

1. Achievements and lessons learnt from the MDGs

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have provided milestones for global, regional and national development efforts. Health has been at their centre, being integral to three of the eight goals.

Member States in the Western Pacific Region made impressive progress on the MDGs, achieving five of the seven health-related targets and advancing significantly towards achieving the remaining two (Table 1). For example, in maternal and child health, increased investments and subsidies to health facilities helped improve skilled attendance at birth.

Strengthened maternal death surveillance and response systems improved information and, in turn, the quality of maternal care and strengthened service delivery. In the fight against tuberculosis (TB), Region-wide implementation of global strategies has cured more than 15 million patients since 2000 and

reduced disease burden by 58% since 1990. In the battle against malaria, all 10 endemic countries in the Region made significant progress through improved vector control, accurate diagnosis, effective treatment and sound programme management. Eight countries reached the target for reducing malaria incidence and nine reached the malaria mortality target. In moving towards malaria elimination, now considered a feasible goal, services need to reach priority groups, including ethnic minorities, migrants, farmers and forest workers in remote areas. The MDGs also mobilized resources and political commitment around priority issues, for example, political support for universal access to drinking-water and sanitation led to the development of national policies in many countries, sector financing plans and human resource strategies in water, sanitation and hygiene for urban and rural areas. Success in reaching the

MDGs shows what is possible through concerted effort on priority public health issues that are supported with solid evidence, sufficient resources and strong monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Nevertheless, some challenges remain – for example, deaths from TB remain unacceptably high – while new challenges loom, such as drug-resistant TB and ensuring adequate financial protection for vulnerable groups. Improvement is also needed in HIV intervention coverage, particularly testing among the most-affected populations. Lessons from the MDGs warn of vertical approaches and a focus on population averages, rather than disparities within populations. Other challenges include a growing noncommunicable disease (NCD) burden, environmental threats that pose health risks and outbreaks that will test the resilience of health systems. ■

MDGs



SDGs



Table 1. Regional overview of progress on the MDGs

TARGET	PROGRESS	Target (%)	Global	AFR	AMR	SEAR	EUR	EMR	WPR
Target 1.C Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	Per cent reduction in proportion of underweight children under 5 years of age, 1990–2015	50	44	35	63	49	85	39	82
Target 4.A Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-5 mortality rate	Per cent reduction in the under-5 mortality rate, 1990–2015	67	53	54	65	64	65	48	74
	Measles immunization coverage among 1-year-old children ^a , 2014	90	85	73	92	84	94	77	97
Target 5.A Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	Per cent reduction in maternal mortality ratio, 1990–2015	75	44	44	49	69	63	54	64
	Births attended by skilled health personnel ^b , 2013	90	73	54	96	59	99	67	95
Target 5.B Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	Antenatal care coverage: at least one visit, 2013	100	88	81	99	84	99	79	95
	Unmet need for family planning, 2015	0	24	55	19	27	28	42	10
Target 6.A Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	Per cent reduction in HIV incidence, 2000–2014	> 0	45	59	28	50	– 16	< – 50	27
Target 6.C Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	Per cent reduction in incidence of malaria, 2000–2015	> 0	37	42	78	49	100	70	65
	Per cent reduction in incidence of tuberculosis, 1990–2014	> 0	17	1	49	17	14	12	48
Target 7.C Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking-water and basic sanitation	Per cent reduction in proportion of population without access to improved drinking-water sources, 1990–2015	50	62	38	62	74	67	39	84
	Per cent reduction in proportion of population without access to improved sanitation, 1990–2015	50	31	7	47	32	28	54	54

Notes: AFR, African Region; AMR, Region of the Americas; SEAR, South-East Asia Region; EUR, European Region; EMR, Eastern Mediterranean Region; WPR, Western Pacific Region.

a. Target for measles immunization coverage was set by the World Health Assembly.

b. Target for births attended by skilled health personnel was set by the International Conference on Population and Development.

Source: Health in 2015: from MDGs to SDGs. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (p. 5).