

# WHAT AFTER THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) IN 2015? ACHIEVEMENTS OF MDGs, FUTURE PROSPECTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIA



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## I. BACKGROUND: THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS):

### ACHIEVEMENTS IN INDIA SO FAR

#### The MDGs

In 2000, the representatives of 189 states met at the UN Millennium Summit and signed the Millennium Declaration. The objectives of this declaration are founded on basic human rights: health, education, shelter, and livelihood security. Its signatories agreed to achieve specific goals (Millennium Development Goals or MDGs) within a fixed period of time: 15 years. The MDGs attempt to achieve the reduction of

#### THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY & HUNGER

GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

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hunger, poverty, infant and maternal mortality, reversal of the spread of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and basic primary education by 2015. Under the 8 goals, 18 specific targets were set as quantitative benchmarks for attaining the goals.

The Millennium Development Goals aimed at a partnership between rich and poor nations: Less developed countries pledged to strengthen policies and governance mechanisms, while richer countries pledged to provide aid and resources. With this visionary document, for the first time, governments on a national level and international institutions on a global level, e.g. the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), regional development banks, etc., admitted accountability for ensuring progress towards achieving these goals.

#### Achievements and Shortcomings in India

When the Government of India agreed to the MDGs, it had optimistically announced that the targets would be reached ahead of the 2015 deadline. Today, in 2013, India is still lagging behind in the areas of *poverty ratio, infant mortality, hunger and malnutrition*. India is still home to nearly a quarter of the world's poor, one third of the world's underweight children, millions that do not have access to health and secure livelihoods and, 42% of households without latrines globally (UNICEF; Government Report 2013).

#### Severe shortcomings:

1. While India was required to reduce the child mortality rate to 42 per thousand live births by 2015, the current estimates suggest that it would be around 52 by the end of the MDG deadline.
2. India is expected to reduce the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015 to 109 per one lakh births. The latest data suggests that MMR would come down to 139 per one lakh births by 2015 from 437 in 1990. Nonetheless, according to "State of the World's Mothers" report by Save the Children, India has the highest incidence of maternal deaths: 56,000 mothers die in India annually.

On the other hand, there are also positive trends in certain social indicators; most notably, new figures released in July 2013 by the Planning Commission of India show that poverty incidence has declined from 37.2% in 2004-05 to 21.9% in 2011-12. This means that goal 1 – eradication of extreme poverty – will be



Figure 1: Maternal and child health remain a main issue in India

achieved. However, development activists and independent experts have raised serious concerns about the benchmarks set to measure poverty. Furthermore, there is near eradication of polio, a significant increase in literacy rates and the enrolment rates, of both boys and girls, in primary school (UNICEF). India is making efforts to achieve 100% primary education and, according to the Indian government, gender parity among children was achieved in 2007-08. *The disparity in secondary education is set to disappear by 2015* (Government report, 2013).

There are two prominent trends in India: impressive economic growth and wealth creation on the one hand and, stagnation in key social indicators, particularly among disadvantaged populations, on the other. The rapid growth of the economy since the early 1990s and the Government of India's (GoI) increased commitment to accelerating social development present a unique opportunity.

## II. THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

### Towards a new Agenda

While there have been positive outcomes, the MDGs have also been criticised. It was, for instance, often mentioned that the goals were too broad and more disaggregation was needed in order to achieve concrete, tangible changes and progression. Furthermore there was criticism that the MDGs were

Goals and Targets	Africa		Asia				Oceania	Latin America & the Caribbean	Caucasus & Central Asia
	Northern	Sub-Saharan	Eastern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western			

### GOAL 1 | Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Reduce extreme poverty by half	low poverty	very high poverty	moderate poverty*	moderate poverty	very high poverty	low poverty	very high poverty	low poverty	low poverty
Productive and decent employment	large deficit in decent work	very large deficit in decent work	large deficit in decent work	large deficit in decent work	very large deficit in decent work	large deficit in decent work	very large deficit in decent work	moderate deficit in decent work	moderate deficit in decent work
Reduce hunger by half	low hunger	very high hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger	high hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger

### GOAL 2 | Achieve universal primary education

Universal primary schooling	high enrolment	moderate enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	—	high enrolment	high enrolment
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### GOAL 3 | Promote gender equality and empower women

Equal girls' enrolment in primary school	close to parity	close to parity	close to parity	parity	parity	close to parity	close to parity	parity	parity
Women's share of paid employment	low share	medium share	high share	medium share	low share	low share	medium share	high share	high share
Women's equal representation in national parliaments	low representation	moderate representation	moderate representation	low representation	low representation	low representation	very low representation	moderate representation	low representation

### GOAL 4 | Reduce child mortality

Reduce mortality of under-five-year-olds by two thirds	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality
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### GOAL 5 | Improve maternal health

Reduce maternal mortality by three quarters	low mortality	very high mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	high mortality	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	low mortality
Access to reproductive health	moderate access	low access	high access	moderate access	moderate access	moderate access	low access	high access	moderate access

### GOAL 6 | Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	low incidence	high incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	intermediate incidence
Halt and reverse the spread of tuberculosis	low mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality

### GOAL 7 | Ensure environmental sustainability

Have proportion of population without improved drinking water	high coverage	low coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage	high coverage	high coverage	low coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage
Have proportion of population without sanitation	high coverage	very low coverage	low coverage	low coverage	very low coverage	moderate coverage	very low coverage	moderate coverage	high coverage
Improve the lives of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	very high proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	high proportion of slum-dwellers	high proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	—

### GOAL 8 | Develop a global partnership for development

Internet users	high usage	moderate usage	high usage	high usage	moderate usage	high usage	low usage	high usage	high usage
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The progress chart operates on two levels. The words in each box indicate the present degree of compliance with the target. The colours show progress towards the target according to the legend below:

- Target already met or expected to be met by 2015.
- Progress insufficient to reach the target if prevailing trends persist.
- No progress or deterioration.
- Missing or insufficient data.

\* Poverty progress for Eastern Asia is assessed based on China's data only.

For the regional groupings and country data, see [mdgs.un.org](http://mdgs.un.org). Country experiences in each region may differ significantly from the regional average. Due to new data and revised methodologies, this Progress Chart is not comparable with previous versions.

Sources: United Nations, based on data and estimates provided by: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Inter-Parliamentary Union; International Labour Organization; International Telecommunication Union; UNAIDS; UNESCO; UN-Habitat; UNICEF; UN Population Division; World Bank; World Health Organization – based on statistics available as of June 2013.

Compiled by Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations.

set by countries in the North while developing countries did not get an adequate chance to participate in the process. In September 2010 UN member states initiated steps towards advancing the development agenda beyond 2015. In January 2012, Ban Ki Moon, the Secretary General, established a UN System Task Team to coordinate preparations beyond 2015. This Task Team published its first report ("Realizing the Future We Want for ALL") in June 2012 which outlined the vision of the United Nations on the global development agenda beyond 2015.

A related process was the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio+20). In June 2012, governments agreed on launching a UN-led process to create a set of universal Sustainable



Figure 2 : To "leave no one behind" is one of the main aspects of the post-2015 agenda

Development Goals (SDGs). The idea of sustainable development is based on the integration of and the balance between the social, economic, and environmental goals, in both public and private decision making. The concept of a green economy focuses primarily on the intersection between the environment and the economy.

In July 2012, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon announced a 27 member High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The Panel pointed out a severe gap between reality and the statistical targets. They found that for the successful elimination of poverty, the post-2015 agenda should reflect the concerns of people, instead of discussing the issue merely on an academic level. With this aim the Panel launched a campaign in which it interacted with people living in poverty, those otherwise suffering and, those whose voices go unheard. Panel members not only interacted with academics and politicians but also directly spoke with farmers, indigenous communities, migrants, workers, people with disabilities, young people, trade unions, women's groups and old people. Furthermore, they got recommendations from 5000 civil society organizations. The UN High level report concluded that the post-2015 agenda is a universal agenda. It needs to be driven by five big, transformative shifts:

1. Leave no one behind: No person – especially vulnerable groups and minorities – must be denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities.
2. Put sustainable development at the core: Social solutions must be found for climate change and environmental degradation- developed countries play a special role in this.
3. Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth: Only sustainable patterns of consumption and production, equal opportunities for all, access to quality education and skills, healthcare, clean water, electricity, telecommunications and transport can lead to the end of poverty.
4. Build peace and effective, open and accountable Public Institutions: Good governance, responsive and legitimate institutions, the rule of law and transparency are of fundamental importance.

5. Forge a new global partnership: Mutual respect and mutual benefits are keys to effectively fight climate change, champion free and fair trade and benefit from technological innovation.

#### Actors involved

- National Governments have a central role to play in ensuring universal human rights as they decide national targets, policies, plans and regulations that will translate visions and goals into a practical reality.
- International Institutions like the United Nations will take a lead in ensuring the course of action to be taken for development funds, programmes and specialized agencies.
- Business can drive economic growth. Firms can create job opportunities and help the 470 million who will enter the job market by 2030, escape poverty. Big businesses can build the infrastructure that connects people to modern economy.
- Civil Society organizations give a voice to people living in poverty, including women, children and people with disabilities. CSOs ensure that the government and businesses develop sustainable practices.
- Foundations, other Philanthropists and social Impact Investors can form bridges between government bureaucracies, international institutions and businesses and even CSOs.
- Scientists and academics can make scientific and technological progress which will lead us to

sustainable development and ensure the fulfilment of the post-2015 agenda. This requires universities, colleges, and skilled workers in all the countries.

### THE 12 NEW GOALS

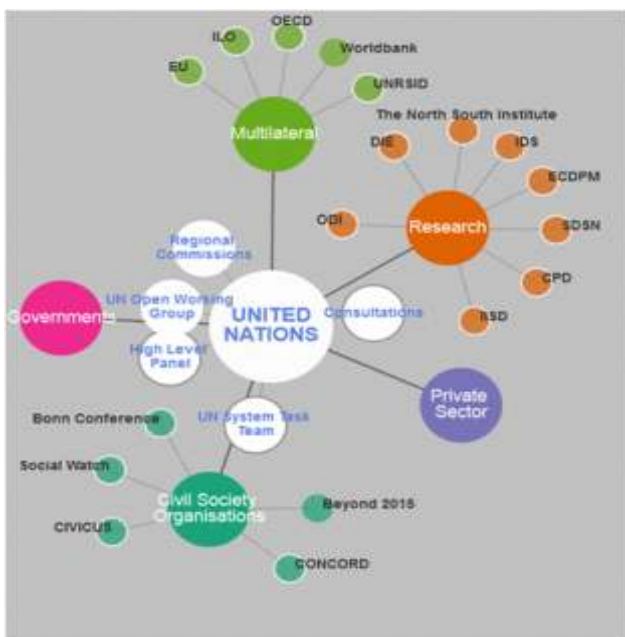
- GOAL 1: End Poverty
- GOAL 2: Empower Girls and Women and achieve Gender Equality
- GOAL 3: Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning
- GOAL 4: Ensure Healthy Lives
- GOAL 5: Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition
- GOAL 6: Achieve Universal Access to Water and Sanitation
- GOAL 7: Secure Sustainable Energy
- GOAL 8: Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods and Equitable Growth
- GOAL 9: Manage Natural Resources Assets Sustainably
- GOAL 10: Ensure Good Governance and Effective Institutions
- GOAL 11: Ensure Stable and Peaceful Societies
- GOAL 12: Create a Global Enduring Environment and Catalyze Long-Term Finance

- People will play central role in new global partnership, if they get the freedom to voice their views and participate in decisions that affect their lives. This is done through access to media and information. It will force governments to be accountable and business to be responsible.

### III. CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE TO THE UN HIGHLEVELPANELREPORT

On May 2013, the UN High Level Panel published its Report with recommendations for a new global development framework commencing in the year 2015. The High Level formulated 12 illustrative goals.

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan – a national campaign, comprising of over 4000 civil society organisations, grassroots organisations and networks that monitors the promises made by the government to meet its policy commitments including the MDGs – anchored



Source: [www.thebrokeronline.eu](http://www.thebrokeronline.eu)

a process of building consensus around a civil society position on the UN's High Level Panel Report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It brought together several groups to discuss the Report and discuss the civil society response to the UN High Level Panel Report. Jointly drafted by Wada Na Todo Abhiyan along with *Save the Children India*, *National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People* and *National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights*, the Civil Society Response has been endorsed by 30 national organisations, coalitions and networks.<sup>1</sup>

The Civil Society Response commends the Panel

for its efforts to reach out to a diverse set of stakeholders and make the process participatory. It welcomes the highlighting of human rights as well as concerns of the socially excluded. It is appreciated that the report uses clear formulations on ending violence against women, ending child marriage, ensuring equal rights for women to own and inherit property, peace, accountable governance, curbing tax evasion and illicit financial flows. Furthermore the report clearly talks of civil society's role in political decision-making and incorporates much of the language that originates from the civil society.

### APPRECIATION

- Not merely “reduction” but “end” of poverty for all groups of people.
- Universality of development as a human right.
- Acknowledgement of the exclusion of marginalized groups, especially people with disabilities.
- Acknowledgement of the failure of MDGs to reach the most marginalized.
- Call for global partnership based on the principles of equity, sustainability, solidarity and humanity.
- Attention to environmental protection.
- Criticality of improving governance systems and ensuring stable and peaceful societies.
- Panel's call for a “Data Revolution”.
- Call to address corruption and step up domestic resource mobilization. Clear mention of the need to do away with illicit flows, tax evasion and to increase stolen-asset recovery.

### CONCERNS WITH THE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Panel has not tackled inequality directly by way of a separate goal, there is no universal definition of inequality, and no specific methods of measurement in order to guide and hold national governments accountable.
- The language of human rights, non-discrimination and social inclusion is greatly diluted.
- There is no commitment to free and universal health coverage. Addressing basic challenges to a decent quality of life for all is crucial for adoption of a human rights frame.
- There is no reflection on disability in the report. This is a pressing concern as the UN itself notes that people with disabilities comprise 20 percent of the world's poorest.
- Ageing and rights of the elderly do not find any mention in the document. They are a section of the population that is most vulnerable to abuse and deprivation.
- There is a lack of clarity as to how sustainable development brings peace when justice is missing from the overarching framework.
- Merely stating “swift reduction” in corruption is in no way a pointer to “zero tolerance” to corruption. A zero-target approach would have been reassuring in this regard. Furthermore recommendations for more progressive tax regimes would have been appreciated.

<sup>1</sup> The Civil Society Response is available online: <http://www.wadanatodo.net/response-hlp-report.asp#.Ue4nl9JHK-0>

However, concerns are expressed regarding the “neoliberal core” of the report. For instance, the shift towards “partnership” is defined as turning to the private sector and civil society “within market principles.” Unfortunately there is no clear articulation of corporate accountability and it remains unclear who comes within the ambit of the “data revolution” that the report calls for. The role of the state and state institutions is minimised as it is only a “partner” when it comes to the issues of corruption, data revolution, and public accountability. The inadequate focus on inequality and intersectionalities is disappointing.

#### IV. CALL FOR ACTION

The discussion on the post-2015/post-MDGs process presents a vital opportunity for India to play a leadership role in international affairs. India has the chance to address key domestic challenges as well as to shape global norms in ways that protect its interests. We must not miss this opportunity. India must therefore take active steps in engaging with the post-2015 agenda.

What needs to be done at the international level?

1. The Ministry of External Affairs is the nodal government Ministry on the post-2015 development agenda and we suggest that they consult relevant line ministries and State governments and commission a white paper on its own recommendations, which can then be deliberated in the public sphere.
2. We suggest the government find ways to engage with the civil society proactively by receiving inputs on the new development frame and evaluating the progress made in terms of actual implementation through government interventions. For instance, this could be operationalised through setting up a Working Group on the Post-2015 Agenda.
3. The government should go beyond traditional civil society to engage faith-based groups, trade unions and people’s movements in any discussion on development framework. Additionally, India should work towards building collaborations with other similarly placed countries in the international negotiations.

#### V. HOW CAN PARLIAMENTARIANS ENGAGE IN THE POST-2015 AGENDA SETTING?

- Raise public awareness around MDGs and participate in campaigns at national and local levels
- Collaborate with civil society to develop and strengthen innovative partnerships
- Monitor and influence the local government’s development policies and actions
- Influence government, social / religious / local leaders and public officials to take positive action and hold themselves accountable for progress in local development
- Encourage and establish public forums to debate issues related to human development. Use the constituency office and political party meetings to debate issues with communities and develop consensus on national policies
- As law makers or decision makers, MPs can design, adopt and oversee the implementation of legislation and government programmes/policy
- As overseers of government activities, MPs can monitor the progress and ground level commitment of the government towards the achievement of holistic human development.
- Ensure that adequate and cost effective funding is provided to state governments to meet the objectives of the various schemes and programmes
- Individual MPs can raise issues pertaining to MDGs in Parliament through Questions and other parliamentary measures, including utilisation of concerned Parliamentary Committees
- Parliamentarians needs to integrate the MDGs and the evolving set of recommendations towards the new development frame after 2015 within debates and scrutinise government policy decisions and their implementation on an ongoing basis, in order to ensure that the government is meeting its obligations to achieve inclusive human development
- Organise debates on MDGs, their effectiveness and coherence under the mandate of the Parliamentary Committees, and the

implementation of social programmes corresponding to the MDGs; organise seminars on budgets, assessment and monitoring of implementation of the Goals

- Ensure that the Parliament scrutinises all government policies to clarify whether they are consistent with national and international development objectives
- Take the initiative to establish a country-wide network of legislators geared towards looking at the new development framework that will become applicable from 2015 when the current MDGs will cease to exist
- Use international conferences and meetings as platforms to raise concerns about the obligations of more developed countries to increase the quality of aid, aid volume and effectiveness

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Newsletter: August-September, 2013

What after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015?

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### *Published by:*

Centre for Legislative Research and Advocacy (CLRA), an organisation of expertise in parliamentary development, political party management and legislative advocacy, is the hosting/implementing organisation of the IMPF and PG-MDGs.