

The Millennium Development Goals Report



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Women's and children's lives improving in Caucasus and Central Asia with advances on Millennium Development Goals

BUT POVERTY, HIV AND AIDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY REMAIN BIG CHALLENGES, UN REPORT SAYS

MOSCOW, 7 JULY 2011 — Countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia continue to advance on gender equality and maternal and child health, but the region falls short on reducing poverty, minimizing new HIV infections and sustaining water resources, according to a UN report.

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, launched today by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in Geneva, finds mixed results for the Caucasus and Central Asia region, which includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Child mortality declined substantially in the Caucasus and Central Asia, according to the MDG Report 2011, dropping from a rate of 78 per cent in 1990 to 37 per cent in 2009. Progress was also made towards reducing maternal deaths in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The region's maternal mortality ratio fell from 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 54 in 2008, making it the second lowest level of maternal mortality among all developing regions. However, gains made in the 1990s to reduce adolescent fertility have stalled since 2000 and the adolescent birth rate remained at 29 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 in 2008.

STRIDES FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

According to the report, the region also made significant progress in women's participation in politics. The proportion of seats held by women in parliament rose from 7 per cent in 2000 to 16 per cent in 2011.

Women in the region continue to participate almost as much as men in paid work, with the proportion of female employees in non-agricultural employment reaching 45 per cent in 2009, the highest among all developing regions, an exemplary trend since 1990.

Equality in education also is very advanced in the Caucasus and Central Asia, according to the report. The region has achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education, and at the tertiary education level, enrolments for girls are even higher than for boys.

However, the region of the Caucasus and Central Asia is not on track to meet the target of halving poverty by 2015, according to the report. Using the latest data available, the report finds the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day – the international poverty line defined by the World Bank – actually increased from 6 per cent to 19 per cent between 1990 and 2005.

And on health, the Caucasus and Central Asia was the only region where the incidence of new HIV infections is increasing, the report says. Treatment for HIV and AIDS has expanded rapidly, but the proportion of people living with HIV who are receiving antiretroviral therapy remains low, at 26 per cent in 2009 (up from 2 per cent in 2004).

ACCESS TO WATER IS LOW, BUT NEAR UNIVERSAL SANITATION

The region is not on track to meet the target of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water either, which remained steady at 12 per cent between 1990 and 2008, the report says. By contrast, the proportion of people using an improved sanitation facility, such as a toilet or latrine, was the highest among all developing regions, at 95 per cent in 2008.

The region is also approaching water scarcity, as it is withdrawing 56 per cent of its internal renewable water resources. Once the share surpasses 60 per cent, regional water sources will not be enough to meet people's daily needs.

The Millennium Development Goals Report, an annual assessment of regional progress towards the Goals, reflects the most comprehensive, up-to-date data compiled by over 25 organizations both within and outside the UN System. Supervised and coordinated by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Report is produced at the request of the General Assembly. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at mdgs.un.org.

For more information and press materials, see www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

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