



Steady progress on many Millennium Development Goals continues in sub-Saharan Africa

Rising poverty and hunger, conflict and population growth pose big challenges to achieving many MDG targets by 2015, says UN

Lagos/Nairobi, 7 July 2014 – Sub-Saharan Africa progressed on most Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but persistent obstacles and new challenges mean the region will not meet most Goals by their 2015 target date, a new UN report says.

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014, launched today by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York, finds that steady progress was made in sub-Saharan Africa, but population growth, conflict and declines in aid make reaching many MDG targets by 2015 unlikely. Despite a new high in official development assistance in 2013, the report says aid shifted away from the poorest countries where achieving the MDGs lags the most. Net bilateral aid to Africa, where 34 of the 48 least developed countries are located, fell by 5.6 per cent in 2013.

Big education gains, but more challenges ahead

Between 2000 and 2012, the adjusted primary net enrolment rate increased from 60 per cent to 78 per cent. However, compared to 2000, there were 35 per cent more school children to put in school in 2012. In addition, armed conflict and other emergencies have kept children out of school—33 million children of primary school age in sub-Saharan Africa were not in school in 2012 and 56 per cent were girls.

Girls continue to face high barriers to schooling in sub-Saharan Africa, where the net primary enrolment rate for girls rose from

Women's equality slowly gaining

Women in the region are gaining more influence in politics. The proportion of seats held by women in single or lower houses of national parliament increased from 13 per cent in 2000 to 23 per cent in 2014, the second highest among all developing regions. Women's access to paid jobs in non-agricultural sectors rose from 23 per cent in 1990 to 33 per cent in 2012.

Maternal and child mortality see big reductions, but more needed to meet targets

The maternal mortality ratio declined by 48 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa since 1990. However, in 2012 only 53 per cent of deliveries were attended by skilled health personnel. In 2012, one child in ten died before their fifth birthday. Since 1990 child mortality rates fell by 45 per cent. However, without greater improvements, the region is likely to miss the MDG targets on maternal and child mortality by 2015.

Greater access to water and sanitation stymied by slums

In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of people with access to an improved drinking water source increased by 16 per cent between 1990 and 2012, despite major population growth. Water remains inaccessible to many households, however, and many people, usually women or young girls, must join long queues or walk long distances to reach an improved water source.
