

Millennium Development Goals – A Progress Report on Nigeria

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Abstract

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are 8 international goals that were officially established following the millennium summit of the United Nations in 2000. Using Nigeria as a case study, there has been massive strides in attaining goals 1 to 6 while there has not been visible improvements in attaining goals 7 and 8. It is imperative for focus to shift to the rural areas where there is a higher demand for provision of basic healthcare and environmental infrastructure if these targets are to be met by 2015. Most importantly, the issues of poverty, universal basic education and health, and provision of safe drinking water will go a long way to improving the quality of life of over 160 million Nigerians.

Introduction

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are 8 international goals that were officially established following the millennium summit of the United Nations in 2000, as well as the adoption of the United Nation Millennium Declaration. The MDGs caught the world's imagination from the very day they were agreed by a record of 189 countries and 23 international organization at the UN General Assembly in September 2000, agreed to achieving those target. Each goal has agreed targets and indicators to track the progress made by each of the countries. Table 1 below shows the goals set at the millennium summit and the corresponding targets and indicators.

Goal targets indicators

Table 1: Millennium development goals(Available at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org>)

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 1A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day • Target 1B: Achieve Decent Employment for Women, Men, and Young People • Target 1C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty gap ratio [incidence X depth of poverty] • Share of poorest quintile in national consumption • GDP Growth per Employed Person • Employment Rate • Proportion of employed population below \$1.25 per day (PPP values) • Proportion of family-based workers in employed population • Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age • Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 2A: By 2015, all children can complete a full course of primary schooling, girls and boys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment in primary education • Completion of primary education
Goal 3: Promote gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 3A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education

and empower women	and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of women in wage employment in the nonagricultural sector • Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 4A: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-five mortality rate • Infant (under 1) mortality rate • Proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles
Goal 5: Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 5A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio • Target 5B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternal mortality ratio • Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel • Contraceptive prevalence rate • Adolescent birth rate • Antenatal care coverage • Unmet need for family planning
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 6A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS • Target 6B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it • Target 6C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV prevalence among population aged 15–24 years • Condom use at last high-risk sex • Proportion of population aged 15–24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS • Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs • Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria • Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide treated bed nets • Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate antimalarial drugs • Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis • Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short Course)
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 7A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs; reverse loss of environmental resources • Target 7B: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss • Target 7C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of land area covered by forest • CO2 emissions, total, per capita and per \$1 GDP (PPP) • Consumption of ozone depleting substances • Proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits • Proportion of total water resources used • Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected • Proportion of species threatened

	<p>population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 7D: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers 	<p>with extinction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural • Proportion of urban population with access to improved sanitation • Proportion of urban population living in slums
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 8A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system • Target 8B: Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) • Target 8C: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States • Target 8D: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term • Target 8E: In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries • Target 8F: In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally • Includes: tariff and quota free access for LDC exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA (Official Development Assistance) for countries committed to poverty reduction • Through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly • Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. • Official development assistance (ODA): • Net ODA, total and to LDCs, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' GNI • Proportion of total sector allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation) • Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied • ODA received in landlocked countries as proportion of their GNIs • ODA received in small island developing States as proportion of their GNIs • Market access:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and from LDCs, admitted free of duty • Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries • Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as percentage of their GDP • Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity • Debt sustainability: • Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative) • Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative, US\$ • Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services • Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis • Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population • Personal computers in use per 100 population • Internet users per 100 Population
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One thing of note is that progress has been uneven among countries and disparities vary across board for all the goals. Nigeria was an enthusiastic signatory to the MDGs and has claimed to pursue them vigorously since then, though with varying degrees of success. While MDGs are for all mankind, they are primarily about children, in part because children are the most vulnerable when essentials like food, water, and healthcare are scarce. Children are always the first victims, six of the eight goals relates directly to children. In order to meet the goals, the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the Millennium Development Goals (OSSAPMDGs) was created in 2005 to provide guidance, coordination and oversight of the debt-relief gains (DRGs) while working alongside partners and other actors. The Senior Special Assistant to the President is supported by a Director and Heads of Desks, who are in charge of supervision and policy formulation and implementation of various initiatives and programmes designed to achieve the MDGs. Since its creation, OSSAP-MDGs had concentrated its efforts on the provision of additional funding to critical sectors to improve Nigeria's chances of meeting the MDGs.

This review seeks to analyze the progress made by the policy stakeholders to ensure that the set targets are met before 2015.

Objectives

The aim of the report is to assess the progress made so far by Nigeria to ensure that the set millennium development goals are met by 2015. Data was sourced from the Nigerian intergovernmental agencies as well as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Nigeria. It is important to note that the first report on Millennium development goals in Nigeria was published in 2004. Subsequently, two updated reports have been published in 2010 and 2014.

Discussion

The aim of the first goal is to reduce extreme poverty and hunger. Nigeria is still far from Target 1A which aims to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than a dollar. Presently, Nigeria has 61.2% of people living on incomes less than \$1 a day where the MDG target is 21.4%. Poverty eradication programmes have not been able to reduce unemployment rates and it remains a socioeconomic burden. The Economic Transformation Agenda hopes to focus more attention on agriculture, electricity generation and infrastructure development which in turn, should stimulate the economy to provide jobs to most of the 23% of unemployed Nigerians. However, Nigeria has been able to maintain its stance in meeting this target of reducing the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and prevalence of underweight children through the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Some of these measures include subsidized sales of fertilizers, seeds and agricultural equipment to farmers, strengthening of distribution chain of staple foods and crops, as well as training of farmers on the importance of mechanized farming. Efforts have also been geared towards reducing imports of agricultural products and encouraging local produce for nationwide consumption via poverty eradication programmes. The efforts of this programme has been recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations which listed Nigeria as one of the countries set to meet the target of reducing hunger by half among its population.

The second goal aims to achieve universal primary education. The policies put in place by the federal government have increased access to basic primary education through enrolment of children. According to the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, enrolment of children into primary schools has increased from 68% in 1999 to 89% in 2012 while the literacy rate for 15-24 year olds has risen from 60% in 2000 to 80% in 2008. The government through the OSSAP-MDGs has also reviewed the Federal Teachers' scheme and continuous training for teachers to improve the quality of teaching. It is hoped that these efforts will ensure that the set target of 100% is achieved. A major issue to be addressed is the retention of female children in school until completion in some parts of the country.

The third goal seeks to promote gender equality and empower women to be role models and decision makers in positions of power. There has been a steady increase in the number of girls attaining primary, secondary and tertiary education which has seen a ratio of 9 girls for every 10 boys in school. The proportion of seats held by women in parliament has also risen from 1% in 1990 to 7% in 2012. This is a remarkable feat that has been recorded through collaboration between the federal and state governments and implementation of the National Gender Policy. However, this figures is still far from the target of 35% set to be implemented by the National Gender Policy.

The fourth goal aims to reduce the infant mortality rate by as much as 66% by the year 2015. Between 1990 and 2012, there has been a reduction in number of infant deaths from 91 deaths per 1000 live births to 61 deaths per 1000 live births. Under-five mortality has also dropped from 191 deaths per 1000 live births to 94 deaths per 1000 live births while there has been a marginal increase of one-year old children immunized against measles from 46% to 61%. The Federal Government has recognised that these activities fall short of the target set and has adopted the integrated maternal, newborn and child health strategy in order to meet the 2015 deadline.

The fifth goal targets improvement and access to maternal health in the population. Nigeria has fared considerably well in the reduction of maternal mortality from 1000 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 350 deaths in 100,000 live births in 2012. The proportion of births handled by skilled health personnel has also risen marginally from 45% in 1990 to 53% in 2012. This activity is being catalyzed by the implementation of the Midwives Service Scheme which involves the training of community health workers on basic skills for the provision of maternal and child health services. This scheme is targeted at the rural areas where access to quality healthcare is not available and this has helped to reduce the number of births that take place at home. It has also increased antenatal coverage from 61% in 2004 to 67.7% in 2012 (at least one visit by any provider) and 47% in 2004 to 57.7% in 2012 (at least four visits by any provider). Efforts are still underway to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015 although the indicators show improvement from the baselines. However, challenges such as cultural and religious barriers limit access of these services at the grassroots level.

The sixth millennium development goal focuses on the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The government with funding assistance from international health agencies have been able to halt the spread of HIV. The indicator shows that HIV prevalence among pregnant women 15-24 years old has reduced from 5.4% in 2000 to 4.1% in 2010. The measures put in place include provision of contraceptives and family planning services, testing platforms for diagnosis, availability of antiretroviral drugs and counseling services. However, access to comprehensive information on HIV/AIDS and reported use of condoms by people aged 15-24 years is still low and might not be met by 2015. Malaria is one of the leading causes of mortality in Nigeria with 90% of the population at risk. One of the preventive strategies has been the use of long lasting insecticide treated nets (LLINs). The proportion of children under five years of age sleeping under LLINs has risen from 5.5% in 2008 to 18.0% in 2011. To date, a total of 46,903,594

Long-lasting insecticide-treated nets (LLINs) have been distributed to populations at risk of malaria. In addition, the government is intensifying efforts in diagnosis and malaria prevention in pregnancy through affordable and available artemisinin-based therapy. There has also been a steady progress in the reduction of prevalence of tuberculosis deaths even though the country is categorized as a high burden for the disease. The latest figures show a drop in mortality rates from 15.74 per 100,000 in 2000 to 5.0 per 100,000 in 2012.

The seventh goal aims to ensure environmental sustainability and sadly enough, not much success has been achieved. Safe drinking water and sanitation remain unresolved probably as a result of lack of implementation of policies and funding. The government has also done little to improve the living conditions of slum dwellers because of population expansion at the urban level and increased unemployment rate. Environmental challenges such as flooding and bush burning have also frustrated efforts at halting the spread of deforestation which has affected wildlife and the environmental ecosystem.

The eight goal seeks to develop a global partnership for development. Even though a large chunk of Nigeria's external debt was written off by the Paris Club in 2005, the money meant to service these debts have not been adequately channeled into the social sector to meet the millennium target goals. As a developing country, there is need to still seek for donor aid and assistance to tackle the socioeconomic problems. However, access to internet and telephony services have improved due to privatization of the telecommunications sector. According to the National Communications Commission, 30 in every 100 people have access to the internet while 60 in every 100 people have access to telephone services.

Conclusion

There has been massive strides in attaining goals 1 to 6 while there has not been visible improvements in attaining goals 7 and 8. It is imperative for focus to shift to the rural areas where there is a higher demand for provision of basic healthcare and environmental infrastructure if these targets are to be met by 2015. Most importantly, the issues of poverty,

universal basic education and health, and provision of safe drinking water will go a long way to improving the quality of life of over 160 million Nigerians. The data collection methods should be consistent and reliable for easy interpretation and accurate decision making.

It is expected that the various policies, if properly implemented and funded will help to prepare the country for socioeconomic development after 2015.

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