



18 August 2014 - Today marks the [500 day milestone](#) until the target date to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - 8 goals established by the UN and governments around the world to tackle some of the world's biggest problems. A lot has been achieved since September 2000, when the MDGs were established, but much still remains to be done before September 2015.

Success stories and challenges

To begin with, extreme poverty in the world has been reduced by 50%, and the rates have fallen in every developing region. Despite this impressive achievement at the global level, 1.2 billion people are still living in extreme poverty.

Developing regions have made impressive strides in expanding access to primary education. Gender gaps in access to education have narrowed, but disparities still remain in all levels of education, particularly for the most excluded and marginalized. Moreover, girls continue to face barriers to schooling, particularly in Northern Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia

Worldwide, maternal mortality has declined by nearly half since 1990. Also, the mortality rate for children under five dropped by 47 per cent—from 90 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 48 in 2012. Despite this accomplishment, more rapid progress is needed to meet the 2015 target of a two-thirds reduction in under-five mortality.

Global malaria deaths fell by an estimated 26 per cent from 2000 to 2010. Although HIV infections are declining in most regions, 2.3 million people are newly infected by HIV every year, with 1.6 million of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

MDGs have made a difference

At the launch of the [Millennium Development Goals Report 2014](#) in July 2014, the UN Secretary-General expressed his faith in the MDGs and the positive effects their pursuit brings: “The Millennium Development Goals have shown that we can make profound differences in people’s lives. The journey we started in the year 2000 has seen us build a solid foundation for further progress.”

Read [stories](#) about MDG progress and success from around the world and share your own story [here](#) .

Join and follow the global conversation to see what people around the world are saying using the hashtag #MDGmomentum

UNRIC's related links:

UNRIC's library backgrounder on the [Millennium Development Goals](#)