

## Millennium Development Goals

### 1. What were the Millennium Development Goals?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a series of **8 targets** - created by the **United Nations in 2000** - for addressing **extreme poverty** in its many forms: *poverty, hunger, disease, a lack of shelter*, whilst promoting *gender equality, education and environmental sustainability*.

Each goal has **specific targets** and **dates** for achieving them.

*E.g Goal 2 aims to ensure children - including both boys and girls will be able to complete a full course of primary education by 2015*



To accelerate the process, the G8 ministers agreed in 2005 to provide funds to the World Bank, the IMF and the African Development Bank in order to **cancel \$40-\$55bn in debt** to allow HIPC's (*Heavily indebted poor countries*) to focus on achieving the goals.

### 2. Why are they so significant in the global effort to reduce the development gap?

- According to the UN, the Millennium Development Goals are the most broadly supported, comprehensive, and specific goals to reduce global poverty that have **ever been established**.
- In terms of international politics, they are used to **base development policy**.
- The goals are also significant, because if they were successfully implemented: **500m fewer people would be living in extreme poverty, 300m fewer would be hungry, millions of lives would be saved**. The Millennium Development Goals are a politically and economically affordable solution.
- Whatever a nation's motivation for achieving the crisis of poverty, **the end goal is the same - the MDGs provide a common goal**
- Success of the goals can be easily monitored as they are all **quantified targets**
- **"The MDGs are too important to fail - It is time to put them on the fast-track they require and deserve"** - UN
- **"For everyone on Earth, they are a linchpin to the quest for a more secure and peaceful world"** - UN

### 3. Millennium Development Goals - An Evaluation

Since the target date of 2015 ('*The Year of Evaluation*') has now passed, the success of the Millennium Development Goals can be measured.

#### Achievements:

- UNDP not only created goals, but also designed and rolled out a large **set of comprehensive tools** which supported MDG planning
- UNDP reports **successfully measured** progress
- MDGs have **improved** the **flow** of **aid** and other **investments**
- With UNDP support, most countries have incorporated MDGs in their development plans
- There was **support** from **financial institutions** and donors - This was critical for MDG success, especially in the poorest countries
- The **UNDP** has had a positive impact by **engaging with countries** and helping to understand MDGs and track their achievement
- **Goal 1 Extreme Poverty:** The number of people living on \$1.25/day has been (almost) halved
- **Goal 2 Primary Education:** Within 10 years, >30m more are attending school
- **Goal 4 Reducing child mortality:** Child mortality rate has been reduced by over half
- **Goal 5 Maternal Mortality:** Mortality ratio has fallen nearly by half
- **Goal 6 Combat Deadly Disease:** Number of HIV infections fell 40% between '00 and '13
- **Goal 7 Environmental Sustainability:** Half of those suffering from unclean drinking water no longer suffer
- **Goal 8 Global Partnership:** Overseas development assistance from MEDCs to LEDCs increased 66% and reached record figure of £80.3bn in 2013

#### However:

- Implementation of MDGs at country level varied due to a lack of leadership by UNDP on national levels
- Not all **MDGs were given equal attention**. *E.g Gender equality targets were applied less often*
- Many **MDG planning** initiatives were **not adequately funded** - hence impacting their success
- Initially, there was resistance to the MDGs. *(However, today they have become key to measuring development)*
- The goals were not necessarily adapted to different countries with varying existing development - meaning that higher income countries tended to focus on localised areas of development whilst lower income, less developed countries had a greater task of eliminating national poverty.
- The degree of success has been **uneven**: with **inequalities between** and **within** nations
- It has been difficult to measure the effect of some MDG initiatives, as other independent initiatives have also occurred simultaneously - **Therefore some consider that the MDGs are reinforcing measures rather than driving measures to end poverty**

- Many well governed countries are too poor and face a poverty trap - This undermines their ability to work toward the MDGs
- **Goal 1 Extreme Poverty:** 1.2bn are still in extreme poverty and 99m children under 5 have inadequate food
- **Goal 2 Primary Education:** Not 'all' children are offered primary education (58m still missing education). Often schools have few teachers.
- **Goal 3 Gender Equality:** Many people still believe girls should not have an education *e.g Pakistan*
- **Goal 4 Reducing child mortality:** The MDG target of 2/3rds fall has not been met
- **Goal 5 Maternal Mortality:** Mortality ratio has not met the MDG target of 2/3rds reduction
- **Goal 6 Combat Deadly Disease:** Target not met, with much work still to be done
- **Goal 8 Global Partnership:** Progress in different countries has been uneven