



The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals

Background in brief

- **Millennium Summit**
- **Millennium Declaration**

The **Millennium Summit** took place within the 55th session of the UN General Assembly (September 2000). By Resolution 55/2, the 189 participant countries, including Romania, adopted the **United Nations Millennium Declaration**.

The **Millennium Declaration** sets out within a single framework the key challenges facing humanity, outlines a response to these challenges, and establishes concrete measures for judging performance through a set of inter-related commitments, goals and targets on development, governance, peace, security and human rights. These goals are named the **Millennium Development Goals**.

The **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**, based on a series of international conferences and summits that took place in the 1990s, are today the framework agreed upon at the international level for monitoring progress in development. Eradication of poverty through sustainable development is at the core of the MDG philosophy.

Millennium Development Goals

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a Global Partnership for Development

The first seven Millennium Development Goals are inter-related and focus on eradication of poverty in all its forms. The last goal – develop a global partnership for development – considers the means by which the first seven goals are to be achieved and ensures responsibility for achieving the goals is undertaken by both the developed world and the developing world.

Events following the Millennium Summit

- **International Conference on Financing for Development**
- **World Summit on Sustainable Development**

The commitments made at government level by adopting the Millennium Declaration were reinforced and turned into actions at various international events following the Millennium Summit.

The **International Conference on Financing for Development** (March 2002, Monterrey, Mexico) was a significant step towards an expanded collaboration between developed and developing countries, especially as it identified actions to reach the MDGs, in correlation with existing resources. During this event, the *Monterrey Consensus* was adopted.

It aims to:

- Mobilise national and international financial resources for development (direct foreign investments and other private flows);
- Develop international trade;
- Strengthen international financial cooperation for development;
- Responsibly address foreign debt and improve coherence of the international monetary, financial and trade system, to favour development.

The **World Summit on Sustainable Development** (September 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa) reiterated the importance of the millennium development goals and established the strategies and actions necessary to reach the MDGs. The *Implementation Plan* that was adopted approaches the following areas of action:

- Poverty eradication;
- Modifying unviable consumption and production patterns;
- Preserving natural resources and ecosystems;
- Combating globalisation's negative effects;
- Improving the health of the world population;
- Addressing the challenges facing small islands developing States, Africa and other regions.

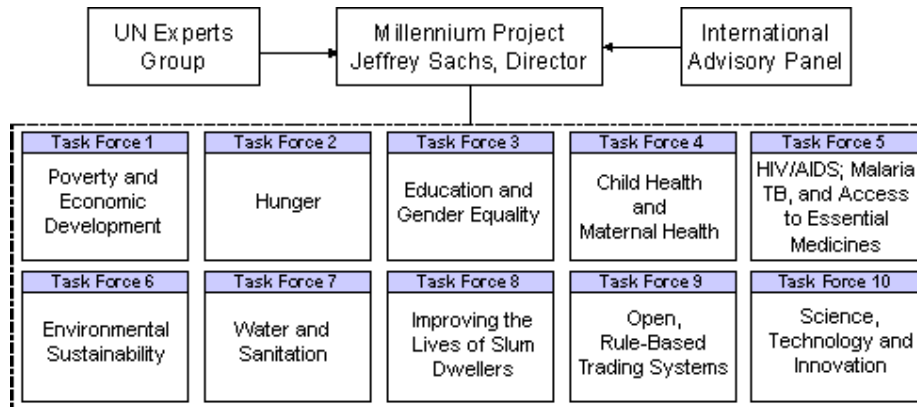
The UN strategy for the Millennium Development Goals

The UN strategy for the Millennium Development Goals has 4 components:

1. The Millennium Project, which analyzes policy options and will develop a plan of implementation for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
2. The Millennium Campaign, which pentru creșterea gradului de conștientizare a problemelor globale ale omenirii, mobilizarea resurselor financiare disponibile și a mobilizes political support for the Millennium Declaration among developed and developing countries. This is led by Evelyn Herfkens, the Secretary-General's Executive Coordinator for the MDG Campaign.
3. Country-level monitoring of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, led by the UN Development Group.
4. Operational country-level activities, coordinated across agencies through the UN Development Group, which help individual countries implement policies necessary for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Project

The Millennium Project will work over a period of three years to devise a recommended plan of implementation that will allow all developing countries to meet the MDGs and thereby substantially improve human condition by 2015. The Millennium Project is directed by Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University, who serves as Special Advisor to the Secretary General on the Millennium Development Goals. Through his involvement, some of the Project's research is conducted at the Earth Institute of Columbia University, which Prof. Sachs directs. The Millennium Project is structured as follows.



The Millennium Project will publish its research findings according to the following timeline:

Late-2002 - Completion of background papers, which map out the planned research work of each Task Force.

Mid-2003 - Publication of the Human Development Report 2003, which will focus on the Millennium Development Goals and draw upon research contributed by the Millennium Project Task Forces.

Mid-2004 - Presentation of the Millennium Project Interim Report to the UN Secretary General and the UNDP Administrator.

June 30, 2005 - Presentation of final recommendations by the Millennium Project to the UN Secretary General.

How will progress be monitored?

- **Targets and indicators**
- **Monitoring levels**

18 targets and 48 indicators were established to measure progress towards the achievement of the eight Millennium Development Goals. It is important to distinguish between goals and targets. The eight goals have a general character (improve maternal health), while most of the 18 targets are quantitative expressions of the goals (reduce by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio).

Examples of indicators irrelevant for Romania:

- Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria;
- Proportion of population below \$ 1 per day.

The 18 targets are the outcome of intergovernmental negotiations and are highly relevant at the global level. However, their applicability is not universal. That is why, to maximize the relevance of the MDGs in each of the 189 Member States, it was agreed to recommend the identification and the use of targets in line with national circumstances, where targets agreed at the global level are already met or when applicability of those targets is very low.

The opportunity to monitor according to indicators stipulated in the framework documents on the MDGs will have to be decided by each State concerned. On that account, when indicators agreed upon at global level prove to be inapplicable, the UN country offices, together with the government of each State, will analyse and select the indicators for monitoring.

Taking into account that Romania is close to completing the transition to a market economy and plans to join the EU in 2007, Romania established its country-tailored Goal 8: Develop Communications and the Information Society; two indicators will be used to monitor progress: telephone lines per 1,000 people and personal computers per 1,000 people.

Goal 8, Develop a Global Partnership for Development, requires a special comment. Due to its complexity it will only be monitored as a whole at the global level. At the national level, the progress on the eighth goal will only be monitored in areas matching the national situation (this is not clear; not sure what this means).

To evaluate progress at the international level, it is necessary to reinforce monitoring systems, in particular in developing countries that, at this

moment, have a reduced capacity to report.

Following the Conference in Monterrey, the UN General Secretary, as President of the UN Development Group, appointed the **United Nations Development Programme** as administrator of the global campaign on the Millennium Development Goals and as the monitoring body for activities taken at the national level to reach the eight MDGs. Monitoring progress towards the MDGs will be done at the **national level**, as well as at the **regional and global level**.

At the national level, the UN specialized agencies will support governments in monitoring their progress towards the MDGs, in particular by designing **National Reports on the MDGs**.

The aim of these reports is to raise awareness of the public on national issues, to renew political commitments, to integrate global goals into national policies and strategies and to evaluate the outcomes. Identification of the factors slowing down progress towards MDGs at the national level will help both the States, in particular the developing countries, and donors to establish financial partnerships for major national priorities.

In 2002, during the 57th session of the UN General Assembly, the General Secretary presented the first annual Progress Report on the MDGs.

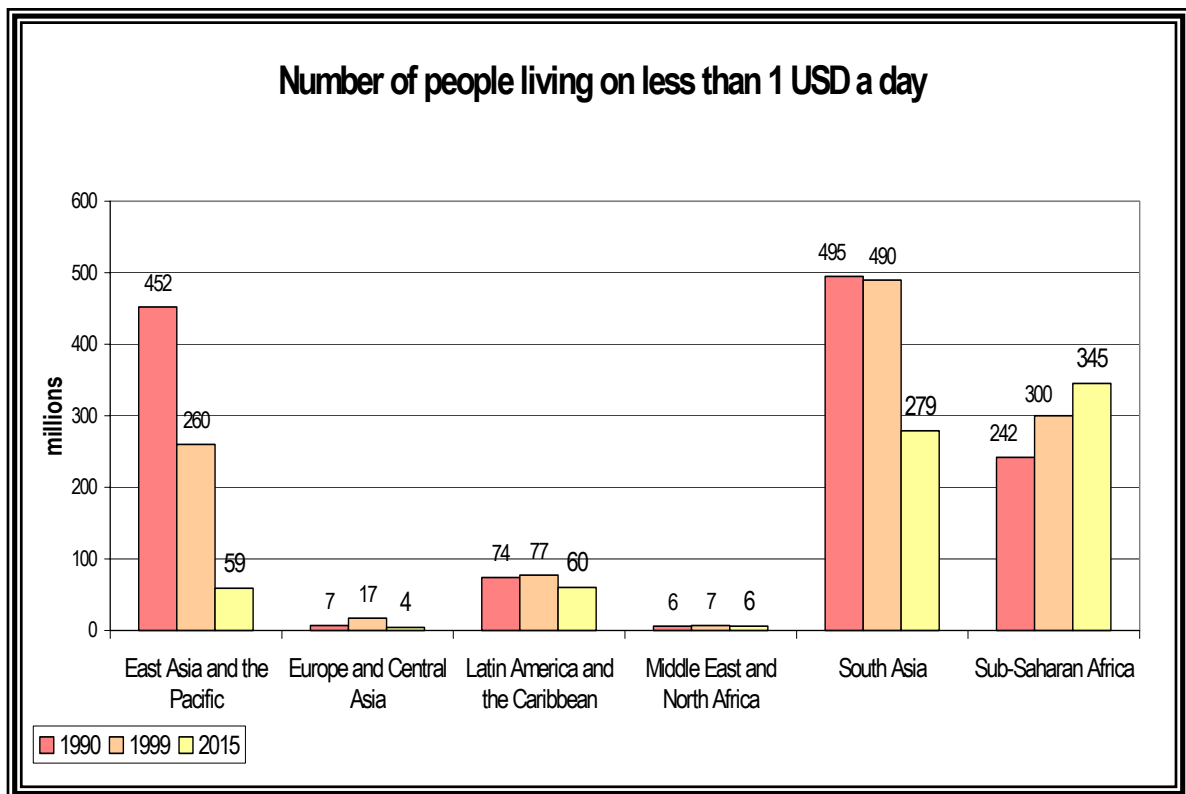
At the international level, the national reports will be pooled and used by the UN Secretary-General in **Global reports on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration**. Annual reports of the UN Secretary-General to the General Assembly will review progress made at the global level for a limited series of indicators. Reports issued every five years will provide progress accounts on the complete set of indicators.

Goal 1 - Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target	Indicators
1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Proportion of population below \$1 per day▪ Poverty gap ratio▪ Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prevalence of underweight children (under-five years of age)▪ Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption

Current situation

In 2002, out of the 6 billion people in the world, 20% lived in poor conditions and had an **income of less than one USD a day**. The 1990s brought a reduction in the number of people in this category. In developing countries, the proportion of this population dropped from 32% in 1990 to approximately 25% in 1999.



Source: World Bank, Global Economic Perspectives and Developing Countries, 2002.

While the largest number of poor people lives in South Asia, the highest proportion of poor people are in sub-Saharan Africa, where slow economic growth and the spread of HIV has forced millions of people into severe poverty.

In Romania, the proportion of the population below \$ 1 per day per PPP (purchasing power parity) is lower than 1% and increased from 0.2 in 1995 to 0.6 in 2001.

Globally, the rate of **under-five malnourished children** decreased from 46.5% in 1970 to 27% in 2000. Approximately 150 million children in small and middle-income countries are still malnourished.

The number of **undernourished people** in developing countries decreased from 840 million in 1990 to approximately 777 million in 1997-1999. It is expected to decrease by 200 million more by 2015.

Most regions have made progress that will allow them to reach this goal by 2015. Current statistics show that more than 40 countries, whose population amounts to almost 60% of the entire world population, have reached or are on the way to reaching this goal.

Part of the success in reducing the rate of extreme poverty was triggered by Asia, where China's economic growth, during 1980-1990, decreased the number of poor people in this State to values below 150 million. Sub-Saharan Africa is the main region facing problems in achieving this goal.

Perspectives

In the 1990s, as a result of the measures taken by governments and the active involvement of certain important international and financial organisations, the proportion of people whose income was less than one dollar a day was significantly reduced from 29 to 23%.

The positive outcomes of the evaluations done so far have proven that the effects of world policies implemented to reduce poverty can lead to good results in a relatively short period of time.

If actions taken so far at the global level continue unflinching, the first Millennium Development Goal could be reached by 2015, and the number of people living in extreme poverty would decrease to 890 or even 750 million.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 1

In order for developing countries to make progress, developed countries will need to provide continuous political and financial support.

Significant economic growth, based on good policies and direct investments, supported by developed countries, will also be needed. The international community will have to continue its current poverty reduction activities, in particular in less-developed regions that do not have the resources necessary to combat extreme poverty and hunger. Immediate action is required in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia where the needs are most acute.

Priorities:

- Support developing countries to **strengthen institutional capacity** with a view to evaluate, monitor and plan activities aimed at eradicating poverty, as well as with a view to providing basic social and medical services;
- Encourage **poor populations to undertake activities aimed at improving their own life conditions**;
- **Grant the financial support necessary** to ensure access of poor populations to all essential services;
- **Support economic and social initiatives** aimed at poverty reduction.

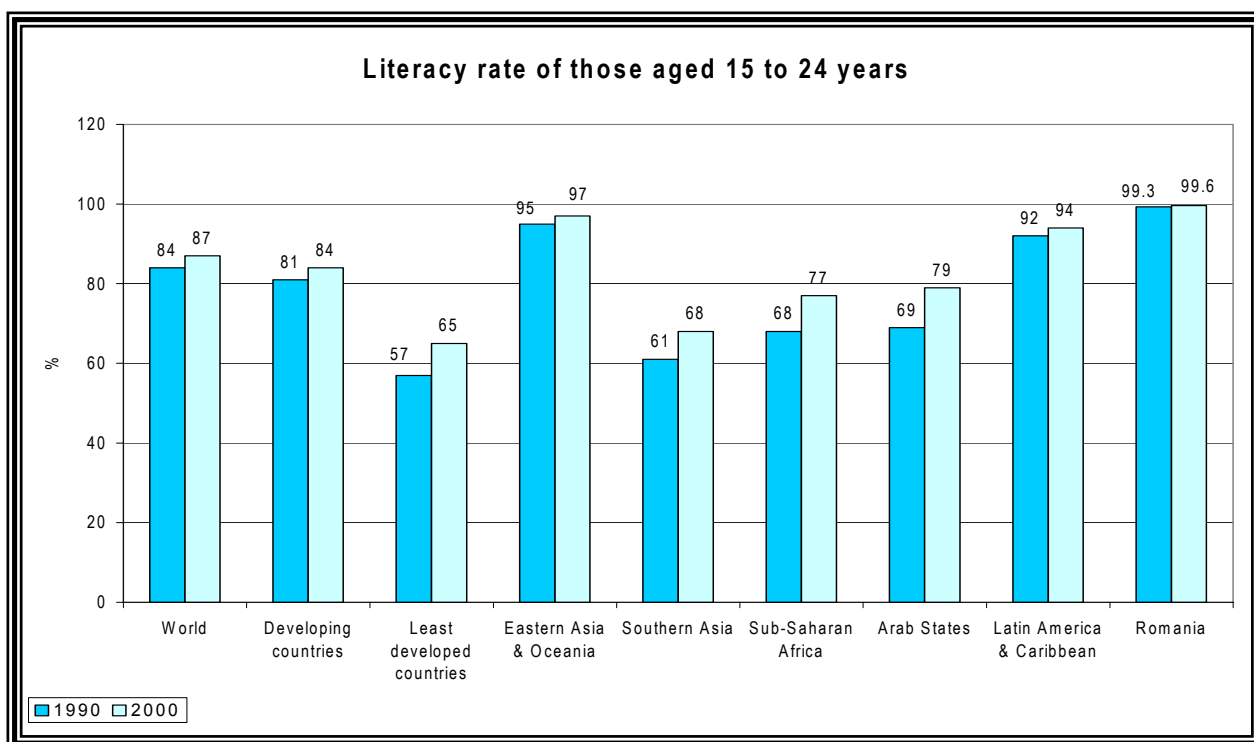
Goal 2 - Achieve universal primary education

Target	Indicators
3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Net enrolment ratio in primary education▪ Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5▪ Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds

Current situation

Globally, in 2002, 113 million children did not attend school. In 1999, 120 million children were not enrolled in primary education; 53% of these cases were in South Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa.

Since 1990, the enrolment ratio in primary education in 17 middle-income countries and 21 low-income countries has stagnated or even decreased. In Eastern Asia, the enrolment ratios in primary education are high and continue to increase. Although the physical infrastructure to provide education for all school age children exists in 79 developing countries, only 27 of these countries succeed in maintaining full enrolment until graduation from primary school.

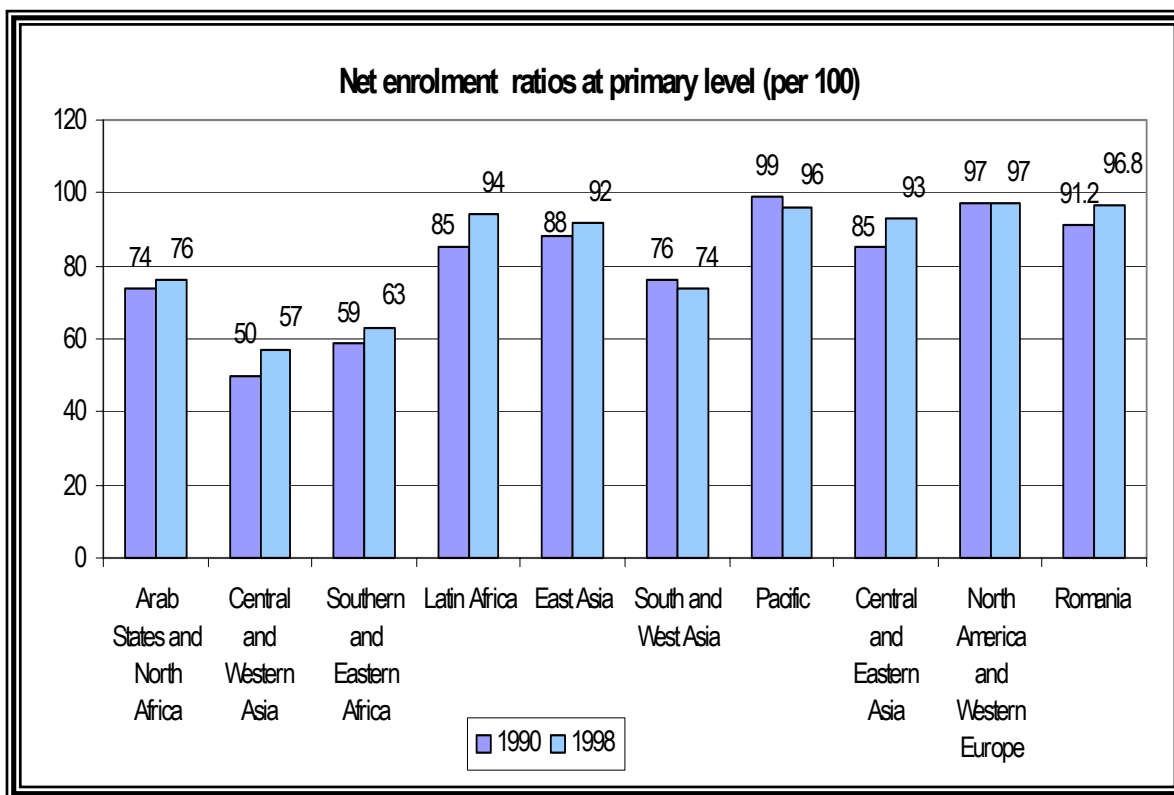


Source: Report of Group of Interagency Experts on MDG Indicators, April 2002; United Nations Statistics Division

Perspectives

Education is an important instrument in decreasing poverty and gender inequality, in improving health and living conditions and it is a *sound basis* for sustainable economic growth. It is essential in building a democratic society and a dynamic economy that is competitive at the international level.

The interdependency between the human development, the degree of poverty and the degree of education is often highlighted. The actions and initiatives designed to contribute to sustainable human development also influence educational gaps and gender inequality.



Source: Report of Group of Interagency Experts on MDG Indicators, April 2002; United Nations Statistics Division
 Note: According to data from the National Institute of Statistics, 1,265,628 children were enrolled in primary education in 1990 and 1,090,172 in 2000.

Immediate progress towards this goal will be difficult to reach in the short term, due to the various ways in which human development is viewed in certain environments. However the target date of 2015 is realistic under favourable conditions. If current trends continue, most regions will reach a percentage of 100% enrolment of school-age children in primary education by 2015.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 2

Governments will have to develop national programmes and strategies to promote education, within the context of the strategies designed to reduce poverty. Efforts will be focused on adjusting national policies through social programmes, improving governance, strengthening institutional capacity and providing the infrastructure necessary for education.

The international community will play an active role in strengthening the government capacity in developing countries, as well as in countries undergoing transition, in order to identify the best practices and ways of approaching the primary education issue.

In addition to actions taken at the governmental level, international financial resources will have to be allocated to motivate certain social groups to ensure their response to new policies and their commitment to educational development activities.

One example is the world school feeding initiative, aimed at stimulating the enrolment rate and decreasing the dropout rate of children attending primary school. Pupils receive a meal at school or a food ration that they can take home (thus increasing the standard of living of their families). To date, the result of this initiative has been positive. There have been significant increases in the percentage of children attending primary school.

Within this context, it is highly recommended to use incentives as long as they do not remain the only measure taken to reach this goal, and as long as they are supplemented by campaigns to raise awareness of civil society on what education means and what the immediate and long term benefits of education are.

Priorities:

- Utilize all international and national resources available for education to **ensure adequate infrastructure and access** to the educational process;
- Increase **the involvement of local communities**, so that they play a major role in the educational process;
- **Mobilise necessary resources**, at all levels, with the aid of multilateral and bilateral donors, banks, civil society and foundations, to supplement efforts made by governments with a view to achieving this goal.

Goal 3 - Promote gender equality and empower women

Target	Indicators
4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels of education no later than 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education▪ Ratio of literate females to males of 15-24 year olds▪ Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector▪ Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

Current situation

In low-income countries, girls have fewer opportunities than boys to attend school. Even if an equal number of boys and girls begin courses, the drop out rate is higher for girls than for boys. Parents still consider the education of boys more important than that of girls and believe that domestic activities carried out by girls are more valuable than school activities.

However, the gap between boys' and girls' enrolment in educational systems has diminished. Eastern Asia is very close to reaching this goal by 2005. Progress has also been made in Northern and Eastern Africa, as well as in South Asia. However, in sub-Saharan Africa, where girls' enrolment ratio in the educational systems is traditionally lower than that of boys, the results to date are disappointing.

Perspectives

Women's education and ensuring their equal rights are important because they contribute to increased productivity, reduced poverty, and gender equality within the family, including empowering women to make decisions regarding their own reproductive health.

Equal access to education is an important step towards recognition of gender equality. Even if gender disparities in the field of education have decreased, constraints remain regarding judicial rights, equal opportunities on the labour market and participation in public life and in decision-making processes.

Given that if adequate measures are taken, the second MDG should be reached by 2015, it also seems feasible to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015.

However, if specific prejudices are not removed, it will be very difficult to make progress towards girls' equal access to all levels of education, even if immediate actions are taken.

Although at the global level there has been an increase in the education level, girls' participation in primary, secondary and tertiary education, is still characterised by gender discrimination. This represents, among other things, *a way of life*, both in the past and present, at least in developing countries where changing the attitude to women's education will not be easy.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 3

Support will need to be provided to implement incentives with the aim of increasing the presence of both boys and girls in the educational system. Given the gender gaps in education are greatest in developing countries, the use of incentives in these countries should serve as a useful measure to decrease the gender educational gaps.

Countries will also have to understand that gender discrimination in primary school enrolment, as well as to other levels of education is a *poor social and economic policy*. Previous experience, accumulated in various areas, has shown that direct investment in girls' education translates into better nutrition for the whole family, better health care, declining fertility and poverty reduction.

As immediate impact will certainly be positive, it is necessary that

- Communities empower women by providing them equal access to education;
- Activities done for sustainable development focus on women's needs and priorities.

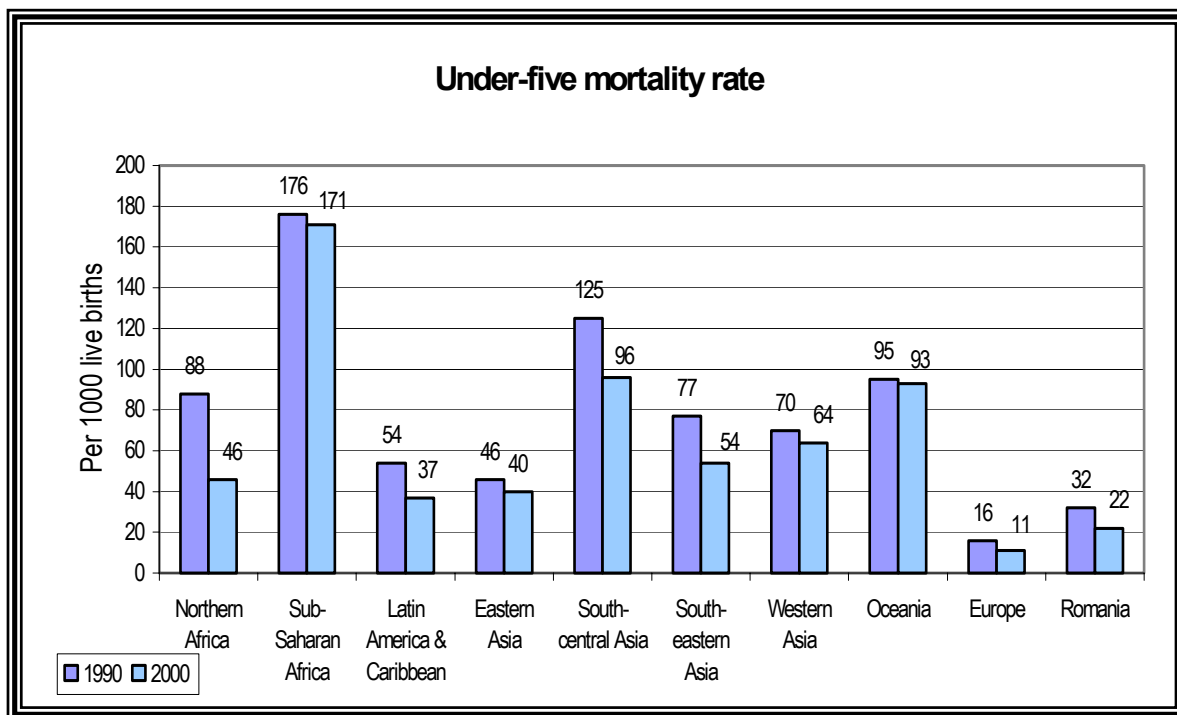
Goal 4 - Reduce child mortality

Target	Indicators
5. Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Under-five mortality rate▪ Infant mortality rate▪ Proportion of 1 year old children immunized against measles

Current situation

All over the world, under-five mortality rates are decreasing. During 1990 and 2000, these rates decreased in developing countries from 94 to 81 cases per 1 000 children that survived until five years old.

In 2000, the rates registered in developed countries were far below the quotas proposed as a goal for 2015.



Source: Report of Interagency Expert Group on MDG Indicators, April 2002; UN Database

Note: According to data from the National Institute of Statistics, the under-five mortality rate amounted to 35.7 in 1990 and to 22.2 in 2000 (per 1,000 living births).

Each year, approximately 11 million under-five children die in developing countries, most of them from preventable diseases.

Perspectives

The current situation favours a positive evolution in the coming years because actions target a well defined group and are well integrated at various levels: governments, local and international communities.

However, positive development in the short term is not a certainty. In recent years, infant mortality has slowed down in several regions due to HIV/AIDS related causes and to the appearance of new malaria and tuberculosis infection sources.

The main causes triggering the persistence of this issue are:

- poor life conditions, without access to safe drinking water;
- malnutrition;
- inadequate immunization;
- lack of education;
- low access to social and health services.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 4

At global level, given most infant death cases occur due to preventable causes, the key measures currently being taken are through the *Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations (GAVI)*, launched in 2000. GAVI aims at stopping the spread of major diseases affecting children. This alliance combines public and private resources to protect all children against six vaccine-preventable diseases: poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, measles, tetanus and tuberculosis.

Priorities:

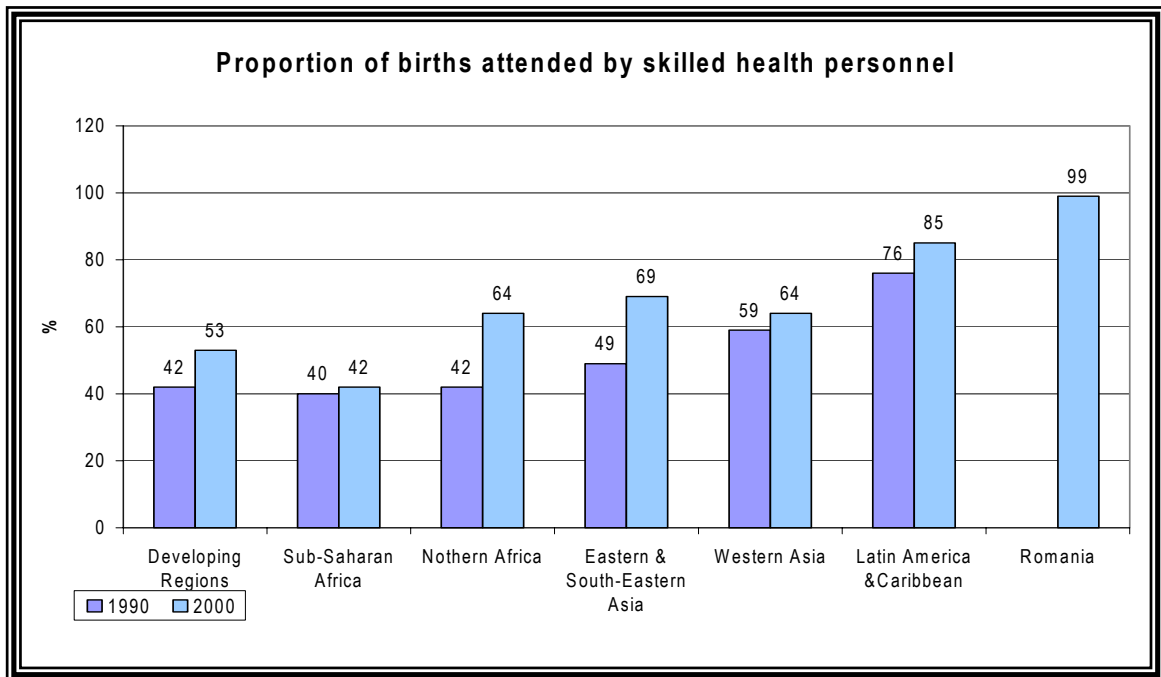
- Increase direct investments to **set up the infrastructure necessary (for ?) to an acceptable standard of living;**
- **Improve national policies** in the field of reproductive health, as well as ruling standards and mechanisms for a safe pregnancy;
- **Increase the involvement of local communities** in processes aimed at reducing infant mortality;
- **Improve access to health services;**
- **Support programmes for immunisation and vaccination**, the use of oral rehydration therapy and sanitation interventions.

Goal 5 - Improve maternal health

Target	Indicators
6. Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maternal mortality ratio▪ Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

Current situation

Each year, at the global level, approximately 500 000 women die from various complications of maternity. 99% of the cases are in developing countries. Skilled health personnel attend only 56 % of total births.



Source: United Nations Statistics Division

While the maternal mortality rate is decreasing at the global level, it is increasing in a number of States. In Romania, the maternal mortality rate decreased from 41 cases per 100,000 living births in the second half of the 1990s, to 33.8 cases in 2001.

Perspectives

Reducing maternal mortality largely depends on the existence of medical services for pregnant women, especially if they face various difficulties during pregnancy.

Quality medical services, which anyone can afford, are an essential element in improving maternal health. The following are current challenges which must be overcome to achieve this goal:

- Lack of qualified health personnel, especially in the developing countries, where the lack of financial resources makes it impossible to have a health system accessible to all segments of the population;
- Poor health education;
- Female adolescents and women who do not have the power to make decisions for themselves, and have little access to good quality maternal health and family planning services.

Improvements in the level of education and access to various information that women benefit from in the medium and long term will be a factor favouring the achievement of this goal.

Chances to reach this goal are high and directly depend on the value of investments that governments and the international community will make to create adequate health systems, in addition to efforts to promote the principles of gender equality and of equal access to all levels of education.

In certain geographical areas, to make progress towards this goal, people will have to overcome mentalities deeply rooted in local tradition. On this account, it will be difficult for a coherent strategy to combat maternal mortality to be accepted at the global level.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 5

At the international level, the United Nations Organization has launched the *Making pregnancy safer* initiative to improve maternal health. The initiative is based on the premise that sustained reduction in maternal mortality depends directly on the availability, accessibility and quality of maternal health care to which pregnant women have access.

To reach this goal, national policies should focus more on rural areas, which are the most affected by the lack of an adequate health system. At the international level social and financial support has to be granted to developing countries to eliminate gender disparities.

The efforts made by governments have to be reinforced through contributions from international organisations in the field, such as the World Health Organization, as well as through continuous involvement of local communities' representatives. Governments are requested to encourage participation of civil society and develop public-private partnerships in their efforts to reduce maternal mortality.

Priorities:

- Promote **adequate community practices** to render maternity safe;
- **Design and/or review policies, ruling standards and mechanisms** for safe maternity and develop the systems necessary for their implementation;
- **Monitor maternal health** and access to health services.

Goal 6 - Combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases

Target	Indicators
<p>7. Have halted by 2015, and begin to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women ▪ Contraceptive prevalence rate ▪ Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS
<p>8. Have halted by 2015, and begin to reverse, the incidence of tuberculosis and other major diseases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria ▪ Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures ▪ Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis ▪ Proportion of TB cases detected and cured under DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short Course)

Current situation

In 2000, AIDS was the cause of three million deaths. Almost 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS. At the global level, until 2000, the number of deaths amounted to the alarming value of 27 million lives. Until now, HIV/AIDS related diseases have orphaned almost 13 million children. Women account for 50% of the total HIV/AIDS infected population. In developing countries the proportion is nearly 95%, and 70% in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Regional disparity is obvious in this case. The issue of abandonment due to the above-mentioned causes is predominant in areas having poorly developed social services. Almost 90% of the cases are in sub-Saharan Africa, where approximately 40 million people are expected to be infected in the next two decades.

In Europe, the highest AIDS incidence in children is recorded in Romania. Whilst in 1998 there were 5,040 AIDS infected children, their number increased to 5,629 in 2000 and to 6,313 in 2001. The number of AIDS infected adolescents and adults (over 13 years old population) also increased between 2000 and 2001, from 1,091 to 1,448.

Eight million people live with tuberculosis and nearly 2 million die annually from it. 90% of these cases occur in developing countries. The number of cases overlaps the registered number of HIV/AIDS cases, as tuberculosis is the leading cause of death in people with AIDS.

Cases of tuberculosis resistant to antibiotic treatment have increased due to limited curative practices and poor access to adequate health services.

At the global level, malaria is another major concern. Each year, one million people die from malaria. The number has doubled over the past two decades.

Perspectives

In recent years, governments have shown their political and financial commitment to solve the issues raised by these diseases, as well as other major human health issues. They have recognised the impact they have on the capacity of poor populations to get rid of extreme poverty.

As to the analysis of this issue by areas, the rural area is by far the most affected. The AIDS issue affects rural areas more as these areas do not enjoy the same financial resources, infrastructure and services as urban areas. The cost of AIDS care in rural areas is usually higher because HIV-infected urban dwellers return to their villages for care when they fall ill.

Although the situation registered at the global level is critical, the chances to reach this goal are high. By 2015, governments and international organisations will have enough time to take the measures necessary to eradicate HIV/AIDS. However, the

Governments that participated in the special Session of the UN General Assembly, in June 2001, acknowledged that prevention of HIV infection must be the mainstay of national, regional and international activities. They also recognized that prevention, care, support and treatment for those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS are elements of common interest that have to be implemented and integrated in a comprehensive approach to combat the epidemic.

deadline proposed to reach this goal could be observed only at the global level, while at the regional level, the decline in the spread of diseases will be unequal due to regional disparities.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 6

Developed and developing countries will have to commit themselves in a powerful financial and political partnership, to develop new global initiatives to fight against these problems and to continue to support the initiatives launched so far. Such an example is the establishment of the *Global AIDS and Health Fund*, aimed at reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and to reduce the consequences of these illnesses. This fund is expected to collect, for HIV/AIDS alone, about 7-10 US billion dollars. Two other active global initiatives are the *Roll Back Malaria Campaign* and the *Stop Tuberculosis Initiative*.

Governments have to play an essential role in promoting national processes to achieve the target. The support for partnerships between the public and the private sector will also be important in solving these problems.

Governments will have to commit themselves again in protecting children from acts of violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination and to ensure that all children have access to quality social services. Particular attention must be paid to the social environment within which children are developing. The role of schools has to be reinforced as early as possible, so that they become community resources and care centres for children with no family.

Priorities

In a nutshell, to reach this goal it is important to:

- Implement a **national strategy** for prevention and treatment, as well as certain **regional and international cooperation measures**;
- Develop specific **international initiatives** to provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, as well as **support the activities of local communities**, particularly in view of supporting orphaned children;
- Comply with the commitments made to provide **resources** to support the **Global Fund for Fighting against AIDS**, tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases and **facilitate access** to this fund to the countries needing it most;
- **Mobilise appropriate public financial resources** and encourage the private sector resources to be invested in **researching** the diseases of poverty, namely HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria;
- **Strengthen health systems**;
- Support and encourage the involvement of local communities in **making people aware** of such diseases.

Goal 7 - Ensure environmental sustainability

Target	Indicators
9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Proportion of land area covered by forest▪ Land area protected to maintain biological diversity▪ GDP per unit of energy use▪ Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita)▪ Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source
10. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water	
11. By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Proportion of people with access to improved sanitation▪ Proportion of people with access to secure tenure

Target 9 - Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Current situation

The surface of the earth covered by natural forests continues to be converted to other land uses at an alarming rate. At present, nearly 3.9 billion ha of land, about 30% of the world's total land area, are covered by forests. Out of these, 17% are in Africa, 14% in Asia, 5% in Oceania, 27% in Europe, 14% in North and Central America and 23% in South America.

The rate of annual deforestation at the global level amounts to 14.6 million ha. **Forest resources** contribute to the survival of communities and in most cases are irrationally exploited. Major causes of deforestation and forest degradation continue to be agricultural expansion and harvesting of fuel wood.

Table 1

	Proportion of protected areas out of the total surface		Proportion of forested areas out of the total surface	
	At global level	In Romania	At global level	In Romania
1990	7.5	2.56	30.3	27.4
2000	9.5	5.18	29.6	28.0

Source: United Nations Statistics Division

Biological diversity is diminishing at an alarming rate. Of the 1.75 million species that have been identified at the global level, approximately 3 400 plants and 5 200 animal species, including one in eight bird species and one in four mammal species, face extinction.

Carbon dioxide emissions, the main greenhouse gas, were estimated to amount to more than 23 billion tons in 1997. Almost a half of these emissions originated from developed countries. The current level is four times higher than the level registered in 1950 and is increasing by an annual rate of 300 million tons. The increase in greenhouse gases content in the atmosphere has already triggered a rise in the average annual temperature by 0.3 – 0.6 degrees Celsius during the last century.

Perspectives

Forest areas

The main causes triggering deforestation and forest degradation continue to be the expansion of agricultural lands and indiscriminate harvesting of fuel wood. This Millennium Development Goal can only be reached if adequate measures are immediately implemented to stop uncontrolled exploitation of forest areas.

In the 1990s, numerous initiatives were developed to integrate the principles of sustainable development into national policies and programmes, as well as to decrease the loss of environmental resources. At the same time, international law instruments were designed to govern these issues.

Protection of Biological Diversity

In 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, at the World Conference on Environment and Development, the **Convention on Biological Diversity** was open to signature. At present, over 180 signatory States are committed to preserve biodiversity, to use its components in a sustainable way and to rightfully share the benefits of genetic resources use.

Major causes leading to the reduction of the biological diversity are:

- Burning of forests;
- Overharvesting of plants;
- Indiscriminate use of pesticides and other persistent toxic chemicals;
- Draining and filling of wetlands;
- Loss of coral reefs and mangroves;
- Destructive fishing practices;
- Climate change;
- Water pollution;
- Conversion of wild lands to agricultural and urban uses.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Climate Change

In 1992, to address the issue of **climate change at the International Conference on Environment and Development**, the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** was opened to signature, to which an additional Protocol, the Kyoto Protocol, was added in 1997. The **Kyoto Protocol** aims to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 5.2% below 1990 levels within the period 2008 to 2012.

For the moment, perspectives in the field of climate change are unfavourable. The Kyoto Protocol has not yet entered into force and, if immediate measures are not taken to control greenhouse gas emissions, the global temperature could raise by a further 0.4 degrees Celsius by the year 2020. Global climate warming could result in sea levels rising, flooding of human inland settlements and melting of the polar ice caps.

Romania is the first State included in Annex 1 – countries with economy in transition – to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2001.

Desertification and soil degradation

Another international legal framework addressing a global issue facing humanity is the *United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa* (UNCCD). Although the Convention is in force, the measures taken so far have not been sufficient to remove and stop the negative effects of desertification.

Measures necessary to reach target 9

Sustainable management of forest resources

It is necessary to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and to intensify efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

Strategies at the global level have to include:

- **Strengthening cooperation and coordination on the main issues concerning forest ecosystems** among international and regional organisations, as well as with public-private partners;
- **Strengthening political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests**, including commitment on first solving the necessities and requirements of countries whose national territory are least covered by forests.

Protection of biodiversity

To evaluate the state and trends of biological diversification it is necessary to allot certain additional resources at the international level. At the same time, it is a priority to:

- **Universally ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**. Equally important is the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
- **Integrate the goals of CBD into programmes, sectoral and intersectoral policies**, at the global, regional and national levels, in particular in the economic sector;
- **Promote sustainable partnerships** and international support for the **sustainable exploitation of biologically diverse resources**;
- National harmonisation and implementation of instruments and programmes on biological diversity.

Reduce carbon dioxide emissions and combat negative effects of climate change

The UN Organisation has organised numerous actions to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Among these, it is worth mentioning the activity developed by the *Intergovernmental Working Group on Climate Change*, whose main activity is to evaluate climate change, as well as its possible socio-economic consequences. Actions coordinated at all levels are still required to:

- **Enter into force the Kyoto Protocol**;
- Develop a framework to elicit **voluntary actions from the private sector** to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Encourage initiatives to **reduce the vulnerability of the poor** and strengthen their adaptive capacity to deal with the adverse impacts of climate change;
- **Encourage partnerships** and strengthen the capacity of institutions acting with a view to limit the adverse impact of climate change;
- **Adopt** at the national level **strategies on limiting the impact of natural disasters**.

Combat desertification and soil degradation

The implementation of the *UN Framework Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa*, has to be reinforced by measures taken at all levels to:

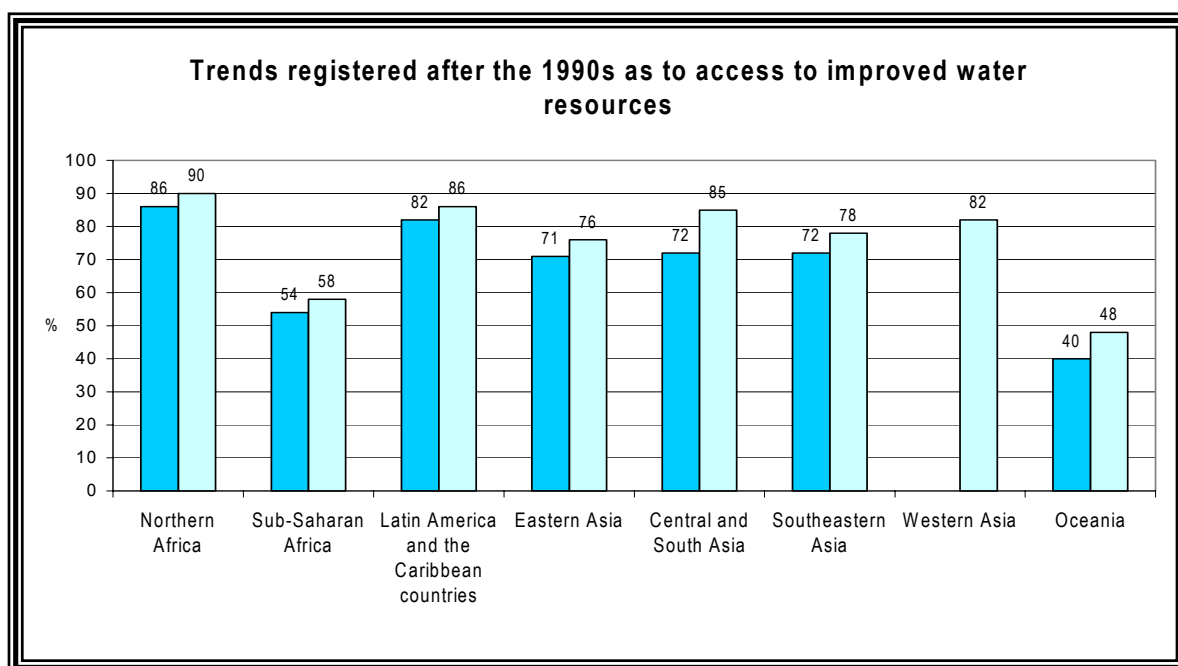
- **Mobilise** adequate and predictable financial **resources** to encourage technology transfer;
- Design **national programmes of action to efficiently implement** in due time this Convention and related projects, including the development of local initiatives;
- Encourage the synergy between this Convention and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;

- **Integrate measures to prevent and fight against desert formation**, as well as to limit the effects of drought by relevant policies and programmes, such as management of soil, waters and forests, agriculture, rural development, and early warning systems.
- **Promote access to information**, with a view to improving surveillance and early warning on drought and desert formation.

Target 10 - Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

Current situation

In 2000, nearly 1.1 billion people, about 18% of the world's population, did not have access to safe water. Although 70% of the world's surface is covered by water, only 2.5% of water resources are freshwater, out of which only 1% is available to the population.



Source: Report of the Inter-agency Expert Group on MDG Indicators, April 2002; United Nations Statistics Division
 Note: According to data from the Ministry of Waters and Environment Protection, in 2000, in Romania, 91.8% of the people living in the urban area and 33.5% of those living in the rural area had access to centralized systems of water supply.

Perspectives

Present trends in water consumption are worrying and do not offer an optimistic perspective in reaching this target. If present trends continue, almost 2.5 billion people will suffer from lack of water by 2050.

Measures necessary to reach target 10

At the international level, initiatives have to be launched in developing countries in order to benefit from financial and technical assistance provided by developed countries and relevant financial organisations . It will also be necessary to promote direct investments in water and sanitation sectors. To solve this issue, the WSSD Implementation Plan aims to:

- **Mobilise** international and national **financial resources** at all levels, encourage **technology transfer**, promote the best practices and support capacity building to **develop infrastructure** for water supply and sanitation services;
- Adopt measures to **protect and prevent unsustainable exploitation of water resources**, as well as to solve water crises;
- Develop and implement **efficient household sanitation systems**;
- **Improve sanitation conditions in public institutions**, especially in schools;
- **Promote good hygiene practices and education**, focusing on children;
- **Promote technologies and practices affordable from a financial point of view** and acceptable from a socio-cultural point of view and develop certain innovative financing and partnership mechanisms;
- Integrate strategies to deal with sanitation problems into water management strategies.

Target 11 - By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Current situation

A quarter of the urban population lives in inadequate housing and lacks access to basic social services, to clean and safe water resources and to sanitation services.

Perspectives

To improve the living conditions of slum dwellers, the likelihood of reaching this goal is high, as long as the other seven MDGs are reached in due time. Or, The likelihood of reaching this goal is closely dependent upon the successful achievement of the other MDGs.

Reaching this Millennium Development Goal will remain a difficult task in the short term, but the results obtained so far prove that the actions taken up to now directly respond to environment issues. Continued action, and a higher involvement at all levels, will directly contribute to achieving this goal.

Measures necessary to reach target 11

A number of initiatives, such as the "*Cities Without Slums*" initiative, the *Global Campaign for Land Reform*, the *Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance*, and the programme *Managing Water for African Cities*

have been designed and implemented to address urban poverty. Nevertheless, slums continue to be affected by the lack of basic municipal services, such as water, sanitation, waste collection and drainage systems, the following measures are required in the near future:

- Facilitate **access to basic services in slums**, such as safe water and sanitation;
- **Develop** integrated and **participatory approaches to urban planning** and management.

Goal 8 – Develop a Global Partnership for Development

Target	Indicators
<p>12. Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system</p> <p>13. Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries</p>	<p>Official Development Assistance (ODA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Net ODA as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income ▪ Proportion of ODA to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation) ▪ Proportion of ODA that is untitled ▪ Proportion of ODA for environment in small island developing States ▪ Proportion of ODA for transport sector in landlocked countries
<p>14. Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States</p>	<p>Market access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of exports (by value and excluding arms) admitted free of duties and quotas ▪ Average tariffs and quotas on agricultural products and textiles and clothing ▪ Domestic and export agricultural subsidies in OECD countries ▪ Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity
<p>15. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term</p>	<p>Debt sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of official bilateral HIPC debt cancelled ▪ Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services ▪ Proportion of ODA provided as debt relief ▪ Number of countries reaching HIPC decision and completion points
<p>16. In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth</p>	<p>Unemployment rate of 15-to-24 year-olds</p>
<p>17. In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries</p>	<p>Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis</p>
<p>18. In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications</p>	<p>Telephone lines per 1000 people Personal computers per 1000 people</p>

Current situation

In the last ten years, the value of the financial support granted to developing countries has decreased by nearly 8%. Only a half of the total amount of this support is granted to low-income countries, whose yearly income per capita did not amount to 700 US dollars in 2000. The other half is granted to middle-income countries, whose yearly income per capita in 2000 ranged between 700 and over 9000 US dollars. According to statistical data, in 2000, the aid provided to low-income countries was not greater than 12 US dollars per capita.

Trade is still hindered by tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Globally, the young population is estimated at approximately 1 billion people. They account for 40% of the total unemployment rate. More than 65 million young people are unemployed; this figure is 10 million higher than in 1995.

In the entire world, 410 million people are connected to telephone networks, but only 5% of these people are in Africa and in Latin America.

Perspectives

At the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey the international community was called upon to support and reinforce international development and cooperation.

With a view to developing global partnership to reach the Millennium Development Goals, the global state of the economy has improved significantly. Positive trends have appeared in the processes of poverty eradication, greater employment opportunities, and higher income of the population, in particular in developing countries, leading to improved living conditions.

To solve their financial, commercial and governance problems, developing countries still require support from developed countries.

The preliminary positive results on poverty eradication, the elimination of gender inequality and the promotion of the right to equal educational opportunities, on peace keeping and security, as well as on environment protection have to be the beginning of the actions taken in meeting the eight goals of the UN Millennium Declaration.

A few indicators established to monitor progresses towards this Millennium Development Goal will only be used to monitor the progress of less developed countries, of small developing island countries, of landlocked countries and of African countries. If necessary, other indicators will be added to this list.

Measures necessary to reach Goal 8

National and international financial resources will play an important role in achieving the last Millennium Development Goal. There will be a need for **international partnerships**, closely supported by important financial organisms and for **social and investments programmes** to eradicate poverty.

A **good fiscal policy**, as well as a **competitive financial system** will be crucial for the future social and economic development of developing countries. Governments will need to mobilize all available financial resources.

Vulnerable countries – less developed countries, small developing island countries and landlocked countries – will be the target groups of the actions taken because these are the states most likely to fail in reaching the Millennium Development Goals, if they do not receive a significant financial aid.

Target 12 - Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system

Trade will have to be viewed particularly as the promoter of economic growth, whose effects will affect in the first place the creation of additional income through the increase in the number of jobs.

In the 1970s, several advanced economies introduced preferential market access schemes for developing countries. The European Union has announced that the “**Anything but Arms**” initiative will grant duty- and quota-free access for essentially all non-military exports from the 49 developing countries. All developed nations have been invited to follow the example set up by the European Union.

In the 1990s, trade increased, in particular in low-and middle-income countries, whose share of world trade in goods grew from 8 to 11 %. Progress has been made as tariff and non-tariff trade barriers have been eliminated, actions that require significant efforts at the international level.

Action taken to make progress in further developing trade will have to aim at:

- **Improving market access for agricultural products from developing countries;**
- **Strengthen capacity and technical assistance for trade negotiations** and dispute settlements.

In order to set up the mechanisms necessary to **raise private capital movement**, the national, regional and international actions will also aim to:

- **Improve governance** with a view to fighting against corruption;
- **Secure foreign investments;**
- Design fiscal and macroeconomic policies, including collection of income from taxes or other means;
- Set up **efficient and diversified financial systems for profitable** investments;
- **Raise investments in health and education systems**, especially in rural areas and for women;
- Promote a **good investment policy** fairly treating national and foreign investors and reduce vulnerability to financial crises.

Target 13 – Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries

Official Development Assistance (ODA) is still a key source of finance, especially for least developed countries that lack the infrastructure necessary to attract private capital flows. To stop the ODA decline that has been registered in the last 10 years, the strategies at all levels have to include:

- Reinforcing the commitments made in Monterrey by industrialized countries to **provide 0.7% of their gross domestic product (GDP) as ODA**;
- Distinguishing between the portion of ODA spent on development and that spent on human assistance so as to **prevent the erosion of development assistance in favour of humanitarian assistance**;
- **Allocation of ODA to countries that need it most and to those countries whose policies are effectively directed towards reducing poverty**;
- Demand bilateral and multilateral development agencies to make **more efficient programmes** and make programmes more **appropriate to the necessities of less developed countries**;
- **Support institutional reforms to increase transparency and dialogue at bilateral and multilateral levels**;
- Require **donor nations to meet their commitments** on increasing aid for less developed countries;
- Set up information systems to **efficiently monitor the efficiency of ODA and the way ODA is used**.

The third **United Nations Conference on the Less Developed Countries**, held in May 2001, adopted a *programme of action to accelerate economic growth and sustainable development in less developed countries*. The programme of action recognizes the important role that governments, civil society and the private sector have to play.

The strategies developed to expand the implementation of these activities will focus on:

- Strengthening efforts to **integrate trade policies into national development policies towards poverty eradication**;
- Assisting less developed countries in **reinforcing their capacity in trade policies and related areas**, such as tariffs, competition and investment in technology;
- Continuing to work towards the objective of **duty-free and quota-free market access for all less developed countries' products**, excluding arms;
- Assisting less developed countries in **reinforcing their production and export capacities and capabilities**;
- Continuing to **improve the system of preferences for less developed countries** by reducing the administrative and procedural complexities.

Target 14 - Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

In September 1996, the Interim and Development Committees of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank endorsed the "**Heavily Indebted Poor Countries**" Initiative (**HIPC Initiative**) to provide

relief to eligible countries once they meet a range of conditions that should enable them to service the residual debt through export earnings, aid, and capital inflows. The **HIPC Initiative** requires debtor countries to pursue macroeconomic adjustment and structural and social policy reforms and provide for additional finance for trade sector programmes, and improvement of primary basic health and education.

To **efficiently reduce the debts of the heavily indebted poor countries**, the future strategies will aim at:

- Encouraging donors to **mobilize resources to finance debt relief**;
- Taking measures to **enhance a national policy framework that contributes effectively to poverty eradication and promotes faster economic growth**;
- Developing and implementing **nationally owned development policies and strategies**, including poverty reduction strategies;
- Monitoring measures to promote **reduction of official bilateral debt**.

Target 15- Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States

Landlocked countries form a group of states whose economic development is negatively influenced by their geographical position, especially with regards to trade. The high level of international transport costs facing landlocked countries is explained by the fact that their exports incur additional costs in the transport to the country of destination and in countries of transit.

To facilitate trade from and with this group of states, the **Global Framework for Transit-Transport Cooperation** was designed. It sets up the trade rules between developing landlocked countries, countries of transit and the donor community. In future, there will be a need for measures to assist landlocked countries in developing efficient and flexible transport systems and innovative mechanisms to meet their needs.

The efforts made by **small island developing States** for sustainable development are constrained by a series of disadvantages: limited natural resources, fragility of ecosystems and high vulnerability to natural hazards. The *Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States* identified the priority areas in which immediate actions are needed at the national, regional and international levels and set up a series of measures designed to improve the condition of these states:

- Provide a **special and differential treatment of small island** developing States, in the financial and trade-related spheres;
- Support and assist small island developing States in **international trade negotiations**.

Target 16 - In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth

In 2000, the UNO system established the *High-Level Policy Network on Youth Employment*, to analyse the current situation and to make recommendations on policies needed to reach this target. It is desired that the

Network mobilize public opinion, so that the general public supports instruments favouring the employment of youth.

National, regional and international strategies have to ensure and facilitate:

- **Youth employment** through increased investment in the vocational training system;
- **Equal opportunities** for boys and girls;
- **Entrepreneurship** by making it easier to start and run enterprises.

Target 17 - In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries

In recent years, the pharmaceutical industry has become increasingly involved in specific programmes to make inexpensive or free drugs available for diseases such as AIDS, malaria, leprosy, meningitis and tuberculosis. In May 2000, a partnership was launched between five major pharmaceutical companies and the United Nations Organization to increase developing country access to HIV medicines.

In June 2001, at the special session of the UN General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, there was a re-examination of the existing trade agreements and of the role they could play to increase access to medicines. The international community was called upon to participate more actively in reinforcing pharmaceutical policies and practices with a view to developing domestic industries.

Priorities

- **Strengthen health systems** to raise access to essential drugs;
- Increase the availability of drugs by using systems of differentiated prices and **reduce or eliminate import taxes**;
- Mobilize the financial resources necessary to **subsidize costs with a view to increase drugs availability in poor countries**;
- **Re-evaluate international agreements** affecting availability of essential drugs.

Target 18– In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have to become efficient instruments in the process of sustainable development and poverty reduction. To identify the means by which the role of technologies can be reinforced in the global development process, the *Information and Communication Technologies Task Force* started its work in September 2001.

According to the two indicators stipulated by Target 18, Romania occupies a favourable position as to fixed and mobile lines and a less favourable position in the field of information technology (shown comparatively in Table 2).

Table 2

	Fixed or mobile telephone lines per 100 people		Number of computers per 100 people	
	At global level	In Romania	At global level	In Romania
1990	10.1	10.19	2.3	0.22
2001	32.3	35.52	9.4	2.68

Source: United Nations Statistics Division

Strategies on developing these instruments will aim at:

- Promoting **universal and affordable access to ICT**;
- **Assisting UN Member States in using ICT** for development strategies;
- **Developing human resources and strengthening institutional capacity.**

Questions and Answers on the MDGs

Are MDG affordable?

Yes, they are financially affordable and technically feasible. Several countries, however, will require considerable more development assistance, improved policies and stronger institutions.

It would be unrealistic to expect that the poorest countries can meet the MDGs without extra international support. Progress in sub-Saharan Africa has fallen further behind; HIV/AIDS is undermining human development.

Do MDGs make good economic sense?

Returns on investment in human development in low-income countries are very high. Many economies are caught in a poverty trap, due to ill health, poor nutrition, low education, limited access to safe water, and often rapid population growth. Many of the poorest countries are burdened by extreme geographical limitations — landlocked and small islands, far from world markets, tropical diseases, extreme environmental degradation, climate change.

These various conditions — some man-made, some physical — explain why private capital flows and foreign direct investment largely by-pass many low-income regions. Extra help will be needed to extricate countries from the poverty trap.

MDG investment will stimulate economic growth, create more jobs, enhance people's productivity and generate additional fiscal revenue — making macro-economic stability a more feasible goal. MDGs make excellent economic sense.

Can the resources gap be bridged?

Absolutely, an extra \$50 billion in donor resources per year will go a long way towards reaching the MDGs at the global level.

Although this figure may appear large in absolute terms, it represents around one-fifth of one per cent of donor income.

Compared with the expected benefits, the MDGs offer an excellent investment opportunity.

Can ODA and debt relief make a difference?

Aid works, when directed at development needs. The record is clear on one kind of health project after another, exemplified by the disease control programmes supported by the Carter Center (e.g. trachoma, guinea worm, river blindness, schistosomiasis); the eradication of smallpox and polio; and the campaigns to extend immunisation.

ODA and debt relief will be indispensable, especially for the least developed countries. Total ODA now stands at a mere one-third of the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the combined GNI of developed countries, and only 0.10 per cent in the United States. The shortfall amounts to about \$125 billion per year.

Regrettably, none of the G-7 countries is a member of the 'G-0.7' group, which comprises Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden — and more recently Luxembourg.

A recent study of budgetary spending in over 30 developing countries found that two-thirds spend more on debt servicing than on basic social services. Some spend three to five times more on debt. In sub-Saharan Africa, governments spend about twice as much to comply with their financial commitment vis-à-vis external creditors than to comply with their social obligation vis-à-vis the people. Debt servicing often absorbs between one-third and one-half of the national budget — making macro-economic stability an elusive goal.

To spend more on external debt than on basic social services — when tens of millions of people see their fundamental human right denied — is ethically wrong and makes poor economics.

The HIPC initiative remains the best hope for solving the debt crisis, but its implementation is painfully slow; the initiative itself should be broadened and deepened. The enhanced HEPC initiative was launched in 1999; it is encouraging that Uganda — the first country to receive HIPC support — is spending most of the debt dividend on primary education and AIDS orphans. We need to make sure that debt attainability is measured against real human needs — specifically against the ability of countries to mobilise the resources necessary to meet the MDGs.

Is trade not more important than aid?

Yes, but both are needed. Access to OECD markets — for agriculture, clothing and textiles — would significantly accelerate growth and create jobs; thereby fostering human development and reducing poverty. But, by itself, more trade will not be enough to meet the MDGs.

Greater financial resources will be necessary to address the critical areas of health, education and the environment. Without more money, the poorest countries will simply be unable to meet the needs for health and education services, sanitation and water, and other critical challenges.

While it is encouraging that the Doha WTO ministerial meeting agreed to place more emphasis on the development implications of future trade agreements; the reality remains that developed countries maintain high levels of protection. Their markets remain closed in areas of specific priority concern of the poorest countries: textiles and apparel, and processed agricultural commodities. Ghana, for example, can export its cocoa beans duty free to Europe, but must pay more than 25 per cent tariffs on processed chocolate; food processing is shifted to Europe, leaving Ghana bereft of the manufacturing base to escape from poverty.

Human and institutional capacities, as well as infrastructural networks, are complementary elements required to benefit from open trade. Poor countries often lack these elements, so that 'aid for trade' will remain important, even if private capital flows and foreign direct investment will continue to increase.

Are capacities strong enough to handle additional funds?

True, resources alone are unlikely to be sufficient; but donor resources can help to strengthen management. Human and institutional capacities need to be made stronger. Collecting taxes efficiently and equitably, making sure that budget priorities reflect the MDGs and influence actual spending, gender-sensitive budgeting, and aligning aid with national and sub-national priorities require strong national capacities. These are political goals, but also expensive management needs. Donor assistance can dramatically improve service delivery. Of course, it will help those countries keen on helping themselves.

To put this another way, the frequent argument that existing resources have to be used more efficiently before more public money is to be invested creates a false dichotomy. It misses the point that insufficiencies of resources create inefficiencies of service delivery. Policy-makers seldom face a choice between either improving efficiency or increasing budget allocations. In most cases, they have to address both aspects simultaneously. Indeed, inefficiencies and insufficiencies are not independent, but interdependent.

What is the European Union's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals?

EU leaders have started to promote the need for more official aid to support the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Not only have they re-endorsed the 0.7 % UN target for Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), but have called for “tangible” initiatives to be taken towards achieving this goal¹. The EU already provides more than half of total global ODA². In addition, four of EU's member states already provide more than the 0.7 target³, and others have set out timetables for reaching the 0.7 %⁴. There is already, therefore, a strong impetus to increase levels of ODA within EU as a whole and it is on this basis that the EU is able to make a claim to global leadership.

At the same time, the EU has been seeking to establish a new generation of free trade agreements with groups of developing countries.

At the level of the European Commission, the development of a common foreign policy is already influencing the traditional role of the EU in development co-operation. The European Commission manages almost a fifth of total world ODA. The new development co-operation policy adopted in 2000 put stress on the needs of developing countries, placed the international development targets of the centre of the progress, and promoted the concept of ownership by developing countries.

Still, the actual test of the EU's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals goes beyond the use of the EU's aid budget or the promotion of increased levels of ODA.

Increased resources for the Millennium Goals will not succeed on their own. Achieving the MDGs also requires an “enabling environment” that is far from evident in most countries. Ultimately the EU will be judged by its willingness to take bold initiatives that help to secure such an environment. Central to this must be a willingness to ensure that its external policies give sufficient space to safeguard the interests of those beyond its borders, and not just to pursue policies derived from internal self-interest.

¹ The European Council Declaration made in Gothenburg stated that “the Union reaffirmed its commitment to reach the UN target for official development assistance of 0.7 % of GDP as soon as possible and to achieve concrete progress to reaching this target before the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002”.

² EU member states and European Commission combined.

³ Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Sweden.

⁴ Ireland has set itself a timetable to reach 0.7 % by 2007.

Why a global MDG campaign?

A global campaign is needed to bridge the gap between the simple messages needed for advocacy (e.g. the number living on less than a \$1 a day) and poverty's more complex reality. For 'goals on paper'¹ to become a practical reality for millions of people, we need to sharply focus public attention and public action on poverty reduction and human development.

The purpose of the campaign is to keep the eyes and actions of the world focussed on the MDGs. In developed countries, the campaign would focus on making the case for aid and for urgent debt relief, based on clear evidence of results; ensuring that aid is allocated to sectors and services relevant to the MDGs; and opening markets more widely to developing countries, especially the least developed countries.

In developing countries, the campaign would focus on mobilising domestic resources, prioritising budget expenditure on the MDGs, and strengthening human rights, democracy and good governance as specified in the Millennium Declaration. Each of these objectives must be pursued in ways sensitive to country context and target groups. It will be absolutely critical for campaign activities to be tailored to country-specific circumstances.

We are contemplating a 'continuous campaign' till 2015, to help transform the political and intellectual debate at the national and global levels so as to put development goals way ahead of its current priority; to create 'business plans' deeply grounded in evidence, on how to achieve the goals; build informed constituencies for more spending on health and education, by demonstrating the enormous returns from such spending; and focus on equity and human rights as part and parcel of the MDGs.

Although our efforts may start with simple slogans like a \$1-a-day poverty, if the campaign is to be sustained and change the political debate and hence public policy priorities, it must, like Rowntree did in the early 20th Century UK, get deep into the facts and findings, and generate academic, public policy and political debate around the MDGs. If we are successful, it will quickly grow out of its early simplicity, and demonstrate to the world the amazing things that can now be accomplished, if we put our minds and hearts into it.

Acknowledgements

Jan Vandemoortele: *MDGs: 10 frequently asked questions*

Simon Stocker: *The European Union's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals*