

# The Millennium Development Goals Report



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## Northern Africa on track to meet most UN anti-poverty goals *But Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women Lagging Behind*

(Cairo, 23 June 2010) – Northern Africa has already met some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is well on track to meet others, according to a United Nations report issued today.

The percentage of people living on less than \$1.25 a day decreased from 5 to 3 per cent between 1990 and 2005, the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2010* finds, putting the region well on track to reaching the UN poverty reduction target.

The impact of the global financial and economic crisis, however, might have undone some of the progress, increasing the percentage of the employed working as own-account or unpaid family workers from 31 per cent in 2008 to 34 per cent in 2009.

Progress in expanding primary school enrolment and reducing the gender gap in education has been strong, according to the report, ensuring that both girls and boys are enrolled in primary and secondary education. The region also made impressive strides towards reducing child mortality, increasing birth deliveries by skilled health personnel, and expanding access to sanitation.

For Northern Africa, the report notes in particular:

- Primary school enrolment reached 94 per cent in 2008, on track to meet the target of universal enrolment by 2015.
- Child mortality was reduced from 80 child deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 29 in 2008.
- Coverage of deliveries by skilled health personnel expanded considerably from 46 to 80 per cent between 1990 and 2008. The region also experienced a significant decrease in the gap between rural and urban areas: in 1990, women in urban areas were 2.5 times more likely to give birth assisted by a skilled attendant than in rural areas; in 2008 that ratio was only 1.3.
- With 89 per cent of the population using improved sanitation facilities – toilets or latrines – the region has already met the sanitation target. Disparities between rural and urban areas are among the smallest of all regions.

Yet for all its successes, the region still has a long way to go in ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of women, the report finds.

Girls' enrolment in tertiary education continues to lag behind boys. And there has been no progress in the share of women earning income outside the agricultural sector: the percentage has stayed at around 19 per cent since 1990.

Moreover, 53 per cent of employed women hold vulnerable jobs – characterized by inadequate earnings, substandard working conditions and a lack of formal work arrangements and benefits – while among employed men, the proportion is just 28 per cent, the largest gender gap in vulnerable employment among all regions.

Women's representation in parliament rose from 2 per cent of seats in 2000 to 9 per cent in 2010, remaining among the lowest in the world.

At a September UN summit, world leaders will seek agreement on an action agenda to build on successes and close the gaps in achieving all the MDGs by the target year of 2015. More than 100 Heads of State and Government are expected, along with leaders from the private sector, foundations and civil society organizations.

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 UN and international agencies. Produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the report has been designated by the UN General Assembly as an official input to the MDG summit. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at <http://mdgs.un.org>

For more information, press materials and inter-agency media contact list, see [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

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