

The Millennium Development Goals Report



UNITED NATIONS

2014

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7 JULY, 10AM EDT (GMT-4)

Latin America and the Caribbean making strides in women's education, employment and political participation

CARIBBEAN SEES SHARP DROP IN NEW HIV CASES WITH BETTER PROSPECTS TO ACCESS TREATMENT, SAYS UN REPORT

MEXICO CITY, 7 JULY 2014 – The region of Latin America and the Caribbean has achieved parity in primary education between boys and girls, and it is the only developing region in which gender disparity favours girls in both secondary and tertiary education, according to a United Nations report launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York today.

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014, finds that in Latin America and the Caribbean 107 girls will enroll in secondary school institutions for every 100 boys. This difference becomes more pronounced for tertiary education, with 128 girls enrolling for every 100 boys.

The eight MDGs, with a number of sub-targets covering a range of poverty, hunger, health, gender equality, education and environmental indicators, were agreed by all countries as an outgrowth of the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, most with a due date of 2015.

The number of women participating in the job market has also increased, with women holding 44 out of every 100 wage-earning jobs in the non-agricultural sector in 2012. This constitutes the highest gender parity ratio among all developing regions.

Latin America and the Caribbean also has the highest share of women in parliament among developing regions. In 2014, women occupied 26 per cent of seats in national parliaments, up from 15 per cent in 2000. This is also higher than the average share in developed countries, which is 25 per cent. Nicaragua was the global leader, with women holding 57 per cent of ministerial positions. In the Caribbean, the share of women in a single or lower house was 33 per cent.

Some countries in the region are also increasing their commitment to end political violence against women. Bolivia and Mexico, for example, passed legislation to address issues that deter women from taking part in politics such as intimidation, physical assault and other forms of aggression against candidates and elected women.

SHARP DROP IN NEW HIV INFECTIONS AND IMPROVED ACCESS TO TREATMENT

Of all developing regions, the Caribbean has seen the sharpest decline in the number of people newly infected with HIV. New HIV infections fell by more than 50 per cent between 2001 and 2012. In Latin America and the Caribbean, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS, which is commonly understood as the provision of antiretroviral therapy to at least 80 per cent of people living with HIV, is within reach. In 2012, 75 per cent of people living with HIV in the region received the therapy, which was the highest among all developing regions.

The number of new tuberculosis cases fell by 52 per cent between 1990 and 2012, putting the region on track to achieve the MDG target of halting the spread and reversing the incidence of tuberculosis.

The region is also set to meet the MDG hunger reduction target. The proportion of undernourished people in the total population decreased from 15 per cent in 1990-1992 to 8 per cent in 2011-2013. However, disparities remain large among the two sub-regions. In 2011-2013, the prevalence of undernourishment in Latin America was 7 per cent, while it was 19 per cent in the Caribbean.

Among the MDG targets reached are halving extreme poverty and halving the proportion of undernourished children, with the proportion of underweight children under age five declining from 7 per cent to 3 per cent from 1990 to 2012.

The region also reached the drinking water target five years ahead of schedule, with the proportion of the population using an improved water source increasing from 85 per cent to 94 per cent between 1990 and 2012. The region is also very close to achieving the target of halving the proportion of the population without basic sanitation.

Latin America and the Caribbean have also reduced their under-five mortality rate by 65 per cent between 1990 and 2012, bringing them closer to achieving their target. The mortality rate for children under five dropped from 54 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 19 in 2012.

In addition, coverage of antenatal care in the Caribbean is one of the highest among all developing regions: in 2012, as many as 80 per cent of pregnant women received at least four antenatal care visits during their last pregnancy. However, the adolescent birth rate remains high at 76 births per 1,000 girls in 2011, and has only recently begun to decline. The adolescent birth rate in Latin America declined from 86 births per 1,000 girls in 1990 to 76 in 2011. The adolescent birth rate in the Caribbean declined from 80 births per 1,000 girls in 1990 to 69 in 2011.

The Millennium Development Goals Report, an annual assessment of global and regional progress towards the Goals, reflects the most comprehensive, up-to-date data compiled by over 28 UN and international agencies and is produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at mdgs.un.org

For more information, see www.un.org/millenniumgoals

MEDIA CONTACTS

Mexico City: UN Information Centre
Juan Miguel Diez, jmdiez@un.org.mx, 5255-4000-9727

New York: UN Department of Public Information
Wynne Boelt, boelt@un.org, +1 212 963 8264

Issued by the UN Department of Public Information – DPI/2590 E