



Promises, promises

How can the Millennium Development Goals be met?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly agreed a set of goals for development across the world with targets for improvements by 2015. These eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) cover areas such as health, education and the environment. The UN Millennium Review Summit beginning on 14 September in New York is supposed to review the progress towards meeting these goals.

Meeting the MDGs would mean lifting 300 million children out of abject poverty.

Education MDGs: promises all but broken

MDG 2 aims to ensure that, by 2015, all children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

MDG 3 aims to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

Progress to date:

- More than 100 million children including 60 million girls across the world are missing an education. In Niger more than 60 per cent of children are out of school compared with less than 1 per cent of children in the UK.
- **A key target has been missed, and is not being acknowledged.** More than 70 countries around the world still do not have as many girls as boys in schools. In Ethiopia nearly three-quarters (72 per cent) of girls never go to school but in the UK less than 1 per cent miss out.
- In sub-Saharan Africa more than 40 per cent of children are out of school and at least two-thirds of countries are off-track to meet the 2015 target of universal primary education.

What this means:

- Millions of girls and boys are being denied their right to education. They will not have a chance to obtain basic literacy and numeracy skills, nor develop the skills needed to contribute to their local economy.
- Millions of girls and their families miss out on the chance of a better, healthier life – educated

The reality for children in Chad

- Almost 0.6 million of the 1.4 million school age population is out of school (42 per cent)
- 0.4 million girls and 0.2 million boys are missing an education

This means that more than half of girls and almost a third of boys who should be in school are not.

2005
make it great
for children

child
MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

girls tend to marry later, have smaller families and be less likely to become HIV-positive.

- Children born to educated mothers are twice as likely to survive to their fifth birthday. Had the 2005 target to increase education for girls been reached, one million childhood deaths could have been averted.
- The MDG target on gender parity was set ten years earlier than the others because of the importance of educating girls for the achievement of the other MDGs. For example, it is essential for girls to be educated in order to reduce child mortality rates.

What needs to change:

- In order to meet the MDGs on education, national education policies and plans must be implemented and fully funded. This means committing national level resources as well as providing more aid that is free from damaging conditionalities.
- \$5.5 billion of additional aid is needed every year to meet the MDGs for education.
- Funds need to be channelled through the Education for All Fast Track Initiative which needs to be expanded to include fragile states.
- **Governments need to be funded so that they can financially support schools and abolish school fees.** This would have an immediate impact, with millions more children attending school across the world, especially girls. Save the Children estimates that in 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa 4.5 million more children could immediately go to school if fees were abolished.

Health MDGs: only met if healthcare made free

MDG 4 aims to reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under five

MDG 5 aims to reduce by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio

MDG 6 aims to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Progress to date:

- Every day, 30,000 children die from the effects of poverty (one every three seconds), many from easily preventable illness and disease.
- Four out of ten children under the age of five who die in the developing world do not survive their first month. At current rates of progress in sub-Saharan Africa it will take 150 years to meet MDG 4.
- 500,000 women die in pregnancy and childbirth every year. These deaths are 100 times more likely to occur in sub-Saharan Africa than in high-income countries.
- More than 16 million children across the world have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS – this figure is expected to rise (not fall) by 2010 to 25 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

The reality for children and mothers in Sierra Leone

- The under-five mortality rate is the worst at 284 per 1,000 children compared with six per 1,000 in the UK.
- Only 42 per cent of births are attended by a skilled attendant. In the UK almost all births are attended.
- 2,000 women die per 100,000 live births compared with 13 per 100,000 in the UK.

What this means:

- Over 270 million children still have no access to healthcare. Lack of access to health services contributes to the appalling figures for child and maternal health in the developing world.

What needs to change:

- Two-thirds of the 10 million children who die every year could be saved through improved delivery of effective health services. An additional \$18 billion per year is needed immediately to meet the health MDGs globally.
- Access to health services in many countries is restricted by fees charged by clinics and hospitals. **International donors must enable countries to**

- abolish fees for healthcare**, and provide aid to deliver quality health services and strengthened health systems. Research by Save the Children shows that abolishing fees in 20 African countries would cost a fraction of the total aid budget and would save 250,000 lives every year.
- More resources and international commitment are needed to ensure universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS by 2010 and proper support for orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV and AIDS.
- It is crucial that mechanisms are put in place to ensure that resources that have been pledged for HIV/AIDS are delivered to community level to benefit the poorest.

Tanzanian costs of living

Sherifa and her daughter Rehema live in Mingoyo village in southern Tanzania. The village is 25 km from the nearest town, Lindi, and has one small dispensary. The dispensary serves all the surrounding villages – about 10,000 people.

Lindi is one of the poorest districts in Tanzania, one of the poorest countries in the world.

Tanzania introduced fees for healthcare in hospitals in 1994 under pressure from international donors.

Sherifa says:

"Whenever my children are sick, we go to the dispensary [in the village]. If it gets too much or they are really ill, we take them to the hospital in Lindi or Nangayo [the local towns]. They are both very far so we go by bus.

"If the children are older than five, they have to pay. It's 500 shillings [25 pence] here and 5,000 [£2.50] if they are admitted to the hospital. Then it can even go to 8,000 if you need a bed.

"It's very difficult sometimes. Their father died in 2003 from a hernia. It happened so suddenly. He went into a coma and just died. So now everyone relies on me. It's very difficult for me as a widow.

"If you don't have money, you can't just stay like that and wait to go to the doctor. You have to borrow and ask your

friends to help you. You go to the hospital and when you come back, you find a way of paying back that money.

"If I didn't have to pay for healthcare, I'd use the money for the normal needs of the family – food, things for school, just the basic needs of life. My daughter used to go to school but because I can't afford the uniform, she had to stop. We don't pay fees but you have to buy books, uniform, things like that. Because of everything else I can't afford them."

Rehema, 14, lives with her mother and three sisters. A school uniform costs between 3,000 and 3,500 Tanzanian shillings (£1.50–£1.75), and plastic sandals another 500–1,000 (25–50 pence), which is beyond the reach of most families.

Rehema says:

"I like living here. I used to go to school not too long ago. It's not that I've left school, I just can't go because I don't have a uniform. It's just a skirt and a shirt. I'm not very happy about it.

"My favourite subjects were English, Swahili and maths. I got up to standard five. I would really like to go back to school but my mum doesn't have the money for the clothes.

"I've got lots of friends at school. My best friend, Fatumah, is still at school and we used to play there together. In the evenings or on holidays, we still play."



Other MDGs: dependent on the rest

MDG 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

This goal is to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. For example in Niger, the second poorest country in the world, a quarter of the country's 12 million people will go hungry without urgent assistance and three-quarters live below the poverty line.

Developing countries and their people can move out of poverty only if their children can grow up healthy and educated. These children will then be able to contribute to the development and economic growth of their country later in life, which will lift millions out of extreme poverty and hunger across the world.

MDG 7 aims to ensure environmental sustainability

MDG 8 aims to develop a global partnership for development

Action Points

5
September

Save the Children launches '60 million girls school book' on the barrier of school fees to meeting the education MDGs.

10
September

White Band Day:
MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY campaign events in UK and around the world.

14–16
September

UN Millennium Review Summit, New York.

- Donors and national governments must commit to removing school fees by 2006 as a first step to achieving the MDGs on education.
- There needs to be a commitment to end user fees for health services as a first step towards achieving the MDGs on health.
- International donors need to commit \$50 billion immediately to ensure the MDGs can be met.

24–25
September

World Bank/IMF annual meetings, Washington.

- The World Bank Development Committee must express a commitment to abolishing fees for health and education in its Africa Action Plan.
- The World Bank must work to enable countries to explore alternative types of financing for health and education to avoid the charging of fees.

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