

Forum: General Assembly

Issue: The establishment of new development goals

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Introduction

In the year 2000, facing the new millennium, the United Nations set out international development goals, a series of time-bound targets which are commonly known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They aim to encourage global development, notably on social and economic matters and are based on the fundamental Human Rights and values such as freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. All Member States of the UN and 23 Organizations signed these MDGs and agreed to achieve them by the year 2015.

The eight MDGs are:

1. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieving universal primary education,
3. Promoting gender equality and empowering women,
4. Reducing child mortality rates,
5. Improving maternal health,
6. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases,
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability,
8. Developing a global partnership for development.

To ensure the completion of each goal, 21 targets and measurable indicators such as the proportion of population below \$1 per day (first MDG) or the ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education (third MDG) were chosen by the UN.

Although some progress has been made in achieving the MDGs, many goals and targets have not been reached and will very likely not be reached by 2015. Gender gaps have been attenuated although they remain high at university level and “large gaps still remain in access to education and completion rates, with significant inequalities based on gender, ethnicity, income, language or disabilities. 72 million children of primary school age were not in school in 2007. Seven out of ten such children out of school live in sub-Saharan Africa or South and West Asia” according to the European commission. Below you can see the progress and failures made in some of these goals:

1. Even though poverty is still an important global issue, developing nations will probably meet the poverty target largely because of progress in China. But in Sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia the proportion of people suffering from hunger has increased. Their number rose from 842 million in 1990-92 to 1.02 billion people in 2009.

3. Gender gaps have been attenuated although they remain high at university level and “large gaps still remain in access to education and completion rates, with significant inequalities based on gender, ethnicity, income, language or disabilities. 72 million children of primary school age were not in school in 2007. Seven out of ten such children out of school live in sub-Saharan Africa or South and West Asia” according to the European commission.

5. There has been little improvement in maternal mortality since the 1990s. Maternal mortality (5th MDG) is still unacceptably high, with 450 deaths per 100 000 live births in developing regions in 2005. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia account for 85 % of all maternal deaths.

6. Despite the overall reduction in the number of new infections, the total number of people living with HIV worldwide continues to grow. The number of people living with HIV globally now stands at 33.4 million. Sub-Saharan Africa remains the worst affected region, accounting for 71 % of all new HIV infections in 2008. In sub-Saharan Africa, women outnumber men 3 to 1 among 15-24 year olds with HIV.

7. More than 2.5 billion people remain without improved sanitation, and at the current rate of progress the MDG sanitation target will be missed for over 700 million people. The lowest sanitation coverage is found in sub-Saharan Africa, where only 31 % of the population has improved sanitation.

Therefore, there remain many global issues that have not been solved within the MDGs and which need to be addressed in the establishment of new development goals.

Definition of key terms

Poverty threshold (/poverty line): the minimum salary deemed adequate in a certain country, however the international standard is 1\$ a day. It is found by investigating the prices of all products that an average adult consumes in a year.

PPP: Purchasing Power Parity is an economic theory that facilitates the understanding of the relative value of all currencies and costs of living. PPP helps us do international comparisons since it let's us assume that a certain amount of money has the same purchasing power in all countries.

Human Development Index (HDI): A way to measure the standard of living by using indicators that measure the life expectancy, educational attainment and average salaries. It was created by the UNDP in 1990, however it has been criticized for it's lack of ecological factors and that it accounts for averages and there may be large differences within a country.

Major Countries and Organizations involved

UNDP (United Nations Development Program)

In addition to its pragmatic work for the achievement of the MDGs, the UNDP was chosen to be the MDG scorekeeper, meaning that the agency has a country-level monitoring of the MDGs' completion. A report is then written every year for each

region (and on a more irregular base, for each country) and notes the progress made. These reports help extract the main challenges and opportunities that remain in each country or region.

The UNDP also supports financially and logistically projects that work towards the achievement of the MDGs.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization helps with the MDGs by providing access to safe and effective medicines for diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, reducing the number of deaths from pneumonia and the prevention of people falling below the poverty line.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa, excluding individual countries such as Rwanda, Ghana, Ethiopia and other individual countries that have shown significant progress, remains the region furthest away from meeting the MDGs. An example is goal number four, where Sub-Saharan African has seen a 22% decline in child mortality. Although this is a great improvement, this region still accounts for half of the world's 8.8 million deaths of children below the age of five, and it is the only area where the child mortality has in fact increased since the goal was set.

Oceania

Following Sub-Saharan Africa, Oceania is the region with the slowest progress, and only one sub-target actually seems to be met (halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS). In fact, five of the sixteen sub-targets haven't seen any progress, but in some cases the situations have deteriorated.

Timeline of events

September 2010: The MDG Summit raised the question of post-2015

August 2012: UN General Secretary Ban Ki-Moon launched a new independent global network of research centres, universities and technical institutions to help find solutions to urgent matters.

2013: The MY WORLD Project is a survey available on the UN's website, where individuals around their world, can express their opinions on the local progress they have seen.

2013: The World We Want Project seeks to provide a "space for citizens to contribute their voices to global consultations on the post-2015 development process".

Relevant UN treaties and events

- "The Millennium Summit" in 2000 put the MDGs into action
- "UN Millennium Project" in 2002 was a concrete plan on how to tackle pressing issues such as poverty and the spread of disease

- “2005 World Summit” resulted in major decisions concerning security, human rights and the reformation of the UN
- “2008 High-level Event on the MDGs” announced new commitment to the MDGs
- “The Future We Want” treaty from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (June 2012) which called for the creation of an open intergovernmental working group on sustainable development (OWG)

Previous Attempts to solve the issue

‘The Millennium Development Goals’ was the first UN Project which covered more than one field, and did so on a global scale. In the past there have been other projects but they have all had a specific focus, such as UNODC (Drugs & Crimes), UNHCHR (Human Rights), and UNEP (Environment).

Possible Solutions

Just like the preceding development goals, the new targets need to cover a wide range of aspects such as health care, environmental sustainability, and education. Delegates must decide which current problems are causing problems at large scales, and which ones are the most urgent to be solved.

It is necessary to match each goal with a feasible target date by which it should be fulfilled. There should also be sub-goals that highlight the different aspects of a wide topic, and how they can be approached.

Goals 1, 5, and 7 have shown little success and so these questions below should be considered:

- Safe drinking water; especially in rural areas (filtration, desalination)
- Functioning sewage systems
- Urban dwellers - from 1990 to 2012, this number has grown from 650 to 863 million (entrepreneur programs that cause independency)
- Loss of biodiversity (nature reserves, limiting tourism, observing areas affected by illegal poaching)
- Deforestation (controlling areas suffering from deforestation, re-planting of trees, starting up alternative local business)
- Hunger - 1/3 of the Southern Asian Children were underweight in 2010 (provision of self-sustaining technology, development of GMOs, fertilizers, less ‘waste’ of resources)
- Vulnerable employment
- Maternal health - the target hasn’t been achieved in any region of the world

These problems have already been tackled, but the progress made is insufficient. It is important to understand the mistakes in earlier methods, and to design new ways to solve them.

Other deeply rooted problems that haven't been covered in the past program, but should be considered are:

- The prevention of ethnic and religious conflicts (education of all religions,
- Sex trade (raising awareness amongst victims, police and immigrant officers), enforcing the 'PROTECT Act')
- The development of sustainable energy resources

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