REFLECTIONS ON THE MDG: PATH TO 2015 AND THE EVOLVING DEVELOPMENT AGENDA BEYOND 2015

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Shaping a new Vision of Education
9-11 May 2012, Bangkok, Thailand
Asia-Pacific and the MDG

Select Findings of the Asia - Pacific MDG Report 2011/12 (ESCAP/ADB/UNDP)

• Impressive but uneven progress
• Particular challenges in achieving health and nutrition targets
• Accelerated progress crucial for countries lagging behind
  • Large gaps in achievement across countries, which are widening in some cases
• National efforts also need to target disadvantaged population groups
  • Within-country disparities as large as cross-country disparities
## Progress in Achieving MDG Targets: A Mixed Picture

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<th>Goal</th>
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<td>Basic sanitation</td>
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- Early achiever
- On track
- Slow
- Regressing/No progress

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG Database and World Population Prospects 2010; UNESCO Institute of Statistics for the education-related indicators under Goals 2 and 3, except ‘Reaching last grade’.
Impressive progress

• Asia and the Pacific is an early achiever or is on-track for some targets:
  • Reduced the proportion of people living on less than $1.25 per day from 50 to 22 per cent
  • On gender, successfully reduced gender inequality in primary, secondary and tertiary education
  • On health, begun to reduce the prevalence of HIV and has stopped the spread of tuberculosis
  • On the environment, increased the proportion of land area that is covered by forests or has protected status, while also reduced the consumption of ozone-depleting substances
  • At the household level, more than halved the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water
On the other hand, the region is still lagging in some major areas particularly those related to health

• The region is behind schedule for ten of the 22 indicators assessed in this report.
• The region still needs to:
  • Eradicate hunger
  • Reduce child mortality
  • Improve maternal health
  • Extend basic sanitation sufficiently rapidly
  • Ensure that all children complete primary school
  • Reduce CO2 emissions.
Extent of Disparities Between Countries

• There are wide disparities in MDG outcomes between countries. This is evident from the figures below.
Disparities between countries over time: select picture

- In many cases, such disparities are widening over time
- This is true for extreme poverty, child hunger, child mortality, maternal mortality and TB incidence - as shown in the Table below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Earlier Year</th>
<th>Gini coefficient</th>
<th>Later Year</th>
<th>Gini coefficient</th>
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<td>1 $1.25 per day poverty</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>0.426</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0.452</td>
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<td>2 Underweight children</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>0.296</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>0.454</td>
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<td>3 Under-5 mortality</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>0.387</td>
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<td>4 Maternal mortality</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>0.579</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0.593</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 TB incidence</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>0.405</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0.447</td>
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Source: Staff calculation based on the United Nations MDG database.
Key lesson learnt for MDG Acceleration: Critical to recognize and work through the inter-linkages

MDG need to viewed as multi-dimensional interdependent and multi-sectoral in nature

• *Education especially of women and girls influences MDG across the board:*
  • Improves the prospects of employment/earnings and helps in poverty reduction
  • Helps achieve better health outcomes (educated mother’s tend to take better care of themselves/health of the infant through appropriate exclusive breastfeeding norms)
• *Gender acts as a MDG multiplier*
• Redouble efforts to MDG 2015: need to roll out the MDG Acceleration Agenda with equity and work to close the gaps on disparities both inter-country and intra-country

• The world now has adequate knowledge of what works, what does not and why (the bottlenecks which impede progress): equity and quality issues take centre stage on 2015 MDG targets: apply equally to education and health MDGs

• UN tools such as the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) and the Breakthrough Strategy offer concrete ways of accelerating MDG progress with government buy in and UN wide support
MDG and the development agenda beyond 2015: Update and Some Reflections
UN Task Team on Post 2015 UN Development Agenda

• Jointly led by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UN Development Programme

• Leads system wide preparations for the post-2016 UN development agenda with support from all UN agencies and in consultation with relevant stakeholders

• The mandate is to ground the post 2015 agenda on a critical evaluation of the MDG framework, what has worked well and areas for improvement especially in the light of emerging issues

• The evaluation and Report is ongoing with an expected formation of a high level panel to make recommendations after Rio +20

• UNDG led national and thematic consultations ongoing
A UN idea that ‘changed’ the world: galvanized political commitment
Concrete, time bound targets anchored in human development
Provided a robust basis for international development assistance

Crafted in a top down technocratic manner
Were not well contextualized and missed out on important development challenges
Not integrated with any resource framework
‘Minimum’ Development Goals? MDG 8 lacked will and ownership?
MDG beyond 2015: Some reflections

Extrapolate MDG beyond 2015 and complete the unfinished agenda

- Need to account for the changed development landscape and emerging global realities (growing inequities, economic crises, climate change in particular)
- Learn from experience

Expand the Agenda to new goals and targets

- Stiff choices and tough trade offs for global consensus
- The Rio+20 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must build from MDGs and not seek to overburden the MDGs
- New targets should have conceptual clarity, be measurable, and have robust data
MDG beyond 2015 should be informed and crafted through a broad based, inclusive, bottoms up consultative process with a sub-national, national, regional and global canvas iteratively and interactively.

The global goals should be amenable to being tailored to national and local contexts.

Tough trade-offs between comprehensiveness and conciseness of the beyond 2015 agenda would require strong gatekeeping which should be UN led.

Resources need to be complemented with appropriate cross-sectoral policies, strategies and institutions to optimally address the inter-linkages synergistically.
• Thank you for your attention!

Feedback: biplove.choudhary@undp.org

Key References:

• ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional MDG Report 2011/12: Accelerating Equitable Achievement of the MDGs: Closing Gaps in Health and Nutrition