



MDG REPORT 2015

LESSONS LEARNTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE MDGS

ASSESSING PROGRESS IN AFRICA TOWARD THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SUMMARY



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

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SUMMARY

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Introduction

Notwithstanding unfavourable initial conditions, Africa has made considerable progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The baseline figures for Africa on most Millennium Development Goal indicators were relatively low compared to other regions. Nevertheless the continent has achieved impressive gains, including in placing more children in primary school, bridging the gender gap in primary enrolment, increasing the representation of women in national parliaments, reducing child and maternal deaths and reducing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. These achievements underscore the important role that national commitment, supported by global partnership, can play in realizing development objectives. Overall, Africa is on track for attaining three out of the eight Millennium Development Goals: Goal 2 (Achieve universal primary education); Goal 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women); and Goal 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases).

Africa's 15 years of experience in striving towards the Millennium Development Goals has generated a wealth of lessons that can inform implementation of the successor development agenda. The following sections summarize the continent's

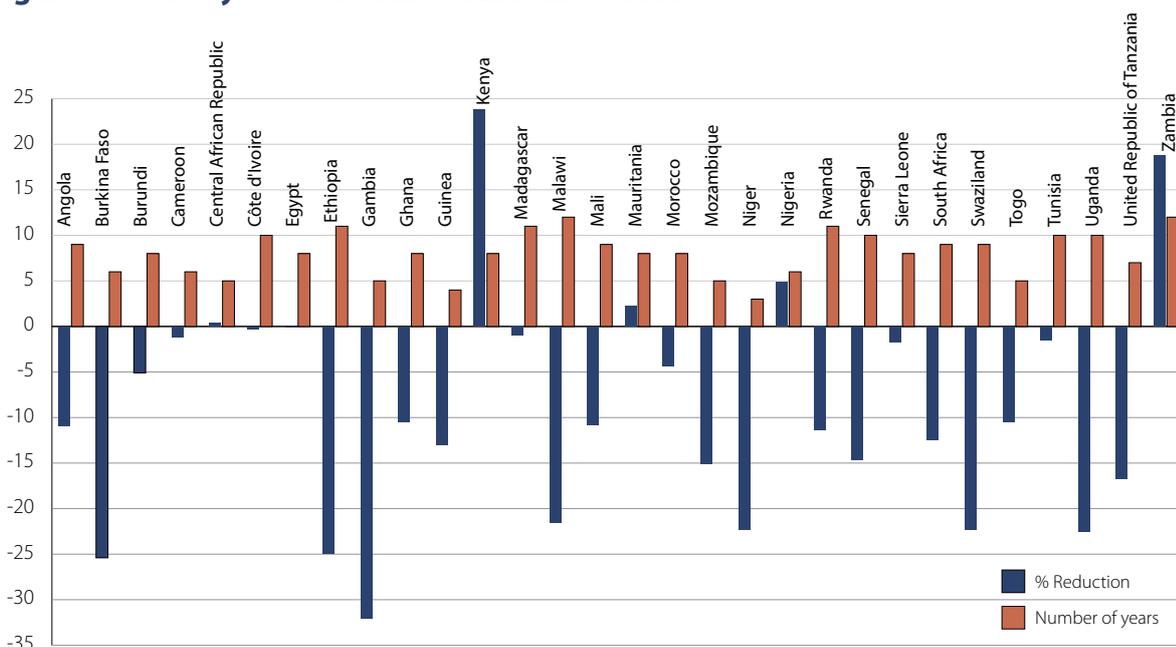
performance in respect of the Goals and propose lessons to consider when preparing the post-2015 development agenda.

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty

Poverty is falling, albeit slowly, with a real risk of reversals from shocks

Africa's progress in reducing poverty has been slow compared to that of developing regions as a whole. Africa excluding North Africa reduced poverty levels from 56.5 per cent in 1990 to 48.4 per cent in 2010 (an 8 per cent reduction), which falls far short of the target of 28.25 per cent by 2015. Efforts at the country level vary, however, with some countries reducing poverty rates much faster than others (see figure 1). Based on 30 African countries for which at least two data points were available, collective poverty reduction efforts resulted in an 8.7 per cent drop in poverty over a period of eight years. The greatest reduction was in the Gambia, which achieved a 32 per cent reduction, followed by Burkina Faso, the Niger, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Uganda and Malawi. Poverty declined by varying degrees in 24 out of the 30 countries analysed, from 0.1 per cent in Egypt to 32 per cent in the Gambia. However, poverty rates also increased in 6 of the same 30 countries, from an average of 0.4

Figure 1: Poverty reduction in 30 African countries



Source: Authors' calculations based on 2014 data from the United Nations Statistics Division, which covers different periods depending on data availability.

per cent in the Central African Republic to 28.4 per cent in Kenya, which represent the lowest and highest increases over the same period. Increases in poverty were also notable in Mauritania, Nigeria and Zambia, whereas Madagascar, Sierra Leone and Tunisia registered significant poverty reduction over a period of eight years.

Additionally, growth has not been sufficient to sustain poverty reduction efforts. Many countries, particularly in Africa excluding North Africa are dependent on primary commodities and susceptible to shocks that tend to disrupt development gains. Early estimates on the socioeconomic impact of the outbreak of Ebola virus disease alone indicate massive losses in livelihoods, which have pushed many households back into poverty in the most affected countries.

Africa's productivity, as measured by output per person employed, is on the rise

Globally, almost all regions doubled the annual growth rate of their gross domestic product (GDP) per person employed since 2001. Developing regions as a group more than doubled their GDP growth rate per person employed from 1.4 per cent in 2001 to 3.2 per cent in 2013, with strong growth rates registered by Asia (2.6 per cent in 2013), followed by Africa excluding North Africa (1.4 per cent in 2013). On balance, Africa excluding North Africa has made the most effort to increase its GDP growth rate per person, resulting in an increase of 0.6 basis points, compared with Asia's increase of 0.4 basis points. By contrast, North Africa experienced negative growth, with GDP falling from a robust rate of 2 per cent in 2001 to one of 0.5 in 2013, due largely to the lingering effects of the mass revolutions and unrest that have swept through the subregion and the Middle East since 2010.

Africa's growth has been relatively strong but not rapid or inclusive enough to create adequate decent employment opportunities

Africa's GDP growth has remained positive since 2001, averaging at least 5 per cent, which is above the global average of 3 per cent annually. Extrac-

tive industries, particularly minerals, oil and gas, have accounted for the largest share of Africa's growth. This has led to improvements in some areas, but not sufficiently or inclusively enough to provide decent job opportunities for the majority of the labour force. Indeed, the employment to population ratio has declined on average from 57.7 per cent in 2005 to 44.4 per cent in 2012. Unemployment rates are in the double digits in some subregions, but these are masked in some cases by high levels of informality. Southern Africa had the highest unemployment rates in 2013 (21.6 per cent), followed by North Africa (13.2 per cent), Central Africa (8.5 per cent), and East Africa (7.9 per cent), whereas West Africa had the lowest unemployment rates (6.9 per cent). Youth and female unemployment is persistently higher than male unemployment rates in all regions. Responding to the youth unemployment challenge is vital if Africa is to derive a dividend from the youth bulge. Owing to a lack of decent jobs, most of the population in Africa is engaged in vulnerable employment, which is largely concentrated in the informal sector.

Disasters and persistent conflict are obstructing the path to food security

The overall net change in the proportion of persons whose food intake falls below the minimum level of dietary requirements in Africa between 2012 and 2013 was zero. Africa excluding North Africa remains the most food-deficient of all regions of the world, with 25 per cent of its population having faced hunger and malnutrition during the 2011-2013 period, a modest 8 per cent improvement from the level experienced during the 1990-1992 period. Persistent conflicts in Central Africa and unfavourable weather conditions such as droughts and flooding in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa continue to exert pressure on food security and nutrition. In addition, the Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone has increased food inflation in the three countries and the subregion, threatening to push many people below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education

Africa is steadily moving towards universal primary education

Since 2000, the majority of African countries have shown accelerated progress in expanding access to basic education, thus steadily narrowing the gaps in universal primary education. In 2012, over 68 per cent of the 25 countries for which data were available achieved a net enrolment rate of at least 75 per cent in primary education. Eleven of these countries (44 per cent), namely Algeria, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the Congo, Mauritius, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia and Zambia recorded a net enrolment rate of over 90 per cent.

Overall, most of the countries have made significant progress as the result of improved education policy formulation using participatory approaches, service delivery and governance. Progress has been slower in meeting the needs of the hardest-to-reach categories such as out-of-school youth, children with disabilities, children living in conflict-affected States, nomadic people and some ethnic minorities.

Improving primary education completion rates remains a challenge

There is steady progress in achieving primary completion for all, but one third of pupils who start grade 1 will likely not reach the last grade of primary education. With a 67 per cent primary completion rate, Africa is still far from the achieving primary completion rates for all by 2015. Barely 20 per cent of African countries, i.e. Algeria, Cabo Verde, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles and Tunisia, had reached the target by 2012. In 24 out of the 44 countries (around 53 per cent) for which 2012 data are available, the primary completion rate was at least 70 per cent, and only five countries (Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, the Niger and South Sudan) deviated widely from the average value with a completion rate not exceeding 50 per cent.

The main causes for this regression may be due to conflict, political unrest, the impact of the higher enrolment on education quality in the short term

since some governments have not been able to sustain quality in a context where the operational needs in qualified teachers, classrooms and learning materials have dramatically increased. The disturbing pattern of stagnation observed in many countries over the 2000-2012 period is partly explained by the lack of rigorous data available because of poor education management information systems, but also by the lack of sustained and deep reforms focused on quality improvement.

High primary enrolments are bolstering youth literacy

The youth literacy rate for the population aged 15 to 24 years has improved in Africa overall, reaching 69.61 per cent in 2012. This progress is partly due to the result of the increased access to universal primary education observed since 2000. Based on the sample of countries for which data were available in 2012, only Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and the Niger recorded youth literacy rates below 50 per cent. Over 58.8 per cent of African countries have achieved at least a 75 per cent youth literacy rate. The performance of Libya, South Africa, Equatorial Guinea, Tunisia, Botswana, Algeria and Swaziland has been exemplary with youth literacy rates above 95 per cent.

Africa excluding North Africa continues to record the lowest youth literacy rates, and boys are more likely to be able to read and write than girls. In spite of the progress achieved since 2000, Africa excluding North Africa lags behind North Africa (89.2 per cent), other developing countries (87.8 per cent) and the developed world (99.6 per cent). The performance of the region reflects serious disparities in access to quality basic education and to literacy opportunities within the countries. The impact of sector policies are limited both by inconsistent investment in literacy and the lack of rigorous learning assessments for non-formal education systems.

In 2012, the gap in youth literacy rates between girls (64.2 per cent) and boys (75.5 per cent) was the widest in Africa excluding North Africa (i.e. 11.35 percent higher for boys). The other regions had a lower gap between youth literacy rates for girls and boys: 7.2 per cent in North Africa, 5.9

percent in the developing world and 5.2 percent worldwide.

The challenges in achieving youth literacy include: limited national and regional literacy policy frameworks; the lack of quality assurance mechanisms; and financing gaps that should be bridged to enable Africa to realize its demographic dividend.

MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Improvements in girls' enrolment and achieving gender parity

Gender parity in primary education has increased in most regions of the world, with several countries adapting universal primary education and implementing gender-responsive interventions that have helped increase enrolments substantially over the years. The rate of gross enrolment for school-aged girls have increased significantly in most developing regions; however, Africa, Oceania and Western Asia still face disparities in that regard.

Within Africa, West Africa is the subregion that has most improved within the continent, followed by North Africa. Southern Africa has continued to register strong progress in reaching parity at all levels of education over the years, followed by North Africa, which has reached parity in all levels except for primary education and has made remarkable progress in tertiary education. Eastern Africa is making steady and significant progress from its initial conditions in closing the gender gap in tertiary education, although it is yet to reach target 3.A (Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015). Central Africa, on the other hand, trails behind all regions in making progress towards this target (see figure 2).

A number of countries, such as Angola, the Central African Republic, Chad and the Niger, continue to face challenges in closing gender gaps in education, with indices below the 1990 levels.

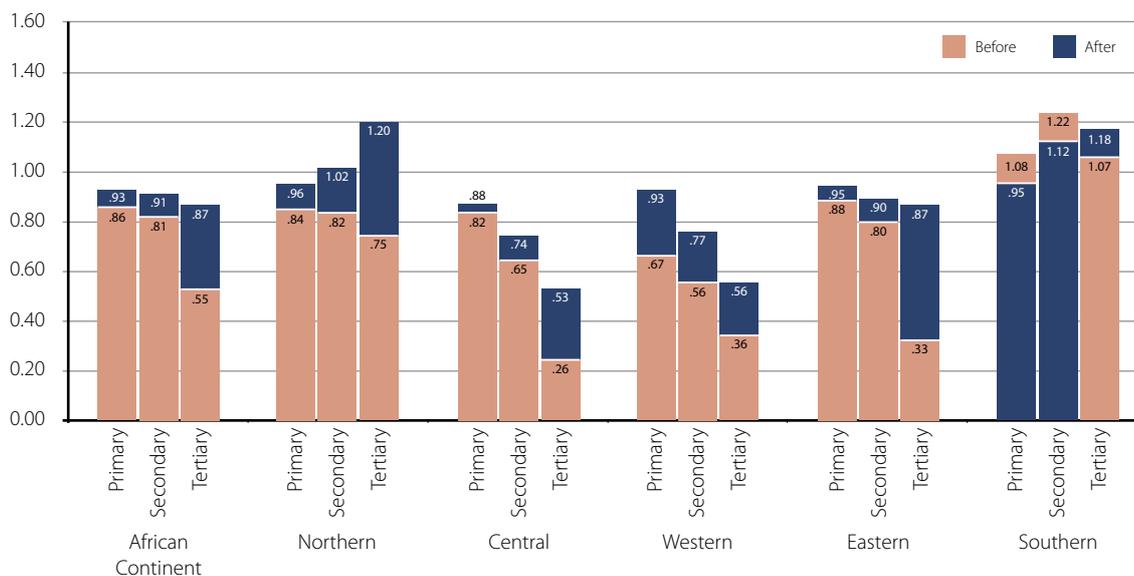
Gender barriers still exist at different levels of education

While there has been substantial progress in closing gender gaps in education, gender barriers remain and are more pronounced at different levels of education. These disparities manifest themselves in low completion rates for girls at the primary level and low transition rates between levels – primary to secondary, tertiary and into wage employment – with the exception of the Southern and Northern Africa subregions. Consequently, while parity may have been achieved at primary school enrolment, the gap widens and enrolment is much lower for girls at secondary and tertiary levels. Furthermore, the transition to paid employment in Africa excluding North Africa and other developing regions is much more difficult for girls than boys. Bringing about true gender equality in education will require resolving some key challenges in the quality of education in most countries, particularly in fragile states and countries in recovery, such as those in Central Africa that face persistent developmental challenges. These challenges include: reaching out to disadvantaged and socially excluded groups, which in most cases are in rural areas; increasing enrolments rates at secondary and tertiary levels with incentives and relevant policy interventions informed by gender equality concerns; and promoting transitioning from one level to the next in the education levels through to the labour market.

Uneven gains in the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector

Historically, in the agricultural sector in Africa, labour participation is generally high and almost the same for men and women. However, in the services sector, the participation of women is higher than that of men. For example, over the 2004-2007 period in Southern Africa, female and male labour force participation was 70 and 49 per cent, respectively. In the industrial sector, during the same period, however, female labour force participation was lower than that of men, at 11 per cent against 20 per cent. Furthermore, Africa's growth has had a limited impact on the welfare

Figure 2: Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education in Africa, before and after 2012



Source: Authors' calculations based on 2014 data from the United Nations Statistics Division.

Note: The closest data points to 1990 and 2012 are used.

of women and youth, and several constraints perpetuate significant gender gaps in women's participation in gainful employment in the formal sector. In order to enhance the productive capacities and economic empowerment of women together with skills development geared towards the formal sectors, it is imperative to remove barriers such as access to inputs, land, credit, capital and technology.

Enhancing women's productive capacities is critical in women's empowerment

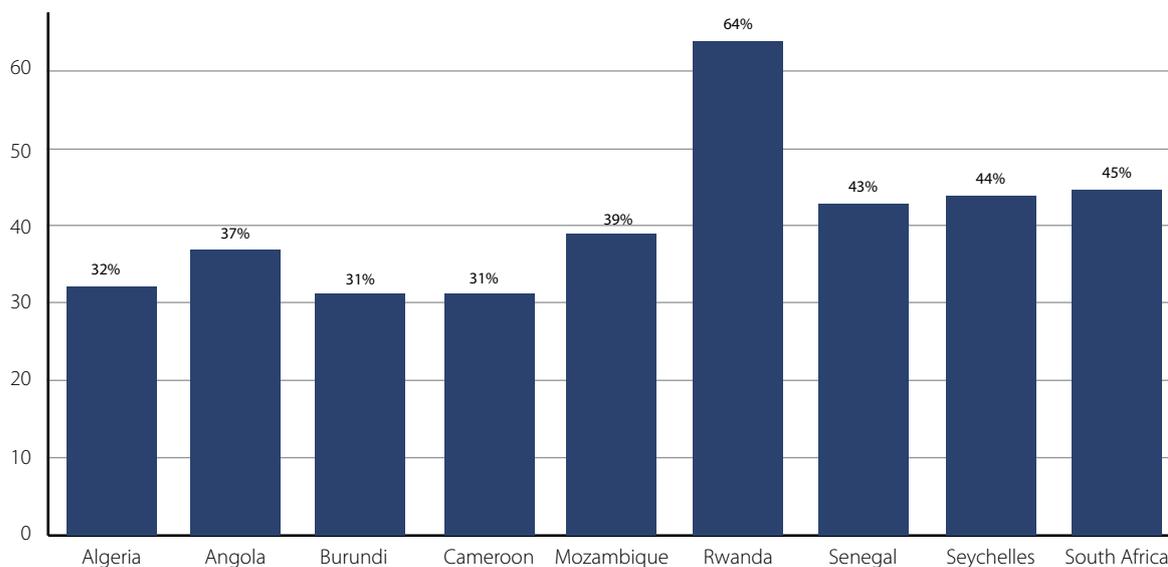
Women's enhanced productive capacities are critical, whether engaged in self- or wage employment, because working women are more likely to invest their earnings in building human capital in their homes and communities. Such micro-economic contributions can be crucial in keeping households out of poverty, increasing educational attainment and contributing to health outcomes in order to meet larger macroeconomic objectives. It is important, therefore, to ensure that women's productive capacities are enhanced by removing the barriers to entry in both the formal and informal sectors. The upward trend in the share of women in the non-agricultural and formal sectors is a strong indication of the gradual shift towards decent jobs for the majority of population groups

including women. More women, however, are most likely to be unemployed than men, and likely to be engaged in the informal sector (including the services sector) and vulnerable employment than their male counterparts in all regions.

Africa is leading in women's representation in national parliaments

Ensuring that women are well represented in positions of power and decision-making can remove some of the barriers they face in access to education, health and employment, thereby substantially reducing inequalities. Although the full impact of women's representation is yet to be realized, their slow but increasing representation in national parliaments is a positive lesson for women globally. This has been achieved largely through affirmative action programmes. From 2000 to 2014, the global average for women's representation in national parliaments rose steadily from 14 to 22 per cent. Over the same period, Africa has made the most progress on this target, with an increase in the share of women in national parliaments by at least 15 per cent, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (11 per cent increase), Asia (9.8 per cent increase) and developed regions (9 per cent increase).

Figure 3: African countries with more than 30 per cent of seats held by women in national parliaments



Source: Authors' calculations based on 2014 data from the United Nations Statistics Division.

There are significant differences, however, within regions and across countries, with results showing a direct correlation between policy measures put in place and the increase in numbers and levels of representation of women in national parliaments. There are nine African countries that are real front-runners in this respect (see figure 3).

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality
Impressive progress in reducing child mortality

Globally, an estimated 6.6 million children under five years of age died in 2012, a remarkable decline from the 12.6 million deaths in 1990. Yet, there are variations in the rate of reduction of child mortality across the various regions (see figure 4). Although Africa has shown encouraging progress in reducing child mortality, 3.2 million of the continent's children did not reach their fifth birthday in 2012; most died as a result of easily preventable infectious diseases. Consequently, Africa accounts for almost half of all child deaths globally, an increase from 29 per cent two decades ago (see figure 4). Ninety-nine out of 188 countries, including 43 of 48 countries in Africa excluding North Africa, observed more significant decreases in child mortality during the 2000-2013 period than during the 1990-2000 period. The average annual rate of

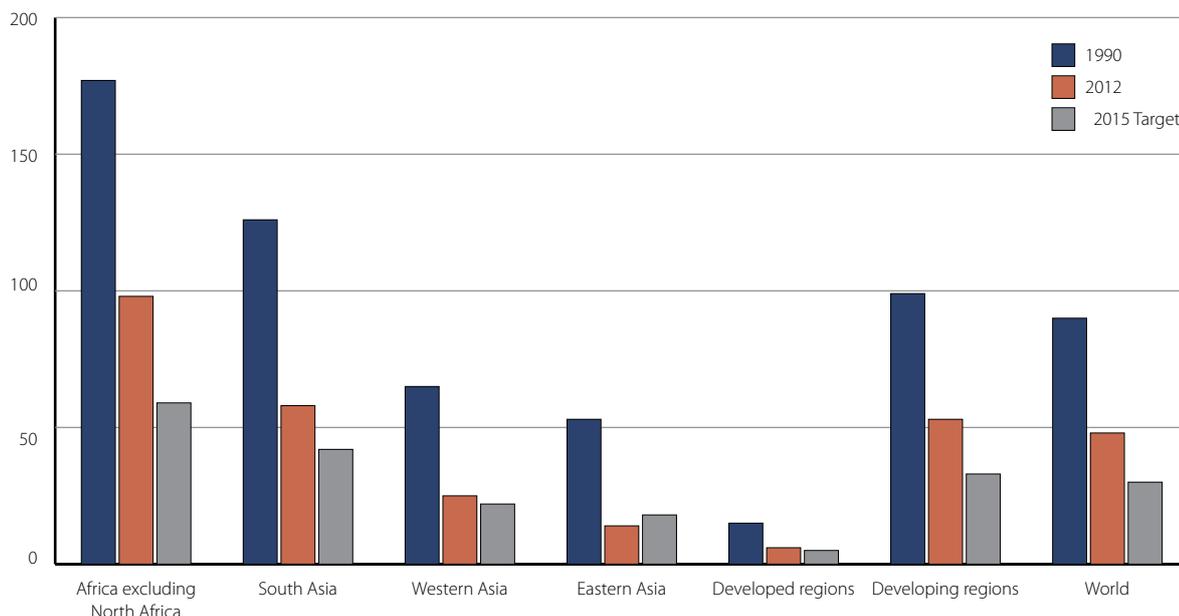
decline in child deaths was 4.1 per cent between 2005 and 2012, against 0.8 per cent between 1990 and 1995.

In Africa excluding North Africa, the under-five mortality rate fell by 44.6 percent, from 177 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 98 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2012, against the target of a two-thirds reduction.

There is also wide variation in the level of achievement among countries regarding the infant mortality rate target. The continent-wide infant mortality rate fell from 90 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 54 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014, an average decline of 40 per cent. In addition, from 1990 to 2012, 18 countries reduced their infant mortality rates by more than one half, and 26 countries registered decreases of between 20 and 49.9 per cent. Over the same period, however, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe registered increases in their infant mortality rate and in their under-five mortality rate.

Many African countries have demonstrated either slow progress or stagnating neonatal mortality rates. The situation is worse for the large rural populations of Africa that have poor access to and uti-

Figure 4: Under-five mortality rates (deaths per 1,000 live births) by region in 1990, 2012, and the 2015 target



Source: United Nations Statistics Division, 2013.

lization of maternal and newborn health services. Africa excluding North Africa, where about a third of under-five deaths occurred during the neonatal period, has the highest neonatal mortality rate (32 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2012) and accounts for 38 per cent of global neonatal deaths.

MDG 5: Improve maternal health

Africa has the highest maternal mortality rates

Africa is the region with the highest maternal mortality rate in the world. According to United Nations Statistics Division data, in 2013, Africa had 289 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, compared to the world average of 210 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. For that same year, the developed regions of the world reported the lowest maternal mortality rate (16 deaths per 100,000 live births), followed by Eastern Asia (33 deaths per 100,000 live births), and Caucasus and Central Asia (39 deaths per 100,000) (table 1).

Global data on the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel indicate that Africa is still one of the regions with the lowest proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (68 per cent), although it performed better than Southern Asia, which reported 51 per cent in 2012. Four African countries registered an impressive

performance, with over 95 per cent of the births being attended by skilled health personnel (Libya, 99.8 per cent; Tunisia, 98.6 per cent; Mauritius, 98.4 per cent; and Algeria, 95.2 per cent). Results also indicate that Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Niger and the Sudan were the weakest performers in Africa.

Family planning should be significantly improved

The contraceptive prevalence rate for married women indicates the ability of a woman to plan when to have children and how many children to have. According to United Nations Statistics Division data on 2012, Africa registered the second lowest contraceptive prevalence rate (44.3 per cent) in the world after Oceania (37.3 per cent). More than 70 per cent of African countries have a contraceptive prevalence rate of less than 50 per cent, which may explain the high maternal deaths that have persisted in Africa. Five countries, namely Chad, Eritrea, the Gambia, Guinea and Mauritania, reported a rate of less than 10 per cent, in contrast to Mauritius, which has the highest contraceptive prevalence rate in Africa.

Condom use is one of the most important modes of contraception, especially in the spacing of pregnancies. Despite the popularity of condom

Table 1: Global comparisons on maternal mortality ratio (maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, women aged 15-49)

Maternal mortality ratio	1990	2000	2013
World	380	330	210
Developing regions	430	370	230
Africa	575	470	289
Latin America and the Caribbean	140	110	85
Eastern Asia	95	63	33
Southern Asia	530	360	190
South-Eastern Asia	320	220	140
Western Asia	130	97	74
Oceania	390	290	190
Caucasus and Central Asia	70	65	39
Developed regions	26	17	16

Source: United Nations Statistics Division, data updated on 7 July 2014.

use in Africa, only a small proportion of married women use it as a method of contraception. Botswana, the Congo, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland have the highest users of condoms among married women aged 15-49 years, although all African countries have condom prevalence rates of less than 50 per cent. Other African countries reported less than a 10 per cent prevalence rate for condom use among women in 2013.

Concerted efforts are needed to prevent adolescent pregnancies

Early childbearing is associated not only with health risks to both the young mother and her child, but also with missed opportunities at school and work, and the consequent intergenerational transmission of poverty. Therefore, reducing early childbearing can impact the achievement of other Millennium Development Goals on poverty, education, gender equality and child mortality. Globally, almost all the regions are witnessing a decline in adolescent birth rates among girls aged 15 to 19 years. Africa, specifically, saw a substantially higher decline in adolescent births rates between 2000 and 2011.

Nevertheless, Africa still faces a major challenge in addressing adolescent birth rates; half of African countries have adolescent birth rates of more than 100 births per 1,000 women. Since, accord-

ing to the World Health Organization, rates above 100 are considered very high, concerted efforts are required to minimize these pregnancies if Africa is to witness a major reduction in maternal deaths. Only seven African countries – Algeria, Djibouti, Libya, Mauritius, Morocco, Rwanda and Tunisia – have reported adolescent birth rates of less than 50 births per 1,000 women.

Antenatal care coverage needs to be expanded significantly

The World Health Organization has recommended a minimum of four antenatal care visits to ensure the well-being of mothers and newborns. According to the global Millennium Development Goals Report 2014, only 52 per cent of pregnant women had four or more antenatal care visits during pregnancy in 2012, an increase from 37 per cent in 1990. The findings indicate that Africa continues to perform poorly in respect of this indicator, with less than 50 per cent attendance of the recommended four antenatal care visits. However, it should be noted that 80 per cent of the women in Africa attended antenatal care in a health facility at least once. Among African countries, Ghana, South Africa and Tunisia have the highest antenatal care coverage, i.e. above 80 per cent of pregnant women, whereas Somalia and Djibouti have the lowest.

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Significant strides in the battle against HIV/AIDS

In the last 15 years, Africa has made significant strides in combating HIV/AIDS and is succeeding in reversing the evolution of the pandemic and reducing its death toll. The progress has encompassed all five of Africa's geographical subregions. Between 2001 and 2013, the incidence of the disease among adults, i.e. the number of new HIV infections per year per 100 people aged 15-49 years, was more than halved in Southern, West and Central Africa; fell by 46 per cent in East Africa; and remained constant at the low level of 0.01 per cent in North Africa. In fact, all countries but Angola and Uganda are registering downward trends in the occurrence of new infections. These two countries are actually faced with a worsening situation.

As a result of the decline in new infections, from 2005 to 2013, the HIV prevalence among adults in Africa excluding North Africa went down from 5.6 to 4.7 per cent and AIDS-related deaths in the population (all ages) recorded a 40 per cent drop, from 1.8 million people to 1.1 million people. In North Africa, the prevalence of HIV among adults was 0.1 per cent over the same period; however, AIDS-related deaths in the population (all ages) increased, from 6,700 to 10,100 people.

Currently, the percentage of people living with HIV that have access to treatment is estimated at 37 per cent in Africa excluding North Africa; however, there are large disparities among countries. Nigeria and South Africa, for instance, are the two countries with the largest number of people living with HIV in the region, i.e. 3.2 and 6.3 million, respectively, but only 20 per cent of the infected people in Nigeria and 42 per cent in South Africa have access to treatment. There are also treatment differentials within countries; children and men are less likely than adults and women to undergo treatment.

Access to HIV counselling, testing and therapy has improved among people who have tuberculosis. In 2012, 74 per cent of all notified tuberculosis

cases were tested for HIV. It is established that HIV treatment lowers the risk of death among people who have both HIV and tuberculosis by 50 per cent. Similarly, among tuberculosis-free HIV patients, antiretroviral treatment reduces the risk of contracting tuberculosis by 66 per cent.

Downward trend in malaria cases and deaths

Africa continues to make good gains in combating malaria and is progressing towards halting its spread in the continent. The percentage reduction in malaria cases and deaths in Africa is slightly higher than the world average. Since 2000, in Africa excluding North Africa, malaria cases have dropped by 34 per cent and the death rate has fallen by 54 per cent compared to 30 per cent and 47 per cent decreases at the global level, respectively. The global burden of malaria mortality and morbidity is highest in Africa excluding North Africa. In 2013, 90 per cent of all malaria deaths occurred in Africa excluding North Africa. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria alone accounted for 34 per cent of all malaria cases and 39 per cent of all malaria deaths in 2013. International targets for reducing cases and deaths will not be attained unless considerable progress is made in these two countries. North African countries with ongoing malaria transmission are progressing very well in malaria elimination efforts. However, specific efforts to protect pregnant women and children against malaria are moving at a slower pace. The *World Malaria Report 2014* indicates that approximately 15 million of the 35 million pregnant women in Africa excluding North Africa in 2013 did not receive a single dose of preventive malaria treatment in pregnancy.

Slow progress in tuberculosis control

Since 2000, Africa has experienced a downward trend in tuberculosis prevalence, incidence and death rates. The incidence rate declined together with the prevalence rate after peaking in 2000. However, the average percentage reductions between 1990 and 2012 were low. Indeed, while tuberculosis prevalence and death rates decreased by an average of 15 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, the incidence rate increased by an average of 14 per cent. The Central African Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Ghana, Malawi, the Niger, Rwanda

and Uganda are some of the best performing countries, recording reductions of more than 50 per cent for all three indicators. By contrast, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Liberia, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Swaziland all more than doubled their 1990 rates for at least two of the above tuberculosis indicators.

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Deforestation is rampant and carbon dioxide emissions are rising

Forests serve multiple environmental, socioeconomic and cultural roles in many countries. They are among the most diverse and widespread ecosystems of the world. Forests provide many significant resources and functions including wood products and non-wood products, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitats, conservation of biological diversity, water and soil. They also play a crucial role in the global carbon cycle. There is general concern over the impact of human activity on forest health and on the natural processes of forest growth and regeneration.

A continuing and fast-decreasing forest area in a country might be a sign of unsustainable practices in the forestry and agricultural sector. The availability of accurate data on a country's forest area, a basic characteristic of its forest resources, is an essential requirement for forest policy and planning within the context of sustainable development. The global rate of deforestation has slowed in the last decade, but is still alarmingly high in many parts of the world, and the Millennium Development Goal indicator on forests has not been achieved. In most regions of the world, the proportion of land area covered by forest shrank between 1990 and 2010. Rising carbon dioxide emissions in a few countries raise concerns about future trends. Over the period 1990-2010, only 16 African countries reduced their carbon dioxide emissions, while 38 increased them. Gabon recorded the largest reduction (3.5 metric tons per capita), whereas Equatorial Guinea (6.4 metric tons) and Seychelles (6.5 metric tons) recorded the greatest increases. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita were highest in developed regions and lowest in Africa. Most regions of the world

recorded an increase in carbon dioxide emissions between 1990 and 2010 except Africa excluding North Africa and Oceania. Developed regions also experienced a decline.

Increasing proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected

Protected areas are essential to the conservation of species, ecosystems and the livelihoods they support. They also play a key role in adaptation to and mitigation of the impacts of climate change. The proportion of protected terrestrial and marine areas has increased in all regions of the world. Globally, between 1990 and 2012, 14 per cent of terrestrial and marine areas were protected in 2012. In Africa excluding North Africa, protected area coverage increased from 10.7 to 15.2. By 2012, a total of 32 African countries had reached the target of protecting at least 10 per cent of their territorial and marine areas compared to 19 countries in 1990.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation is improving slowly, but progress remains skewed towards urban areas

Since 2000, almost one quarter of the current African population (24 per cent) – the lowest figure globally – has gained access to an improved drinking water source. Furthermore, only 16 per cent of the population has access to piped drinking water; this is also the lowest figure in the world. There are also wide rural urban disparities in access to safe drinking water that tend to bring down national aggregate figures in some countries (table 2).

Sanitation is still a daunting challenge. The proportion of people with access to improved sanitation is low for all developing regions. From 1990 to 2012, this indicator has increased moderately in Africa excluding North Africa (from 24 per cent to 30 per cent), compared to North Africa (from 72 per cent to 91 per cent) and developing regions (from 36 to 57 per cent) during the same period. Africa also remains far from the target of 66 per cent coverage to be met by 2015. There are disparities across countries. Only 4 out of the 77 countries that met this target in 2012 were from Africa (Algeria, Cabo Verde, Egypt and Tunisia). The

Table 2: Use of improved drinking water sources, 2012

	Urban	Rural	Total
Oceania	94	45	56
Africa excluding North Africa	85	53	64
Caucus and Central Asia	96	78	86
Developing regions	95	80	87
World	96	82	89
Western Asia	96	79	91
Southern Asia	96	89	91
North Africa	95	89	92
Eastern Asia	98	85	92
Latin America and Caribbean	97	82	94
Developed regions	100	98	99

Source: World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, 2014.

rural-urban divide and the poor situation of slum dwellers further compound this slow progress.

North Africa maintains the lowest slum prevalence among developing regions

The proportion of people living in slum conditions in urban areas was highest in Africa excluding North Africa (62 per cent). The lowest slum prevalence is observed in North Africa, with a level of 13 per cent. From 2000 to 2012, the share of urban residents in the developing world living in slums declined from 39 to 33 per cent. Globally, the target, under Goal 7, of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 has been attained, ten years in advance.

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Trade and related economic agreements are worrisome from an African perspective

African share of global merchandise trade declined from 3.5 per cent in 2012 to 3.3 per cent in 2013, compared with 4.9 per cent in the 1970s. In the short term, it is expected that Africa's imports will increase more than its exports, deteriorating national trade balances. In the meantime, intra-African trade, at 16.3 per cent of total trade in 2013, is still low compared with other regions. Greater efforts are required to address supply-side constraints and ensure that multilateral trade agree-

ments benefit Africa. This not only highlights the critical need for Africa to diversify its economy, but also to meet international norms and standards and rules of origin.

Negotiations through the so called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between African countries and the European Union are ongoing, but little progress has been made. EPAs have not had the desired impact on Africa's economies. Renegotiated EPAs, which technically came into effect on 1 October 2014, were aimed at changing this. The United States African Growth and Opportunity Act entered its final year on 1 October 2014 and has been renewed until 20 September 2020. Nevertheless, in both cases, there is no evidence that the stated goals of trade development and sustainable growth have been achieved in African countries. Despite efforts, many countries have found it difficult to expand trade and take advantage of the preferential market access programmes. For many African countries, logistical bottlenecks at ports and foreign exchange policy constraints constitute major hindrances. There is also a shortage of skilled workforce in many countries. The continent also continues to experience a very large infrastructure deficit and there are other supply-side constraints, including relatively low labour productivity, little or no scale economies, and shallow capital markets.

Development aid continues to fall short of commitments

Most States members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development continue to ignore their long-standing commitment as States Members of the United Nations to disburse 0.7 per cent of their gross national income (GNI) in official development assistance (ODA). However, the United Kingdom increased its ODA by 29 per cent between 2012 and 2013, which translates into a disbursement of 0.72 per cent of GNI. This was the first time that the United Kingdom had surpassed the important target of 0.7 per cent of GNI. It did so again in 2014, disbursing current US\$17.9 billion, or 0.71 per cent of the country's GNI in ODA.

However, total ODA during 2014 represents a downturn of 0.5 per cent in real 2013 prices. As a group, total ODA reached only 0.29 per cent of the combined GNI of DAC countries in 2014, which implies a delivery gap of 0.41 per cent when compared with the United Nations target. This delivery gap was lower the year before, at 0.40. The delivery gap in absolute dollars was \$169.6 billion in 2013, on top of similar delivery gaps over previous years. This is equivalent to half of South Africa's total GDP, or to the combined GDP of the 28 smallest African countries. Thus, the annual delivery gaps are huge and could have contributed significantly to speeding up Africa's development.

It is estimated that ODA from DAC countries to Africa will be substantially lower in 2014 (\$46 billion) than in 2013 (\$50 billion), with both amounts referring to 2013 US dollars. Moreover, a 2014 survey conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development shows that ODA to Africa is projected to remain low over the period 2015-2018, at an average of around constant 2013 US\$47 billion annually. Another delivery gap concerns quality aspects of ODA disbursements. Studies show that significant shares of ODA remain in the donor country through various channels. Aid effectiveness is another concern among scholars and other field-oriented professionals and entities.

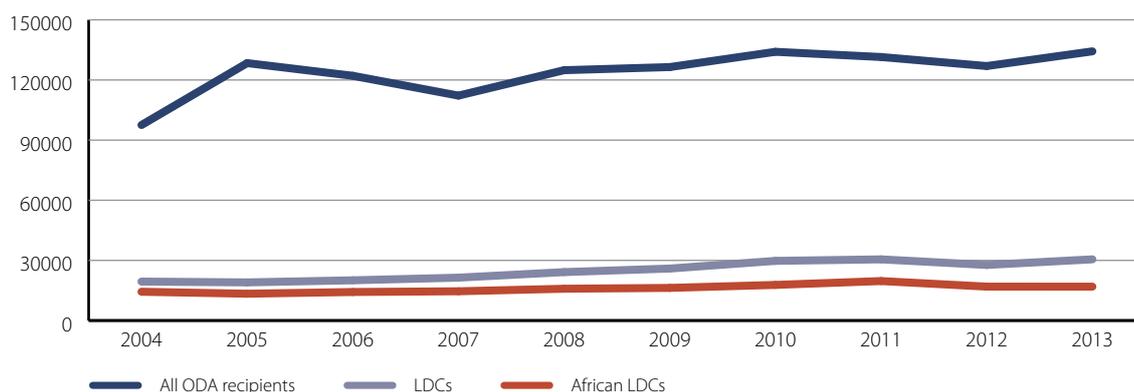
ODA to the least developed countries deteriorated both in 2011 and 2012, then resurged in 2013, but is estimated to have deteriorated further in 2014 with \$37.8 billion, representing 28 per cent of all ODA from DAC countries. Indeed, ODA from those countries to the least developed countries amounts to only about one third of total ODA disbursed since 1990. In fact, according to the most recently available metadata, only eight DAC countries met the 0.15 per cent United Nations target of net ODA to the least developed countries in 2012. ODA from DAC countries to African least developed countries has not changed much in recent years. Between 2004 and 2013, the share of ODA flows averaged 20 per cent to the least developed countries and only 13 per cent to African least developed countries (see figure 5).

Lack of access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets, as well as high transit costs impose real burdens on socioeconomic progress in landlocked developing countries. In general, African landlocked developing countries as a group experienced ODA reductions, so that the average ODA as a percentage of their GNI dropped steadily from 14.1 in 2004 to 11.1 in 2012. Over the longer period of 1990-2012, the average ODA to African landlocked developing countries amounted to 13.6 per cent of the recipient group's GNI, while being 14.4 over the period 1990-2003, and 12.3 over the period 2004-2012.

Similarly, small island developing States have not been spared from cuts in ODA. In 2012, the average ODA as a percentage of small island developing States' GNI was only 9.6, compared to the 1990-2003 average of 18.3, and the 2004-2012 average of 10.7. Four of the six African small island developing States – namely, Cabo Verde, the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, and Seychelles – experienced reductions of ODA as a percentage of their GNI of over 25 per cent.

Debt sustainability is a growing concern

Since 2010, total foreign debt has been higher than 30 per cent of GDP in Africa and is expected to rise to 37.1 per cent of GDP in 2015. In 2015, net foreign debt (total debt minus reserves) as a share

Figure 5: ODA from DAC countries in constant 2012 US\$ million, 2004-2013

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014.

of GDP is projected to be only 1 per cent of GDP, following a negative trend since 2006 due to high international reserves in oil-exporting economies. Mineral-rich and oil-importing African countries have positive net foreign debt, and some extreme cases have very high ratios, raising issues of debt sustainability.

The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative is almost completed, as 35 out of 39 countries eligible for debt relief under the Initiative have now reached the completion point. Three African countries – Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan – are newly eligible for debt relief under the Initiative, but have yet to start the process. Africa's long-term debt sustainability remains a challenge for post-completion point countries owing mainly to structural problems and inadequate debt management capacity. As conclusion of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative draws near, the growing concern about debt sustainability raises the more basic issue of how to ensure a fair debt workout mechanism to address future sovereign debt crises.

Notable progress on technology indicators

Fixed telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants peaked in 2009, averaging 4.17 from 1.44 in 1990. Thereafter, it steadily declined to 3.60 in 2013. This is closely related to fast growth of populations and mobile telephone subscriptions. Mobile telephone subscriptions have indeed grown massively in Africa from only four African countries registering mobile-cellular subscriptions in

1990 to all African countries having mobile subscriptions in 2013. Subscriptions averaged 80.20 per 100 inhabitants, with 15 African countries registering over 100 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants. Having reached 11.1 percent in 2013, mobile subscriptions in Africa as a whole continued to grow and surpass the global average of 6.3. Africans have been able to utilize mobile phone technology in a number of innovative ways that have changed their lives in banking, activism, education, entertainment, disaster management, agriculture and health. In Africa, 14.7 out of 100 inhabitants use the Internet, which is much lower than the world average of 43.7. However, during the 2004-2013 period, the average annual growth of Internet users per 100 inhabitants was much faster in Africa (21.7 per cent) than the global average (10.2 percent). If the current growth rates are maintained over the coming years, Africa as a whole may reach global rates.

Lessons learned from Millennium Development Goal implementation

The Millennium Development Goal implementation process has generated invaluable lessons that can inform policymaking going forward. This is particularly important in the context of the new development agenda, which will build on several elements of the Goals. While sector-specific lessons can be drawn from each Goal, there are some overarching lessons that cut across various sectors and even into the new areas that will be covered by the post-2015 development agenda.

Low initial conditions slow the pace of progress on the Millennium Development Goals

The relatively low baseline figures for Africa on most Millennium Development Goal targets explain in part the continent's failure to achieve most of the Goals. Initial conditions influence the character and pace of a country's progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. As a result, differentiated approaches to supporting and evaluating progress are imperative.

Commitments do not have to be binding to achieve results

Significant progress has been achieved on several targets even though the commitments made by its signatories were non-binding. This positive outcome was partly due to the effective communication and continual follow-up processes undertaken at the national, regional and global levels.

Global agendas can induce demand for data

The Millennium Development Goals underlined the importance of timely access to disaggregated data as an important ingredient in monitoring results and holding relevant stakeholders accountable for their actions or inactions.

Millennium Development Goals induced demand for more comprehensive and timely data

The desire of governments to demonstrate results and of stakeholders to track performance invariably generated demand for data and contributed to improvements in data availability.

Strengthening both access to and quality of service delivery

The Millennium Development Goals have also revealed that improvements in access to basic services have often not been associated with improvements in the quality of service delivery. Given the substantial resources required to leverage change and the urgency to improve access, the quality of service delivery has not received the desired attention; more effort must be made in this area.

Sustainability requires adopting an integrated approach to development

The focus of the Millennium Development Goals on outcomes such as poverty reduction without particular attention to the underlying causes has led in some cases to undesirable, unintended and often unsustainable consequences. For instance, the Ebola pandemic has exposed the shortcomings of vertical, or disease-specific, interventions that fail to address fundamental weaknesses of the health system.

Exploiting inter-sectoral synergies heightens impact

The Millennium Development Goals have also highlighted the benefits and efficiency gains that can be achieved by leveraging inter-sectoral synergies. For instance, improving child and maternal health is not merely a health issue, but requires related non-health interventions such as reducing adolescent child births, improving contraceptive use, and improving access to sanitation and improved water sources.

Progress is tied to a robust means of implementation

The Millennium Development Goals lacked a robust mechanism for implementation. While the Monterrey Consensus provided a framework for funding the Goals, the follow-up mechanism was ineffective. Strengthening the means of implementation of global agendas is therefore key to success.

Poverty reduction is underpinned by rapid, sustained and inclusive growth

Critical to Tunisia's success in reducing extreme poverty by 76.3 per cent over the 1990-2005 period was rapid and sustained real GDP growth of around 5 per cent over the previous two decades combined with a long-standing commitment to social and physical development.

Growth need not compromise on equality

Rwanda's experience illustrates how growth can occur hand-in-hand with improvements in income distribution. The country's growth has been associated with falling inequality since 2007.

This is in contrast to the 2000-2001 to 2005-2006 period, when inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, rose from 0.51 to 0.52. The Gini coefficient then declined from 0.52 to 0.49 during the 2006-2011 period.

Strengthening capacities through social protection reduces poverty and inequalities

Social protection programmes have played an effective complementary role in reducing poverty and enhancing the skills and capacities of vulnerable groups. Such programmes have been effective in countries that view it not as a “handout”, but rather as a long-term investment in people, reinforced by regular budgetary allocations.

Investments in rural education infrastructure

Investments in rural education infrastructure have proven effective in expanding access to primary schools. Ethiopia increased its net primary enrolment rate from 50 per cent in 1990 to 86.5 per cent in 2009/2010 due in part to the construction of classrooms, particularly in rural areas where access poses an acute challenge.

Community empowerment

Empowering local communities to run their own schools has boosted primary enrolment, particularly in poor communities. Togo and Burundi have adopted an innovative approach of direct community involvement in the running of schools. In the poorest region of Togo, Savanes, most of the schools are entirely funded by rural households, including the building of classrooms and the payment of teachers' wages. As a consequence, the net enrolment rate increased from 67 per cent in 1990 to 87 per cent in 2008.

Tracking attendance and enhancing the learning experience

Tracking attendance has proven effective in improving attendance and reducing dropout rates. The United Republic of Tanzania is mapping, to the extent possible, all primary education facilities and identifying all school-aged children, including those out-of-school. This information is useful in gauging the scope of the nation's educational resource needs.

The importance of removing barriers to female education

The removal of economic and social cultural barriers to education is an imperative for progress in gender equality and the empowerment of women. This is also true for the labour market and women's participation in the social and political spheres.

Policy reforms and affirmative action promote political empowerment

The introduction of quotas and voluntary quota systems has been instrumental in boosting the representation of women in national parliaments and political parties. Uganda has made a legal provision for 69 women representatives in the national parliament – around 22 per cent of the total.

Investing in health-care workers

Improving the skills of health workers in delivering high-impact interventions is fundamental to improving child survival. Ethiopia's Health Extension Programme and integrated Community Case Management strategy, and its so-called “Health Development Army” have been critical for successful community-based newborn care. North Africa has made significant progress in reducing the maternal mortality rate by improving access to professional health workers. In Egypt, in 2002, 61 per cent of all births were attended by skilled personnel, leading to a 50 per cent decline in all maternal deaths in only eight years.

Reducing financial barriers to health services

A number of countries including Burundi, Ghana and Sierra Leone have abolished user fees in the provision of maternal health-care services while many others are providing subsidies and protection schemes in a bid to improve maternal health.

The effectiveness of the Directly Observed Treatment Shortcourse

The Directly Observed Treatment Shortcourse (DOTS) was developed and proved to be a low-cost, effective strategy for the detection and treatment of tuberculosis through which millions of tuberculosis deaths might be prevented. It is one

of the most widely advocated and used strategies today.

Pursuing deforestation

Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Rwanda and Tunisia have launched reforestation programmes. In Cabo Verde, the proportion of forested area climbed by 6.7 percentage points to 21.1 per cent during the period 1990-2010. Malawi has had some success in addressing deforestation. A project run by RIPPLE Africa in Malawi provides a sustainable source of timber by planting fast-growing, exotic trees, conserving indigenous trees by decreasing the demand for wood from Malawi's natural forests, and restoring degraded land by planting indigenous trees where appropriate.

Advocacy targeted at local communities

Targeted advocacy and infrastructure development initiatives can be successful in improving sanitation. Ethiopia's efforts have led to a decrease in the practice of open defecation from 82 per cent in 1990 to 34 per cent in 2012. The key to success was advocacy aimed at encouraging communities to stop open defecation and investments in the construction of sanitation facilities.

Ghana has enhanced access to urban, rural and small town water supplies and improved irrigation facilities for more than 2,400 peasant farmers by rehabilitating its infrastructure, and by expanding and building new elements to meet current and growing demand.

Conclusions

African countries will not meet all the Millennium Development Goals, but this should not overshadow the progress made in devising innovative

solutions to some of their pressing development challenges. In poverty and social development, progress has been underpinned by rapid growth and investments in social and economic infrastructure, greater involvement of local communities in service delivery, and policy reforms aimed at reducing financial and cultural barriers to access to social services. Girls and women have been empowered through affirmative action programmes, and by addressing cultural biases and by investing in gender-appropriate infrastructure.

Strengthening governance systems through rigorous monitoring mechanisms for results and budget tracking are critical. The availability of data on pupils' enrolment, completion, learning achievement and other information related to budget and results- is also critical. Experience shows the importance of addressing data gaps at the national and regional levels to ensure effective follow-up.

Reforestation and rain harvesting initiatives have helped to reduce the rate of deforestation and expand access to improved water sources. Despite limited progress on sanitation, advocacy and awareness raising have generated progress in this area.

Moving forward, countries will benefit from continued support to develop home-grown solutions to their development challenges.

One important lesson from the MDG experience is that initial conditions invariably influence the pace of progress on global development agendas. Given their relatively low scores on most MDG indicators in 1990, it is not surprising that Africa will not achieve all the MDGs by 2015. Nevertheless, several countries introduced successful institutional and policy reforms to improve governance, promote economic growth and enhance access to social services. As a result, the pace of progress on all indicators has accelerated since 2005.

In particular, African countries have made significant strides in enhancing women's representation in national parliaments, reducing maternal, infant, and HIV-related deaths, and placing more children in primary schools. These achievements are a testament to the effort and commitment of the African people and their governments to meet the Goals.

However, several challenges remain: a high degree of inequity still characterizes access to social services including health and education; much remains to be done to achieve full and productive employment for all, particularly for women and youth; the threat of conflict and climate change looms large and could derail the progress made so far; and shocks such as the Ebola crisis have exposed the weakness of the health systems in some countries.

Sustaining the momentum and advancing the gains made under the MDGs will therefore require new approaches which embrace all three dimensions of sustainability – environmental, economic and social. In this context, African countries will need to adopt more inclusive growth strategies that create decent jobs for broad sections of society, promote equity and meet the development needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Africa's regional strategy for sustained and inclusive development complemented by the global post 2015 development agenda provide an appropriate framework for sustainable development. Nevertheless, an important lesson of the MDGs is that success will hinge on a credible means of implementation. This report highlights successful policy interventions in Africa that should guide the implementation of the post 2015 development agenda going forward.