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World Health Organization (WHO)

**“Drinking Water for Sub-Saharan Africa: Reaching the
Millenium Development Goal No. 7”**

Introduction

On 18 September 2000, 147 Heads of State or Government signed the United Nations Millennium Declaration at the UN headquarters in New York. This declaration consists of a compilation of principles and goals that the international community aims at achieving in the 21st century. Ultimately adopted by all 189 member states of the UN at the time, the declaration has demonstrated its importance in outlining how the international community hopes to deal with an increasingly globalized and interconnected world that still faced with high levels of poverty, conflict, insecurity, and inequality. The Millennium Declaration has spurred the establishment of eight measurable development objectives, which were labeled as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs consist of a series of benchmarks and targets, which are connected to a wide variety of development issues that the international community has pledged to achieve by 2015. The specific MDGs emerged from various international and UN conferences held in the 1990s and continued to evolve and be reaffirmed throughout the 2000s. Overall, the international community has consistently reiterated its commitment to the MDGs and the targets that they set for 2015. As the deadline approaches, however, vigorous and coordinated efforts will be needed in order for the targets to be met. Consistent and continued review of progress made toward achieving the MDGs is necessary, particularly in light of the fact that, at current rates, nearly none of the MDGs will be attained at the global level. Indeed, many countries and regions continue to have high levels of poverty, disease, malnutrition and inequality far greater than desired by the present day. In light of the approaching deadline, the UN General Assembly must continue to promote strategies, which will accelerate the pace of sustainable development globally and ensure that major advances toward the MDGs are made in the following years.

Progress made toward achieving the MDGs

This section of the preparation paper reviews the progress that has been made toward achieving the MDGs, and the challenges that remain toward their attainment by 2015. With less than half a decade left until the deadline arrives, many countries and regions remain far away from the established goals. Although there have been many cases of significant progress, tremendous challenges remain, and the potential for the MDGs to ultimately remain unattained is a real danger. This section will briefly introduce the various MDGs and list the achievements that have been realized since their establishment as well as the strategies of the international community to encourage further progress in the upcoming years.

The information provided in this section of the guide was almost exclusively gathered from two sources: The Report of the Secretary General entitled Keeping the Promise: a forward looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the MDGs by 2015 of 12 February 2010, and the official 2011 MDGs Report.

The Goals

The MDGs consist of 8 general goals, with each goal further consisting of a series of measurable targets to be attained by 2015. The following list outlines each goal and its corresponding targets.



- **Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger**

Target 1.A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.

Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.

Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

- **Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education**

Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

- **Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

- **Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality**

Target 4.A: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

- **Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health**

Target 5.A: Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio.

Target 5.B: Achieve universal access to reproductive health.

- **Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases**

Target 6.A: Have halted by 2015 and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Target 6.B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it.

Target 6.C: Have halted by 2015 and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

- **Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

Target 7.A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Target 7.B: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss.

Target 7.C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Target 7.D: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

- **Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

Target 8.A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

Target 8.B: Address the special needs of least developed countries.

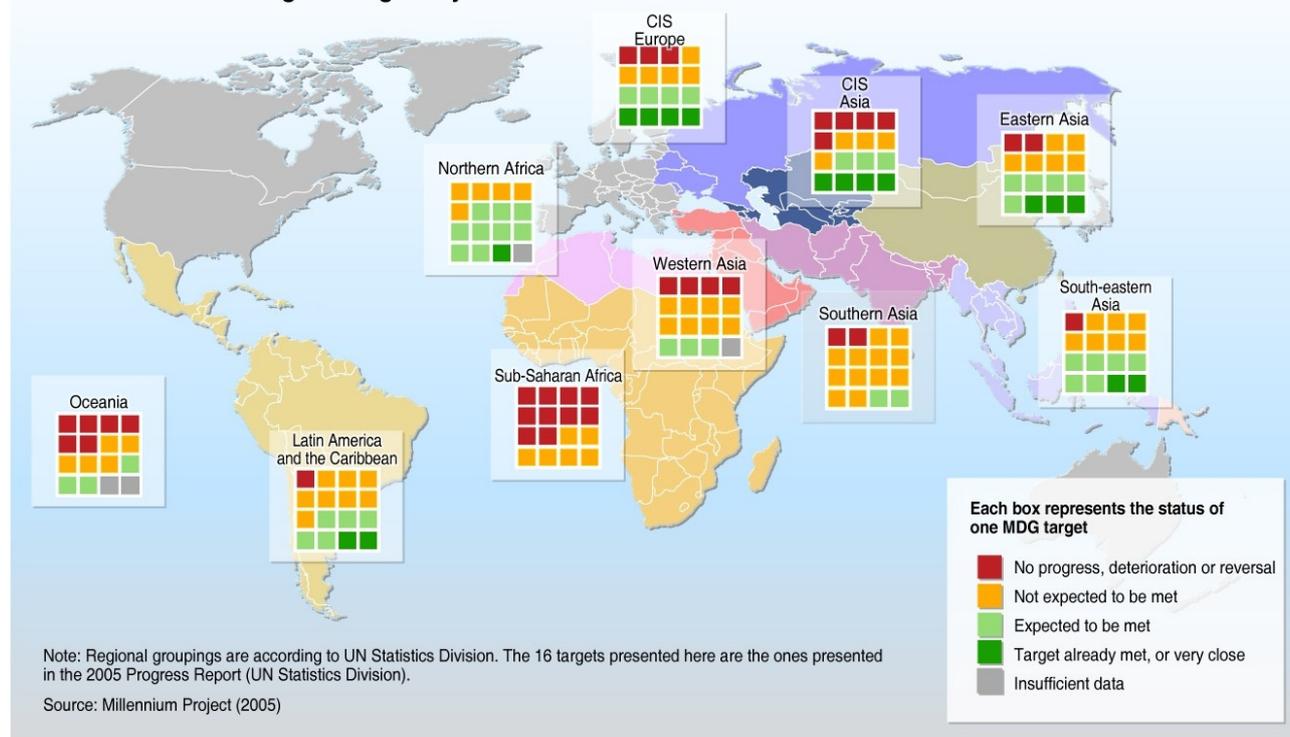
Target 8.C: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states.

Target 8.D: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries.

Target 8.E: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.

Target 8.F: In cooperation with the private sector, make available benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication.

Millennium Development Goals overview Trends toward meeting the targets by 2015



Shortfalls and successes in achieving the MDG goal no. 7

Since the establishment of the MDGs, major international efforts have been made to increase the progress made toward the attainment of the eight goals. However, despite those efforts and certain successes, at the current rate, major targets for each goal will not be achieved by the deadline in 2015. This section reviews some of the successes and shortfalls that have been associated with each MDG as well as its respective target or targets. For a complete overview delegates should read the Report of the Secretary General entitled Keeping the Promise: a forward looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the MDGs by 2014 of 12 February 2010, and the official 2011 MDGs Report.

Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Deforestation remains extremely high with 13 million hectares of forest cover lost per year in the 2000s. Global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise despite the global economic downturn. Biodiversity remains in significant decline with the target to reduce biodiversity loss not having been met by 2010. This year approximately 17,000 plant and animal species were known to be threatened with extinction. The drinking water target will likely be reached although 1 in 10 people will still be without access in 2015. Over 2.6 billion people still lack flush toilets and access to improved sanitation. Growing urbanization is outpacing improvements in urban slums.

The world will meet or even exceed the drinking water target by 2015 if current trends continue. By that time, an estimated 86 per cent of the population in developing regions will have gained access to improved sources of drinking water, up from 71 per cent in 1990. Four regions - Northern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia - have already met the target. Even though progress was made primarily in rural areas, those areas still remain at a disadvantage. Globally, eight out of 10 people who are without access to an improved drinking water source live in rural areas.

With half the population of developing regions lacking basic sanitation, the 2015 target appears to be out of reach. At the current rate of progress, the world will miss the target of halving the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation such as toilets or latrines. In 2008, an estimated 2.6 billion people around the world lacked access to improved sanitation. If this trend continues, the number will grow to 2.7 billion by 2015. Wide disparities also exist by region with sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia continuing to lag behind. Recent data shows that 69 and 64 per cent of their populations still lack access. Moreover, the gap between rural and urban areas remains huge, especially in Southern Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania.

The MDG Report states that persisting inequalities are detracting from these gains, given that achievements were unequally distributed across and within regions and countries. In addition, progress has slowed for some MDGs after the multiple crises of 2008/2009. Important improvements in maternal health and reduction in maternal deaths have been achieved, but the progress is still slow. Reductions in adolescent childbearing and expansion of contraceptive use have continued, but at a slower pace since 2000 compared to the decade before. Nearly half of the population in developing regions, around 2.5 billion, still lacks access to improved sanitation facilities. By 2015, the world will have reached only 67% coverage, well short of the 75% needed to achieve the MDG target.

Suggested strategies for accelerated progress in achieving the MDGs

Numerous strategies have been proposed in order to ensure that progress toward the attainment of MDGs continues and to help accelerate the progress so that targets are achieved by the deadline. The following sub-section outlines some strategies that have been deemed critical for the successful development of initiatives aimed at the MDGs. This is by no means an extensive list, and delegates should consult the two primary sources utilized for this section of the session guide for more information.

National Ownership

The development of strategies and initiatives, which are tailored to national and regional realities has been recognized as being of extreme importance. A review of the progress has clearly shown that different regions have been more or less successful with regards to particular MDG targets. For example, sub-Saharan Africa has made successful steps toward primary education, but lags behind when it comes to other targets, while east Asia, in return, has seen greater improvements with the protection of forests than other regions. Overall, regional and national realities need to be assessed, and strategies that address their particular needs should be devised. Furthermore, "one-size-fits-all" policies and programs are bound to fail due to wide variations among countries in terms of their capacity and historical and geographical circumstances. Hence, local efforts dealing with local realities are highly encouraged.

Holistic Approaches

It has also been acknowledged that holistic, community-led strategies are more effective than stand-alone programs. The various MDGs are interrelated and the success of certain MDGs depend on the success of others. By understanding the interconnections between the different targets of the MDGs, better initiatives and interventions can be devised and implemented.

Economic Policies

Economic policies devised by national governments should focus on sustainable growth and growth of real output and employment as opposed to primarily on debt stabilization and curbing inflation. Recent policies that have led to a "jobless recovery" since the economic downturn will not be helpful in allowing countries to achieve the MDGs. In addition, targeted investments by national governments in agricultural development, schools, teachers, water and sanitation projects among others are encouraged as they have proven to be most successful in spurring overall progress toward achieving MDGs.

Financial Support

A lack of adequate and predictable international financing has constrained progress toward achieving the MDG targets. There have been noticeable shortcomings in particular with respect to growth in the levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided to developing countries. Ultimately, although ODA reached its highest level ever in 2008, large gaps remain in meeting existing and long-standing commitments. 35 billion dollars of additional flows, for example, would be necessary in 2010 to meet targets for ODA set by the G8. Given the lack of realization of promised ODA levels, detailed analyses by the International Monetary Fund and the UNDP have shown that highly worthy MDG-based programs are unfunded because of non-delivery of promised donor funding.

Possible issues for the debate

- How could Western contribute in the acceleration progress?
- How could the acceleration progress be influenced?
- Plan B? What happens after 2015?

Further reading

<http://www.who.int/en/>

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Press%20Release%20MDG%20Report%202012.pdf>

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/>