on malaria and tuberculosis.

- **Access to an improved drinking water source became a reality for 2.3 billion people**

The target of halving the proportion of people without access to an improved drinking water source was achieved in 2010, five years ahead of schedule. In 2012, 89 per cent of the world's population had access to an improved source, up from 76 per cent in 1990. Over 2.3 billion people gained access to an improved source of drinking water between 1990 and 2012.

- **Disparities in primary school enrolment between boys and girls are being eliminated in all developing regions**

Substantial gains have been made towards reaching gender parity in school enrolment at all levels of education in all developing regions. By 2012, all developing regions have achieved, or were close to achieving, gender parity in primary education.

- **The political participation of women has continued to increase**

In January 2014, 46 countries boasted having more than 30 per cent female members of parliament in at least one chamber. More women are now holding some of the so-called “hard” ministerial portfolios—such as Defence, Foreign Affairs and the Environment.

- **Development assistance rebounded, the trading system stayed favourable for developing countries and their debt burden remained low**

Official development assistance stood at \$134.8 billion in 2013, the highest level ever recorded, after two years of declining volumes. However, aid is shifting away from the poorest countries. 80 per cent of imports from developing countries entered developed countries duty-free and tariffs remained at an all-time low. The debt burden of developing countries remained stable at about 3 per cent of export revenue.

## Substantial progress has been made in most areas, but much more effort is needed to reach the set targets

- **Major trends that threaten environmental sustainability continue, but examples of successful global action exist**

Global emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) continued their upward trend and those in 2011 were almost 50 per cent above their 1990 level. Millions of hectares of forest are lost every year, many species are being driven closer to extinction and renewable water resources are becoming scarcer. At the same time, international action is on the verge of eliminating ozone-depleting substances and the proportion of terrestrial and coastal marine areas under protection has been increasing.

- **Hunger continues to decline, but immediate additional efforts are needed to reach the MDG target**

The proportion of undernourished people in developing regions has decreased from 24 per cent in 1990–1992 to 14 per cent in 2011–2013. However, progress has slowed down in the past decade. Meeting the target of halving the percentage of people suffering from hunger by 2015 will require immediate additional effort, especially in countries which have made little headway.

- **Chronic undernutrition among young children declined, but one in four children is still affected**

In 2012, a quarter of all children under the age of five years were estimated to be stunted—having inadequate height for their age. This represents a significant decline since 1990 when 40 per cent of young children were stunted. However, it is unacceptable that 162 million young children are still suffering from chronic undernutrition.

- **Child mortality has been almost halved, but more progress is needed**

Worldwide, the mortality rate for children under age five dropped almost 50 per cent, from 90 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 48 in 2012. Preventable diseases are the main causes of under-five deaths and appropriate actions need to be taken to address them.

- **Much more needs to be done to reduce maternal mortality**

Globally, the maternal mortality ratio dropped by 45 per cent between 1990 and 2013, from 380 to 210 deaths per 100,000 live births. Worldwide, almost 300,000 women died in 2013 from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Maternal death is mostly preventable and much more needs to be done to provide care to pregnant women.

- **Antiretroviral therapy is saving lives and must be expanded further**

Access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV-infected people has been increasing dramatically, with a total of 9.5 million people in developing regions receiving treatment in 2012. ART has saved 6.6 million lives since 1995. Expanding its coverage can save many more. In addition, knowledge about HIV among youth needs to be improved to stop the spread of the disease.

- **Over a quarter of the world's population has gained access to improved sanitation since 1990, yet a billion people still resorted to open defecation**

Between 1990 and 2012, almost 2 billion people gained access to an improved sanitation facility. However, in 2012, 2.5 billion people did not use an improved sanitation facility and 1 billion people still resorted to open

defecation, which poses a huge risk to communities that are often poor and vulnerable already. Much greater effort and investment will be needed to redress inadequate sanitation in the coming years.

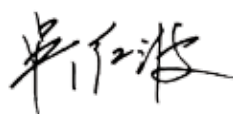
- **90 per cent of children in developing regions are attending primary school**

The school enrolment rate in primary education in developing regions increased from 83 per cent to 90 per cent between 2000 and 2012. Most of the gains were achieved by 2007, after which progress stagnated. In 2012, 58 million children were out of school. High dropout rates remain a major impediment to universal primary education. An estimated 50 per cent of out-of-school children of primary school age live in conflict-affected areas.

## The MDGs show that progress is possible, providing the platform for further action

The MDGs brought together governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector to achieve concrete goals for development and poverty eradication. Much has been accomplished through the concerted and focused efforts of all, saving and improving the lives of many people, but the agenda remains unfinished. The analysis presented in this report points to the importance of intensifying efforts to meet all MDG targets.

The post-2015 development agenda is slated to carry on the work of the MDGs and integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Continued progress towards the MDGs in the remaining year is essential to provide a solid foundation for the post-2015 development agenda.



WU HONGBO  
Under-Secretary-General for Economic  
and Social Affairs



# Data for development

Reliable and robust data are critical for devising appropriate policies and interventions for the achievement of the MDGs and for holding Governments and the international community accountable. The MDG framework has fostered the strengthening of statistical systems at both national and international levels to enable the production of quality data for monitoring progress towards the set of concrete, time-bound Goals. Despite considerable advancements in recent years, reliable statistics for monitoring development remain inadequate in many countries. Data gaps, data quality, compliance with methodological standards and non-availability of disaggregated data are among the major challenges to MDG monitoring.

## MDG monitoring is driving development policy decision making

- MDG monitoring has generated public support and funding for development

The number of Member States submitting country progress reports to the Global AIDS Response Progress Reporting (GARPR) increased from 102 in 2004 to 186 in 2012. The monitoring of HIV and AIDS has helped to galvanise global efforts and to increase the allocation of aid to the fight against HIV and AIDS. Funding for HIV programmes has more than tripled compared to a decade ago, and about ten million people living with HIV were accessing antiretroviral treatment in 2012.

- Reliable and timely data allow targeted measures against poverty

The Government of Tanzania has established a comprehensive, MDG-based poverty-monitoring system and has used this information to hone its Poverty Reduction Strategy. Evidence of growing urban-rural disparities has

- Disaggregated data can identify problems in local areas and specific population groups, thus allowing effective interventions

Disaggregated data help to track progress accurately in local areas and across marginalized and disadvantaged groups to map out inequalities. For example, household surveys in Bosnia and Herzegovina found that only 32 per cent of the poorest fifth of the Roma population had access to an improved drinking water source, compared to 82 per cent of the poorest fifth of the general population. Thus, data disaggregation makes the invisible visible and allows monitoring progress towards the elimination of inequalities that have undermined the full realization of the Human Right to Water and Sanitation by all.

## The MDG monitoring framework has helped to improve statistical capacity and data availability

- Statistical capacity has been strengthened to produce internationally comparable development indicators

In many developing countries, the need to track MDG progress gave national statistical systems the opportunity to develop their capacity to produce and deliver the necessary information. The international statistical community has helped to improve methodologies, produce guidelines, and define priorities and strategies to support countries in data collection, analysis, and reporting on MDGs. Household surveys—such as the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), supported by the international statistical community and undertaken by national authorities—have enabled developing countries to produce statistically sound and internationally comparable estimates on MDG

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