# UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL SACRO CUORE

## Master in International Relations

The UN Millennium Development Goals:

A utopian dream for an equal future

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*Abstract*

The Millennium Project, commissioned by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 2002, aspires to develop a concrete action plan for the world to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Development goals are the United Nations' response to the new demands and old difficulties which the peoples of the world have to deal with: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; develop a global partnership for development.

This work seeks to provide a peripheral vision of the UN efforts to propose global actions in order to offer a better prospective of an equal world. With the analysis of strategies and plans proposed by the United Nations during the last years, this work aims, moreover, to explore the concrete implementation of the eight target, highlighting which achievements, failures and critics they have met.

*Introduction*

My thesis seeks to deepen the United Nations' effort to create an equal and dreamy world where poverty, hunger, disparities, deaths and diseases diminished to clear some space to equality between Developed and Developing countries.

Furthermore, the aim of my work is to explore concretely the eight goals proposed by the United Nations highlighting which targets have been met so far, which have not and where.

Finally, my analysis drives at displaying how the Millennium Development Goals have been embraced in Guatemala, underlying firstly the reason why they have been so welcome, secondly, which category of people has been excluded by the targets and, finally, which is reaction -both official and unofficial- of the Guatemalan governments and population.

I decided to choose this subject because I wanted to examine in depth the importance of the United Nations as the most important international institution in the sphere of development of the Developing and Least Developing Countries. In my liberal vision of the world, I have always considered the UN as the crucial organisation capable of mitigate and spur on rich countries to help poorer regions.

Moreover, I selected this topic because my intensions were to realize how much the theory of an equal world differed from the practise, in particular if and how much, concretely, the UN targets have been spread and achieved.

In order to deepen my analysis on the United Nations and its actions, I exploited the available data, documents and reports that I found on the UN website and some official documents from the Guatemalan government.

My work is divided in three chapters, each of them focus on a particular aspect of the problem I analysed.

The first chapter displays the long path that the United Nation had to do to create the eight targets for the world, from the year 2000.

The second chapter presents a deep study of the goals, perusing their achievements, their failures and their hope for the future post-2015.

The third and last chapter is a survey of a specific Country -Guatemala- and its connection to the MDGs, underlying that not every single UN goal have been met and

that, even if the Country improved its situation in the last years, it still has work to do in order to achieve that equality that the UN hoped. This last section of my thesis aimed at demonstrating my scope: the ambitious and utopian dream that the United Nations cherished in the last almost fifteen years, cannot fits for everyone in the world… because "no size fits all".

# 1.  "WE CAN END POVERTY": A LONG PATH FOR THE UN

Now that we are approaching the year 2015, target date for the eight United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved, I intend to figure out which was the UN process that led to this point. All the world's countries agreed on the United Nations' blueprint, which scope is to halve extreme poverty, to cease the spread of HIV/AIDS and to guarantee universal primary school education.

This first chapter will explore the long path, started in 2000, that the United Nations marked out in order to achieve its goals for poverty reduction. This path is constituted by three Summits, held in 2000, 2005 and 2010, whose aim was to urge Member States to put effort into global collaboration in order to achieve the eight goals.

Starting from September 2000, world leaders converged to commit their nations to a global partnership to diminish poverty and to fix some targets, which became popular as the Millennium Development Goals.

Thereafter, in 2005, during the World Summit, important decisions in the areas of development, security, human rights and reform of the United Nations were taken.

Finally, the 2010 MDG Summit pushed to hasten progress on women's and children's health, and pledged over $40 billion in resources over the next five years[1].

During the High-level Event on the MDGs, in 2008, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon described the MDGs as follows during the High-level Event on the MDGs, in 2008: "Eradicating extreme poverty continues to be one of the main challenges of our time, and is a major concern of the international community. Ending this scourge will require the combined efforts of all, governments, civil society organizations and the private sector, in the context of a stronger and more effective global partnership for development. The Millennium Development Goals set time bound targets, by which progress in reducing income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter and exclusion can be measured. They also embody basic human rights. The Goals are ambitious but feasible and, together with the

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[1] *UN Summit concludes with adoption of global action plan to achieve development goals by 2015*, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Closing%20press%20release%20FINAL-FINAL%20Rev3.pdf)

comprehensive United Nations development agenda, set the course for the world's efforts to alleviate extreme poverty by 2015".[2]

## 1.1    THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT

The General Assembly of the United Nations, by its resolution 53/202 of 17 December 1998[3], decided to designate its fifty-fifth session "The Millennium Assembly of the United Nations", and to organise a Millennium Summit of the United Nations.

The Millennium Summit, the largest gathering of world leaders in history, was held by 189 Heads of State and Government, lasting three days from Wednesday, 6 September, to Friday, 8 September 2000 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. It was co-chaired by the President of Finland Tarja Halonen and the President of Namibia Sam Nujoma.

Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations at that time, opened the first day of the Summit calling for a minute's silence for four United Nations workers who had been killed in West Timor by pro-Indonesian militiamen. U.S. President Bill Clinton and Russian President Vladimir Putin delivered a plea for world peace and disarmament. Sixty-three other speakers spoke, for five minutes each.

On the second day, seventy heads of State, including Chinese, Japanese, Sierra Leonean, South African and Sri Lankan Presidents, debated peacekeeping issues at a round-table meeting of the UN Security Council.

On the final day of the Summit, other sixty leaders, including Indian, Indonesian, Nigerian and Zimbabwean Presidents made their speeches.

During the Summit, whose purposes were to discuss the importance for the United Nations to strengthen its role in meeting the challenges of the 21st century[4] and to

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[2] *Committing to action: achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Background note by the Secretary-General*, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/commiting.pdf)

[3] *Resolution 53/202 adopted by the General Assembly: The Millennium Assembly of the United Nations*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/53/202&Lang=E)

[4] *UN summit agenda; The largest gathering of world leaders in history meets in New York to discuss the role of the United Nations in the 21st century*, BBC News website
(URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/904903.stm)

underline that the year 2000 is a "unique and symbolically compelling moment to articulate and affirm an animating vision for the United Nations"[5], world leaders drafted the United Nations Millennium Declaration. On 8 September 2000, after three days of Summit, Heads of State and Government unanimously adopted the Declaration pledging: "We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than one billion of them are currently subjected"[6]

The Millennium Declaration displays eight chapters[7], which delegates agreed on:

I. Values and Principles

Six are the fundamental values to international relations for the $21^{st}$ century[8]:

- Freedom.

  Men and women have the right to live in dignity, free from hunger, fear of violence, oppression or injustice.

- Equality.

  No individual or nation must be denied the chance to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.

- Solidarity.

  Global challenges must be managed in accordance with principles of equity and social justice. Along these lines, costs and burdens are distributed fairly.

- Tolerance.

  Human beings must be respectful one other, in all their multiplicity of belief, culture and language.

- Respect for nature.

  Human kind must act with prudence in the management of all living species and natural resources in order to preserve them for our descendants.

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[5] *Yearbook of the United Nations 1998,* United Nations, USA 1998, p.598

[6] *Resolution 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)

[7] *Resolution 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)

[8] *Resolution 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)

- Shared responsibility.

    Nations of the world must share their responsibility for managing economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security. As the most universal organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role.

II. Peace, Security and Disarmament

Underling that they "…will spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, which has claimed more than 5 million lives in the past decade"[9], Member States are willing to strengthen the rule of law and ensure compliance with decisions of the International Court of Justice.

Moreover, affirming that they "…will also seek to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction"[10], Member States' aim is to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for this aim.

III. Development and Poverty Eradication

Member States commit themselves to create an environment that could be favourable to development and to the eradication of poverty, to ensure the accomplishment of the High-level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development and to meet least developed countries' needs.

IV. Protecting our Common Environment

World leaders pledge themselves to free men and women from the threat of living on our planet, which is spoilt by human activities, by supporting the principles of sustainable development and by adopting, in all environmental actions, a new and different ethic of preservation.

V. Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance

Member States bind themselves upon the promotion of democracy, the strengthening of the rule of law, the respect for all the internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.

VI. Protecting the Vulnerable

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[9] *Resolution 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)

[10] *Resolution 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)

World leaders commit themselves to ensure that people that suffer the consequences of humanitarian emergencies are given assistance and protection by strengthening international cooperation.

VII. Meeting the Special Needs of Africa

Delegates pledge themselves to support the consolidation of democracy in African Countries and to assist Africans in their struggle for peace, poverty reduction and sustainable development. They are willing to help the region by giving institutional and political support to the emerging democracies, by taking measures to eradicate poverty and to develop the Continent and, finally, by helping Africa in tackling the spread of infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS.

VIII. Strengthening the United Nations

Emphasising the fact that Member States "…will spare no effort to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for pursuing all of these priorities: the fight for development for all the peoples of the world, the fight against poverty, ignorance and disease; the fight against injustice; the fight against violence, terror and crime; and the fight against the degradation and destruction of our common home"[11], they reiterate their faith in the United Nations. This trust in the international institution and its Charter, seen as indispensable for a more peaceful and just world, is even more stressed on one side by the fact that leaders are inclined to consider the United Nations General Assembly as a central position. On the other side, by the fact that Member States are willing to intensify efforts for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects and for further strengthen the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice.

## 1.2    THE 2005 WORLD SUMMIT

A further step towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is represented by the 2005 World Summit, a meeting that took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York City from 14 to 16 September 2005. The Summit, described by the United Nations as "a once-in-a-generation opportunity to take bold

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[11] *Resolution 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)

decisions in the areas of development, security, human rights and reform of the United Nations"[12], was held by 191 Member States.

The World Summit, also defined as Millennium+5 Summit, had the purpose of evaluating the progress towards the goals articulated in the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) for , between 2000 and 2005, many governments didn't act as promised and the gap between rich and poor continued to widen. In March 2005, Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented a five-year progress report, *In Larger Freedom[13]*, on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Governments received this report six months before the Summit, in order to have time to consider it before. The report was divided into four main sections: the first three presented priorities for action in the fields of development, security and human rights (underlining the importance for human beings to have "Freedom from Want", "Freedom from Fear" and "Freedom to live in dignity"[14]) , while the last dealt with global institutions.

During the three-day meeting, presided over by the Prime Minister of Sweden, Göran Persson, the majority of delegates addressed the UN General Assembly and made speeches on the United Nations' past achievements and future challenges.

However, although the Summit was convened to address possible reforms of the United Nations, many of those, with the exception of one, were postponed to a later date. The exception was the endorsement of the "Responsibility to Protect" (known also as RtoP and R2P), a new term linked to the "Right of Humanitarian Intervention", developed by a UN Commission. The RtoP gives the world community the right to intervene in the case of "national authorities manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity"[15]. The adoption of the RtoP was an historic step in the evolution of human

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[12] *The 2005 World Summit: an overview*, UN website

(URL: http://www.un.org/ga/documents/overview2005summit.pdf)

[13] *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all. Report of the Secretary-General*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/59/2005)

[14] *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all. Report of the Secretary-General*, UN website (URL: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/59/2005)

[15] *Resolution 60/1 adopted by the General Assembly: 2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN website

(URL: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf)

rights and humanitarian law because it focused the attention on the aspect of forceful intervention.

During a closing meeting on 16 September 2005, summaries of the discussions were presented and addressed to Member States, selected observers, members of non-governmental and regional organizations. Member States adopted a final outcome document containing a number of decisions and recommendations. This document, known as the World Summit Outcome Document, was delivered to the United Nations General Assembly in order to be adopted as a resolution on 16 September[16].

Thanks to this document, world leaders agreed on the following topics divided in five sections[17]:

I.   Values and principles

In this first section, Member States reaffirm their faith in the United Nations, restate the UN Millennium Declaration and their commitment to the purposes of the UN Charter.

II.  Development

Underlying global partnership for development, financing for development, domestic resource mobilization, investments, rural and agricultural development, employment and sustainable development, Member States "reiterate their determination to ensure the timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including those agreed at the Millennium Summit which have helped to galvanize efforts towards poverty eradication".[18]

III. Peace and collective security

In this third section, Member States identify that they are facing a wide range of threats that necessitate collective response, such as terrorism,

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[16] *United Nations General Assembly Session 60 Verbatim Report 8. Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields A/60/PV.8,* UN website
(URL: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/60/PV.8)

[17] *Resolution 60/1 adopted by the General Assembly: 2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN website
(URL: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf)

[18] *Resolution 60/1 adopted by the General Assembly: 2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN website
(URL: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf)

peacekeeping, peacebuilding, sanctions, transnational crimes, protection of women and children[19].

IV. Human rights and the rule of law

According to this section, Member States commit themselves to protect and promote all human rights, underlying that these rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, and interdependent, and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner[20].

V. Strengthening the United Nations

In the last section, Member States reaffirm their commitment to strengthen the United Nations, improving its authority and efficiency and providing the United Nations with adequate and timely resources with a view to enabling it to carry out its mandates[21].

## 1.3 THE 2010 WORLD SUMMIT

The 2010 World Summit, also known as High-level Plenary Meeting of the 65th Session of the UN General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, was a meeting that took place at the United Nations headquarters in New York from 20 to 22 September 2010, representing a further step to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The main aim of the Summit, under the theme "We can end poverty by 2015", was to adopt a global action plan to accomplish the eight anti-poverty Millennium Development Goals by 2015 in order to accelerate progress on halving extreme poverty and reducing hunger, disease, maternal and child deaths. Its purpose, in addition, was to announce major new commitments for women's and children's health: "We know what works to save women's and children's lives, and we know that women and children are

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[19] *Resolution 60/1 adopted by the General Assembly: 2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN website
(URL: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf)

[20] *Resolution 60/1 adopted by the General Assembly: 2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN website
(URL: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf)

[21] *Resolution 60/1 adopted by the General Assembly: 2005 World Summit Outcome*, UN website
(URL: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf)

critical to all of the MDGs. Today we are witnessing the kind of leadership we have long needed"[22] Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said during the Summit.

The three-day meeting unfolded by morning and afternoon sessions held with round-table sessions on six themes: addressing the challenge of poverty, hunger and gender equality; meeting the goals of health and education; promoting sustainable development; addressing emerging issues and evolving approaches; addressing the special needs of the most vulnerable and widening and strengthening partnerships[23].

The main outcome of the Summit was a document entitled "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals" in which Member States set out an action agenda in order to achieve the Goals by 2015. The document is divided into two parts: The first identifies achievements during the past 10 years clearly declaring "We, Heads of State and Government, welcome the progress made since we last met here in 2005 while expressing deep concern that it falls far short of what is needed. Recalling the development goals and commitments emanating from the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, we reaffirm our resolve to work together for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples"[24]. While the second section, named "The way forward: an action agenda for achieving the MDGs by 2015", reviews each of the eight goals and gives recommendations in order to improve each of them. In this section, Member States reiterated the importance of national ownership and leadership, underlying that "each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies, domestic resources and development strategies cannot be overemphasized"[25].

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[22] *UN Summit concludes with adoption of global action plan to achieve development goals by 2015*, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Closing%20press%20release%20FINAL-FINAL%20Rev3.pdf)

[23] *The 2010 Millennium Development Goals Review summit. Second Report of Session 2010-2011. Volume I*, Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: International Development Committee, p.6

[24] *Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,* (Doc. A/65/L.1), UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/mdg%20outcome%20document.pdf)

[25] *Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,* (Doc. A/65/L.1) UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/mdg%20outcome%20document.pdf)

## 2. THE UN ACHIEVEMENTS, FAILURES AND LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

After a brief glance over the process that led the United Nations to accomplish such important achievements and targets on the eradication of poverty, my attention now shifts from the path to the importance and effectiveness of these MDGs.

As Sakiko Fukuda-Parr pointed out in her book *"Millennium Development Goals: Why They Matter"*[26], even if many development goals have been set by the UN since the 1960s, the MDGs are innovative because they put human development at the centre of the global development agenda. Although they have been areas of concern for some time, they have not been the core. For this reason, the adoption of the MDGs, represents an important endorsement of the central objectives of poverty and human well-being.[27] Moreover, the author adds that the MDGs have to be considered as an innovation because they are not just aspirations or a new strategy but define concrete goals that can be monitored and they are an instrument for mobilizing actions.[28] According to Fukuda-Parr, "the MDGs are a global commitment and framework of accountability because they commit world leaders to a collective responsibility for all people irrespective of national borders".[29]

In order to direct my attention to MDGs importance, in this second chapter I will firstly explore each Goal comparing the MDGs Reports from 2011 to 2014, in order to show graphically which goals the UN reached in this years, and which it failed. Secondly, in the second part of the chapter, I will examine the UN future expectations for poverty reduction thanks to its Post-2015 Development Agenda.

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[26] *Millennium Development Goals: Why They Matter*, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Global Governance, 2004

[27] *Millennium Development Goals: Why They Matter*, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Global Governance, 2004, p.395

[28] *Millennium Development Goals: Why They Matter*, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Global Governance, 2004, p.395

[29] *Millennium Development Goals: Why They Matter*, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Global Governance, 2004, p.397

## 2.1    MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

As we saw in the first chapter, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international development goals established straight after the Millennium Summit of the UN in 2000, which had been the very first meeting discussing about these topics. International organizations and all United Nations member states at the time committed to achieve the following MDGs by 2015:

Goal 1: To halve the number of undernourished people

Goal 2: To achieve universal primary education

Goal 3: To promote gender equality and empower women

Goal 4: To reduce child mortality

Goal 5: To improve maternal health

Goal 6: To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Goal 7: To ensure environmental sustainability

Goal 8: To develop a global partnership for development[30]

Each goal has specific targets, in particular eight goals and eighteen targets, and dates for achieving them. In this first part of the chapter, I will assess each goal underlying its purpose and its effective implementation during the last years thanks to the last four MDGs Reports.[31] [32] [33] [34]

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[30] UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)

[31] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*, UN Website (URL:

http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/(2011_E)%20MDG%20Report%202011_Book%20LR.pdf)

[32] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2012*, UN Website

(URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202012.pdf)

[33] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, UN Website

(URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf)

[34] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014*, UN Website

(URL: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B4wogrvNAUHvV2EtcGpkcy1aMTQ/edit)

The first Goal concerns poverty and hunger. The result to be achieved by 2015, compared to 1990, is to halve the proportion of people living in conditions of severe poverty and people who suffer from hunger.[35]

Starting from poverty, as the below horizontal bar chart shows, during the last 20 years there has been progresses in the reduction of it, with differences from area to area. In some regions, such as in sub-Saharan Africa, the situation and the speed of reduction need to be improved, while in some other regions, the situation sharply progressed , such as in Asia, where the improvements have been even higher than expected. Thanks to the implementation of this goal, 700 million fewer people lived in extreme poverty conditions in 2010 than in 1990. However, despite this impressive achievement at the global level, 1.2 billion people are still living in extreme poverty. [36]
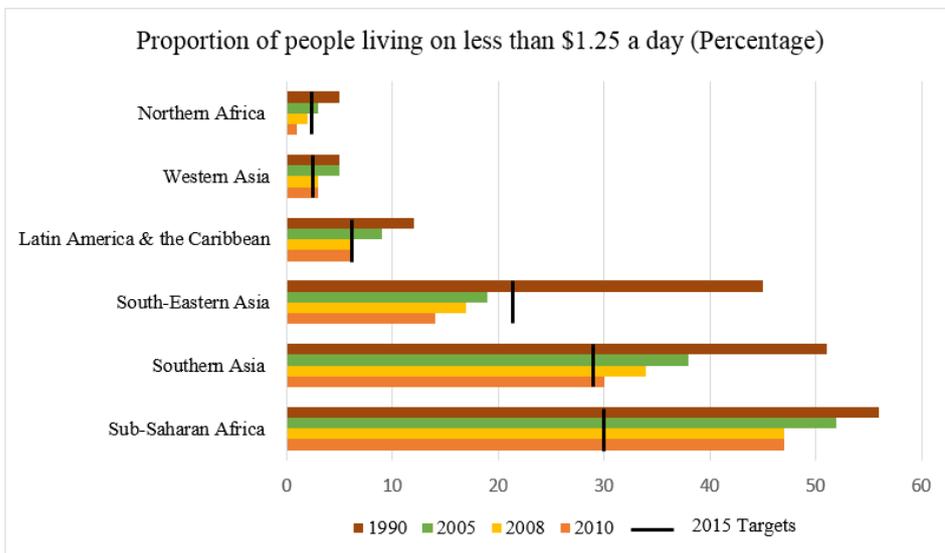


Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

The second target to be achieved, according to Goal 1, is to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger in the developing countries. Although this target was slightly accomplished during the last twelve years, the proportion of undernourished people globally decreased from 23.2% in the 1990s to 14 % in 2011, it still leaves 870 million people going hungry.[37]
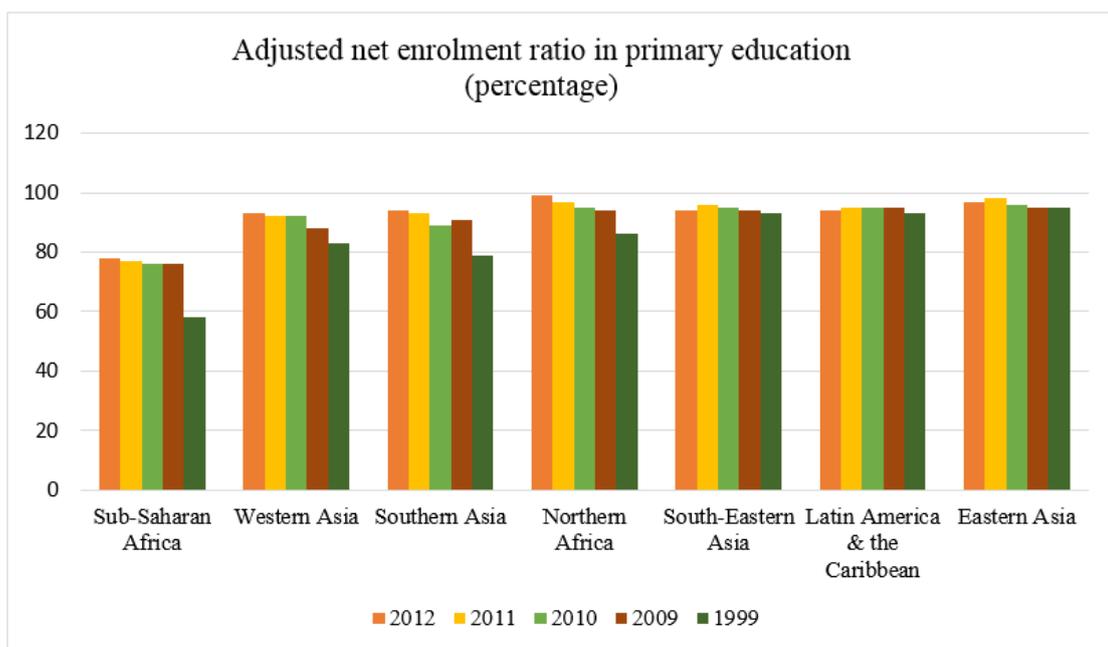
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[35] *Goal 1: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_1_fs.pdf)

[36] *Goal 1: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_1_fs.pdf)

[37] *Goal 1: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_1_fs.pdf)

The second Millennium Development Goal aims to give all children, male and female, the opportunity to complete primary school, which includes facilities, available teachers and the possibility for all to be educated regardless of ability to pay and distance from schools.

Developing regions have made impressive steps towards the expansion of the access to primary education, as we can notice from the chart below. From 2000 to 2011, the enrolment rate grew and the number of out-of-school children dropped from 102 million in 2000 to 57 million in 2011.[38] On the other side of the coin, the percentage of early school leaving remains high: among the 137 million children who entered first grade in 2011, 34 million are likely to leave before reaching the last grade of primary school. This translates into an early school-leaving rate of 25% and into a failure for this Millennium Development Goal.[39]
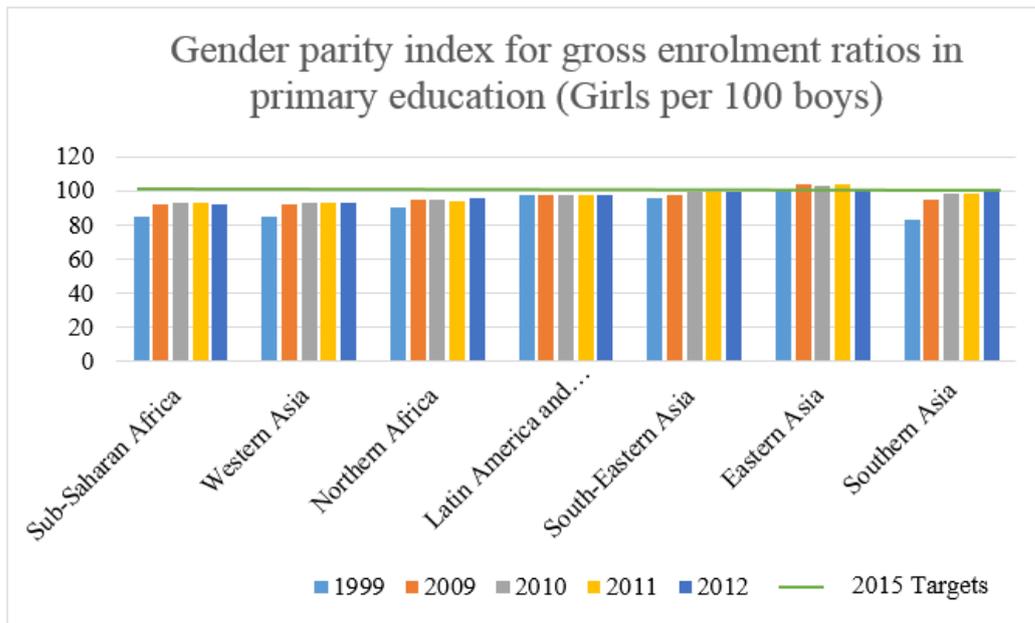


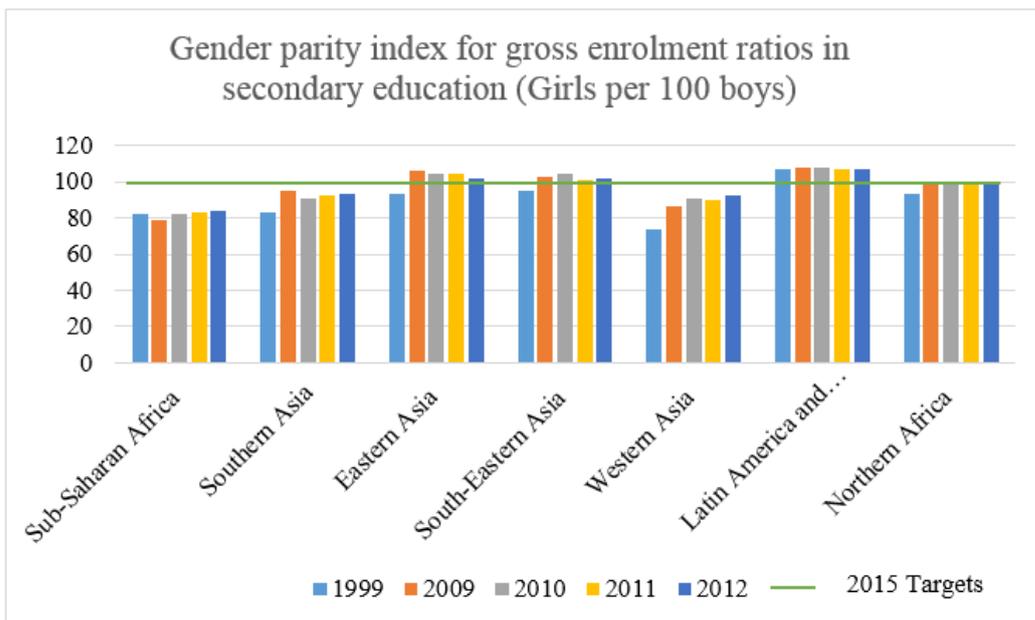Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

[38] *Goal 2: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_2_fs.pdf)

[39] *Goal 2: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_2_fs.pdf)

The third MDG aims to an equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in primary, secondary and tertiary education. As we can see from the charts below, the percentage of men and women attending school is different depending on regions and level of education.



Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014



Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratios in tertiary education (Girls per 100 boys)
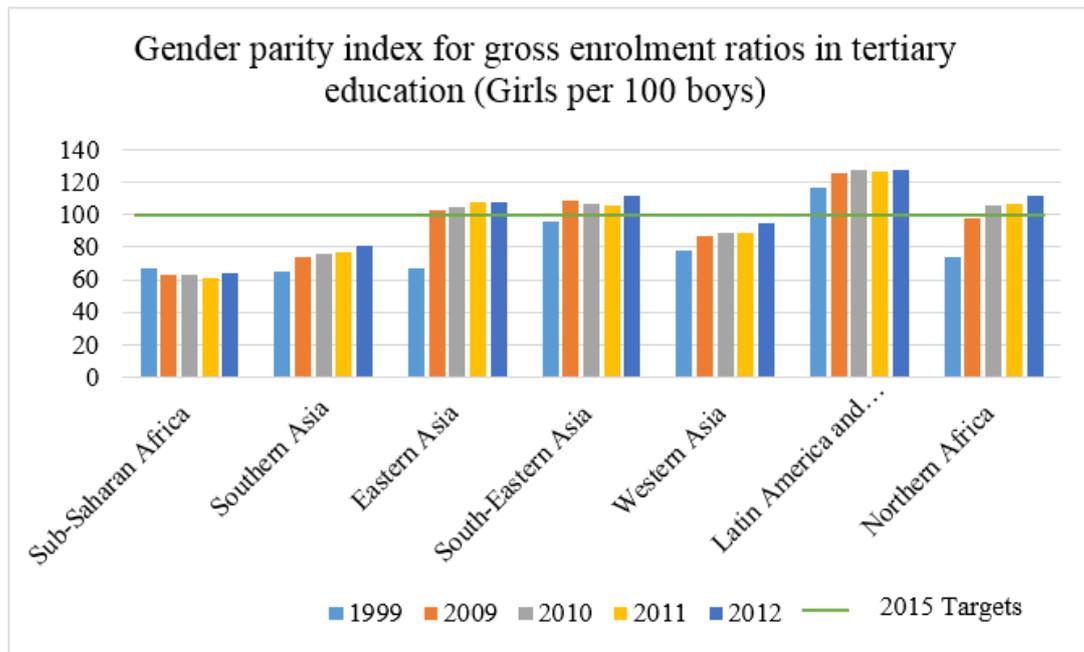
Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

As the charts show, from 1999 and 2012, gender gaps have narrowed, but disparities remain in all levels of education. The main cause of inequality in developing countries is poverty, because, among other things, girls are forced to spend time fetching water, they cannot attend school due to lack of sanitation facilities and also because child marriage and violence are a strong barriers to education.

Gender equality in primary schooling worldwide has been almost achieved. However, girls continue to face barriers, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa where only 90 girls are enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys.[40]

Access to secondary education remains highly unequal even if giant steps have been done. Also in this level of education, sub-Saharan Africa appears to be the less equal with just 80 girls attending school every 100 boys.

At the university level, disparities are even greater. In Southern Asia, only 80 girls per 100 boys are enrolled in tertiary education, while in sub-Saharan Africa only 66 girls per 100 boys have the possibility to have a tertiary education.

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[40] *Goal 3: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_3_fs.pdf)

The fourth Millennium Development Goal's purpose is to reduce by two-thirds, the mortality rate of children under five since that, in the 1990s, 90 children of every 1.000 died before age five.[41]

According to the MDGs Reports, as we can see on the chart below, there has been an overall improvement from 1990 to 2012, even if 19,000 children still pass away under the age of five.[42]
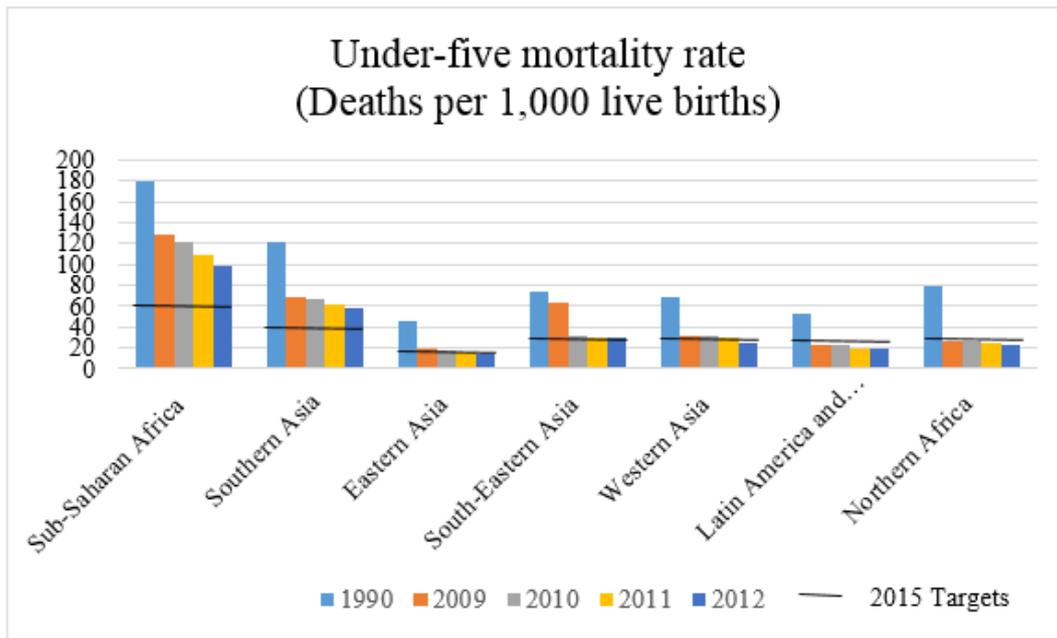


Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Although worldwide the mortality rate for children under five dropped significantly, more rapid progress in some area is needed in order to meet the 2015 target. The main alarming regions are Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, which, together, accounted for 5.3 million (81%) of the 6.6 million deaths in children under five worldwide.[43]

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[41] *Goal: Reduce child mortality*, UNICEF Website

(URL: http://www.unicef.org/mdg/index_childmortality.htm)

[42] *Goal: Reduce child mortality*, UNICEF Website

(URL: http://www.unicef.org/mdg/index_childmortality.htm)

[43] *Goal 4: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_4_fs.pdf)

The fifth MDG focuses on maternal health by reducing by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio. Every year, half a million women die of complications that could be prevented thank to appropriate care before, during and after pregnancy. As the chart below shows, maternal mortality has declined by nearly half since 1990.[44]
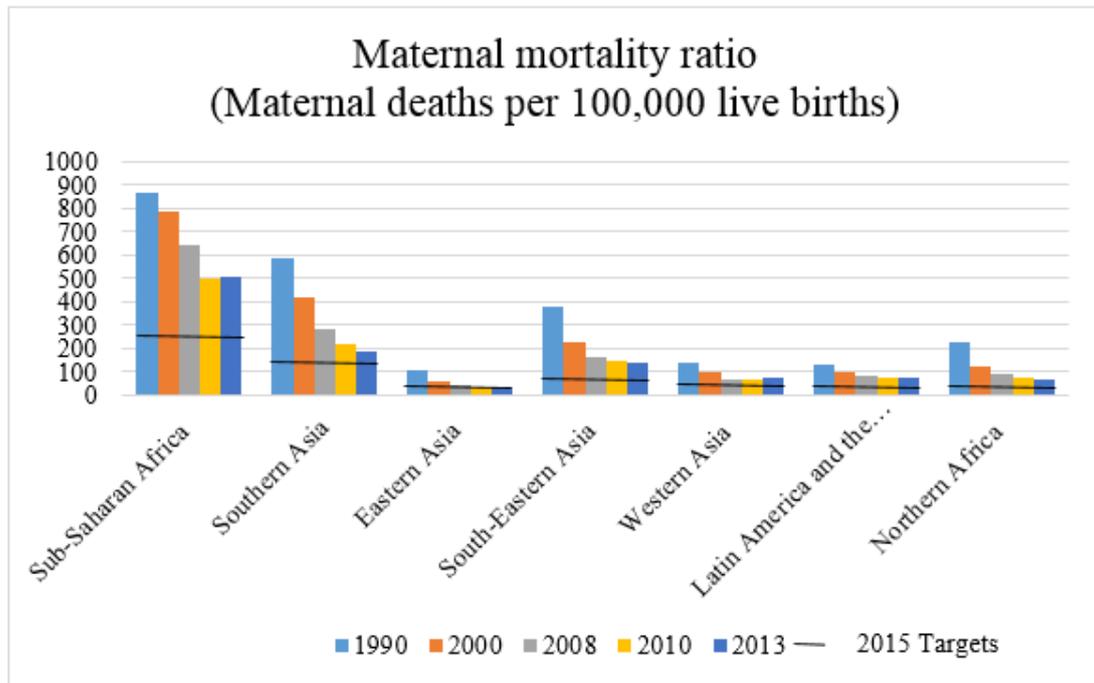


Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

As it is clear from the chart, all regions have made important gains. Globally, the ratio declined from 400 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 210 in 2010.[45] However, even if some region, such as Eastern Asia, managed to achieve the MDG 5, other regions are still far from achieving it, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. As we can see, Goal 5 did not affect all countries in the same way: if, on one side, Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest maternal mortality ratio with 510 deaths per 100,000 live births, on the other side, in other developing regions, maternal death has become a rare event nowadays, with less than 100 deaths for every 100,000 live births.[46]

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[44] *Goal 5: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_5_fs.pdf)

[45] *Goal 5: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_5_fs.pdf)

[46] *Goal 5: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_5_fs.pdf)

The sixth MDG's commitment is to combat and stop the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases by achieving universal access to treatment for it for all those who need it.[47]

As it possible to see from the chart below, the MDG target of halting the spread of HIV has been met, and the incidence of HIV is diminishing in most regions.
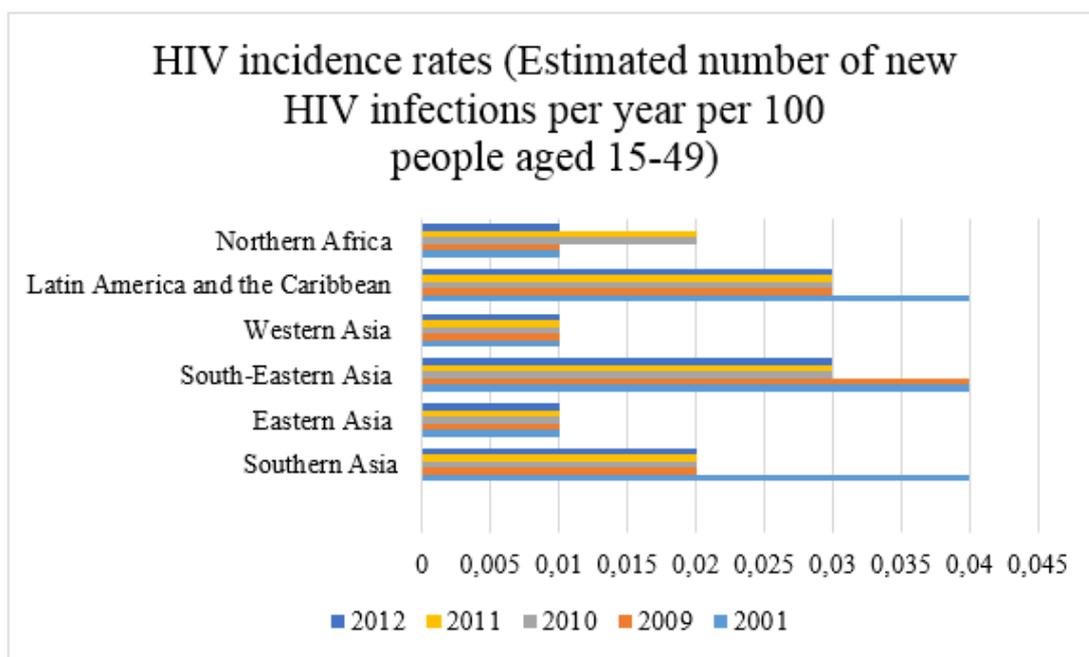


Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Globally, even if still 2.3 million people are newly infected by HIV each year, the percentage dropped by 33% from 2001 to 2012 and, moreover, the number of people who have access to treatment raised from 8.1 million in 2011 to 9.7 million people in 2012.

The MDG Report 2014[48] points out that the spread of other infectious diseases decreased in the last years thank to the substantial expansion of interventions. Global malaria mortality fell by 42% from 2000 to 2010, while the tuberculosis mortality rate declined by 41% between 1991 and 2011, although it still killed 1.4 million people in 2011.[49]

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[47] *Goal 6: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_6_fs.pdf)

[48] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014*, UN Website

(URL: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B4wogrvNAUHvV2EtcGpkcy1aMTQ/edit)

[49] *Goal 6: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_6_fs.pdf)

The seventh Goal's purpose is linked to the environment, precisely to ensure environmental sustainability by integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies, by reducing biodiversity loss, by improving the lives of slum dwellers and by halving the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water.

As the UN reported in its "Goal 7: Fact Sheet 2013"[50], countries put efforts on these targets achieving the expected results. First, more than 240,000 people a day gained access to a latrine, toilet or other improved sanitation facilities from 1990 to 2011. Moreover, between 2000 and 2010, more than 200 million slum dwellers gained access to improved water and sanitation. In addition, significant progress has been made in increasing the coverage of protected areas dedicated to safeguarding and maintaining biological diversity and natural resources, reaching 14% of world's land surface protected[51]. Finally, the target of halving the proportion of people without access to an improved source had already been achieved in almost every area, in 2010, five years ahead of schedule[52], as the chart below shows.



Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014
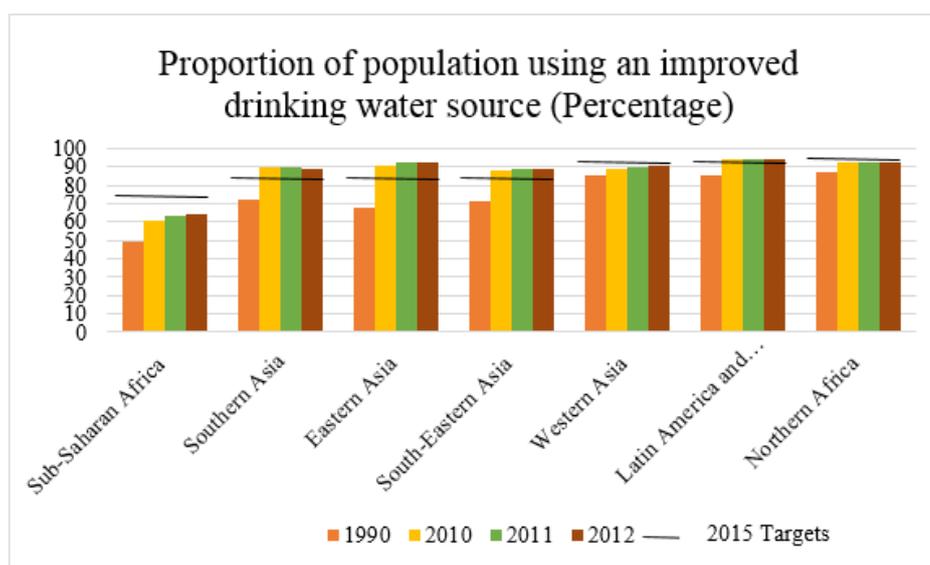
[50] *Goal 7: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_7_fs.pdf)

[51] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014*, UN Website
(URL: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B4wogrvNAUHvV2EtcGpkcy1aMTQ/edit)

[52] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013,* UN Website
(URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf)

The eighth and last Goal's aim is to have a global collaboration in order to achieve the targets. Countries commit themselves to improve a global partnership for development by enhancing an open trading and financial system, by addressing the special needs, by dealing with developing countries' debt and by making available benefits of new technologies.[53]

Thanks to the cooperation of all countries, great steps forward have been made in the last 14 years. Firstly, debt service ratios are one-quarter less from their 2000 level, lessening the financial burden on developing countries.[54] Secondly, the trade climate improved for least developed countries and developing countries, whose share of world trade rose to 44.4% in 2012.[55] Thirdly, mobile phone subscriptions grew in developing countries thank to a more widely available communications technology services. Fourthly, the increase of the Internet users: two-thirds of the world's Internet users are in developing regions, where the number of users doubled between 2009 and 2014. Although Internet use penetration grew by 8.7%, still less than 20% of the developing world population is online, compared to 80% in the developed world[56], as we can see from the line chart below.



Sources: Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

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[53] *Goal 8: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_8_fs.pdf)

[54] *Goal 8: 2013 Fact Sheet,* UN Website, (URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_8_fs.pdf)

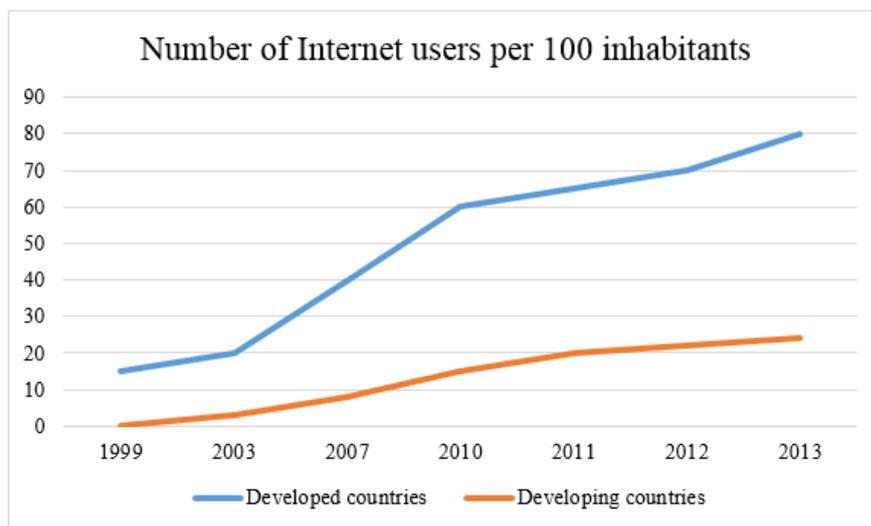[55] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013,* UN Website
(URL: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf)

[56] *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014*, UN Website
(URL: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B4wogrvNAUHvV2EtcGpkcy1aMTQ/edit)

This brief overview of the eight Millennium Development Goals and their effectiveness gave me the opportunity to demonstrate that not all of the UN targets have been achieved, even if many improvements have been made.

As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon affirmed during the 2010 Summit, "we defined achievable targets and timetables. We have more development success stories than ever before. The transformative impact of the MDGs is undeniable. This is an achievement we can be proud of, but the clock is ticking, with much more to do." [57]

## 2.2   POST-2015 UN DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

With the MDGs' deadline approaching, discussion around what should come after the UN targets is a very important conversation of this century. For this reason, the UN led a process, the "Post-2015 Development Agenda", which aims at defining the future global development framework, giving a further opportunity to develop a practical agenda in order to ensure the overarching objective of eradicating poverty and sustainable development even after 2015.

There are different key players in the process of the establishment and the follow-up of the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thanks to its success in revising MDGs progress, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)[58] is one of the player that has a key role in the preparations and implementation of the post-2015 Development Agenda. It is through the 2014 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR)[59], whose theme is "Addressing on-going and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future", that the ECOSOC gives a prompt to accelerate the process for  elaborating the post-2015 Development Agenda.

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[57] *The clock is ticking, Secretary-General says, urging world leaders to generate resources, political will to achieve MDGs by 2015*, UN Website

(URL: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/ga10987.doc.htm)

[58] For further information about the ECOSOC, see its website, URL: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/

[59] *2014 Annual Ministerial Review*, ECOSOC website,

URL:http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/amr2014.shtml

A second important key player in the process of implementation of the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda is the UN System Task Team established by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in order to support system-wide preparations for the Agenda, in consultation with all stakeholders. The team brings together over 60 UN entities and agencies and international organizations, as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. [60] The Task Team focuses on the global partnership for development, monitoring and indicators for sustainable development. For this reason, thanks to its first report, "Realizing the Future We Want for All"[61], the Task Team plans a vision for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Moving from the key players to the purposes of the process of the implementation of the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda, it is important to underline which are the Goals that this program wants to achieve.

On the global side, five are the targets set out, in the report "A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development"[62], in order to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 thanks to a global partnership:

1. Leave No One Behind. "After 2015, we should move from reducing to ending extreme poverty, in all its forms. We should ensure that no person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, race or other status – is denied basic economic opportunities and human rights."[63]

2. Put Sustainable Development at the Core. "We have to integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. We must act now to slow the

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[60] Referring to the UN Website

(URL: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/untt_members.pdf), for the full list of members of the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

[61] *Realizing the Future We Want for All*, Report to the Secretary-General, UN Website

(URL:http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/untt_report.pdf)

[62] *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development,* The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf)

[63] *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development,* The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf), p. 7

alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity."[64]

3. Transform Economies for Jobs and Inclusive Growth. "A profound economic transformation can end extreme poverty and improve livelihoods, by harnessing innovation, technology, and the potential of business. More diversified economies, with equal opportunities for all, can drive social inclusion, especially for young people, and foster sustainable consumption and production patterns."[65]

4. Build Peace and Effective, Open and Accountable Institutions for All. "Freedom from conflict and violence is the most fundamental human entitlement, and the essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies. At the same time, people the world over expect their governments to be honest, accountable, and responsive to their needs. We are calling for a fundamental shift – to recognize peace and good governance as a core element of wellbeing, not an optional extra."[66]

5. Forge a New Global Partnership. "A new spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual accountability must underpin the post-2015 agenda. This new partnership should be based on a common understanding of our shared humanity, based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. It should be centred around people, including those affected by poverty and exclusion, women, youth, the aged, disabled persons, and indigenous peoples. It should include civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, local and national governments, the scientific and academic community, businesses, and private philanthropy."[67]

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[64] *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development,* The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf), p. 8

[65] *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development,* The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf), p. 8

[66] *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development,* The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf), p. 9

[67] *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development,* The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013, UN Website (URL: http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf), p. 9

On the regional level, the report "A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda"[68] shows up a regional contribution to global policy debate. The regional priorities identified may be summarized as the following table shows:

| | Economic sustainability | Social sustainability | Environmental sustainability | Governance and institutions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Africa** | Economic growth and transformation; poverty reduction; employment, especially youth employment; food security; trade, investment and technology; income inequality. | Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection. | Climate change; disaster risk reduction; desertification; biodiversity; urbanization. | Democracy and the rule of law; affective institutions; conflict resolution and citizen security; global governance. |
| **Latin America and the Caribbean** | Economic growth and diversification; employment; trade, investment and technology; income inequality. | Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection. | Climate change; biodiversity; disaster risk reduction; urbanization. | Democracy and the rule of law; effective institutions; armed violence and citizen security; global governance. |
| **Asia and the Pacific** | Economic growth; poverty reduction; employment; food security; trade, investment and technology; income inequality | Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection. | Climate change disaster risk reduction; biodiversity; urbanization. | Democracy and the rule of law; effective institutions; citizen security; global governance. |
| **Western Asia** | Inclusive growth and diversification; adequate mapping and reduction of poverty; employment, specially youth and women; trade, investment and technology; regional cooperation and integration. | Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection; social justice. | Climate change; water and food security; desertification; urbanization. | Democracy, free press and the rule of law; effective institutions; citizen security; global governance. |
| **Europe and Central Asia** | Full employment; reduction of the informal sector; income and wealth inequality; regional cooperation and economic integration. | Education; health; gender equality; social protection; equitable pension systems. | Climate change; disaster risk reduction; biodiversity; food security; urbanization. | Democracy, free press and the rule of law; effective institutions; citizen security; global governance. |

Sources: *A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda,* UNECA Website

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[68] *A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda,* UNECA Website
(URL: http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/post2015regionalreport.pdf)

As we can see from the table, four are the main areas in which each region has to deal with beyond 2015. There is no region that does not have to improve in the future, both rich and poor areas. Thanks to the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda, governments commit themselves to achieve goals presented by the United Nations in order to reach a better condition in the entire world.

This second part of the chapter aimed at showing how much work has to be done and how much efforts governments have to put in order to reach the craved dream of an equal future. This very optimistic view of the future helps governments to persevere in their commitments because, as Ernest Hemingway said in his *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), "Today is only one day in all the days that will ever be. But what will happen in all the other days that ever come can depend on what you do today".

# 3. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ACTION: THE CASE OF GUATEMALA

The aim of my third chapter analysis is to examine the situation in Guatemala since the 2015 target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals is approaching.

In the first part of the chapter, I will illustrate the reason why the MDGs have been a very important step for Guatemala, from an historical point of view, by comparing them with the *Acuerdos de paz* (Peace agreements) that the Country signed in order to develop and bring peace within the region.

The second section of the chapter will be dealing with the evaluation of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, thanks to the comparison between the three national reports (*informes*). These documents, mandatory for each Member State and made by the national Governments, display the current situation of Guatemala in terms of achieving the targets. They reflect (or should do) the situation in which the Country is living, impartially.

In the third part of the chapter, I will analyse the peculiar condition of indigenous peoples within the region showing their state of "invisibles". Even though they represent the majority of the population in Guatemala, they seem not to have the right to benefit from the United Nation MDGs. Although the UN noticed their "lack" and tried to fix it, these populations still do not receive an equal treatment.

Finally, in the last section of the chapter, I will explore the governmental approach to the Millennium Development Goals. I will show how the Guatemalan Government reacted to the implementation of the targets by demonstrating its insincerity. What the *informes* showed, it is not what is actually happening within the region. It is true that the Country improved, but work has still to be done.

## 3.1 *ACUERDOS DE PAZ*: FORERUNNERS OF THE MDGs

Guatemala experienced an internal armed conflict in which acts of cruelty, contempt for life and the dignity of the Guatemalan population have been made.

After 36 years of internal armed conflict, finally on 29 December 1996 a lasting peace agreement was signed between the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG)[69] and the State of Guatemala, in order to reach peaceful solutions to the major problems that caused the internal armed conflict. This event that ended the conflict and that introduced the necessary foundation for peace and development in future presage for the Country.

The agreement[70] intends to guarantee and protect the full observance and respect for human rights and a commitment to investigate violations of them during the conflict. Those goals aimed to help strengthening the process of national reconciliation and democratization[71] and to recognize the identity and rights of indigenous peoples as a basis for building a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual nation.[72] In order to achieve a complete level of development, eradicate poverty and unemployment, improve health, education and social security are considered priorities.

In the first part of the third chapter, I wanted to mention Guatemalan *Acuerdos de paz* (peace agreement) because they seemed to be the forerunners of the Millennium Development Goals. The *Acuerdos de paz,* which included a dozen agreements[73] signed by the Government of the Republic of Guatemala and the URNG, and the MDGs have the same spirit: to build a Country with equal opportunities for all. Both their scope is a

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[69] For further information about the URNG, see its website, URL: http://www.urng-maiz.org.gt/

[70] *The situation in central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development,* UN Website, (URL:https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/site_media/media/accords/Guatemala_Agreement_on_a_firm_and_lasting_peace-1.pdf)

[71] *Los acuerdos de paz en Guatemala*, Secretaría de la Paz Presidencia de la República, Gobierno de la República de Guatemala, 2006, (URL: http://arias.or.cr/documentos/FA05035107.pdf), p.8

[72] *Los acuerdos de paz en Guatemala*, Secretaría de la Paz Presidencia de la República, Gobierno de la República de Guatemala, 2006, (URL: http://arias.or.cr/documentos/FA05035107.pdf), pp.11-17 and pp.29-42

[73] *Los acuerdos de paz en Guatemala*, Secretaría de la Paz Presidencia de la República, Gobierno de la República de Guatemala, 2006, (URL: http://arias.or.cr/documentos/FA05035107.pdf), pp. 4-6

common challenge for the State and society as a whole aiming at building a better country and ensure a better quality of life for all Guatemalans. Moreover, both the MDGs and the *Acuerdos the paz* put human freedom at the centre of development: development must be understood as the extension of people's capabilities by removing obstacles such as illiteracy, disease, lack of resources or lack of political freedoms and civil.[74]

Although the *Acuerdos de paz* enhanced situation in the Country, the Millennium Development Goals are still important for Guatemala because the region has not achieve an important level of development. Guatemala is the 5th Country with the highest level of extreme poverty in Latin America; it is the 1st of Central America in underweight; it has the lowest percentage of children entering first grade reach grade of primary in Central America and the 3rd highest infant mortality rate.

This situation highlights the precarious conditions in which Guatemalans are living, which makes particularly relevant the implementation of the MDGs. These Goals can give the opportunity to put human development rights at the core of the State policies.

## 3.2 *LOS INFORMES* ILLUSTRATE GUATEMALA IMPROVEMENTS

In this paragraph, I will explore the current condition of the Millennium Development Goals in Guatemala, answering the question "What is the Guatemalan situation in terms of implementation of the MDGs?"

It is thanks to the slogan *"¡Sumemos nuestras fuerzas! Trabajemos por la Guatemala que queremos"*[75] (Joining our forces! We work for the Guatemala that we want), that Guatemala showed its commitment to support the Millennium Development Goals, and, carried away by the enthusiasm, welcomed the eight MDGs.

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[74] *Manual de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio con enfoque de derechos humanos*, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2008,
(URL:http://cms.fideck.com/userfiles/onu.org.gt/File/2401254507533238.pdf), p.11

[75] *Manual de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio con enfoque de derechos humanos*, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2008,
(URL:http://cms.fideck.com/userfiles/onu.org.gt/File/2401254507533238.pdf), p.12

Like all UN members, Guatemala committed itself to give reports in order to measure progress towards meeting the MDGs. In Guatemala, there are currently three progress reports: the first has been produced in 2000 by the UN in Guatemala; the second has been developed by the Government of Guatemala with support of the United Nations System in Guatemala in 2006, and the third has been presented in 2010.

These reports are based on the need to shift MDGs' commitments from a global to a local level by establishing global Goals and national priorities and to start up again a wide political support to accelerate progress in achieving the objectives by generating public awareness and by creating partnerships between countries.

Guatemalan three reports (*informes*) show on one side the level of development for each MDG, and bring to light the progress made from 1990 to the date of publication of the report, on the other side, they present a table summarizing the possibilities of achieving the MDGs.

The first report[76] presents an assessment of the progress of Guatemala in relation to the Millennium Development Goals by evaluating ten-year period (1990-2000). The *informe* underlines that, although Guatemala is a country in post-conflict situation and its development is affected by it, important progress have been made, even if significant challenges remain. This first statement has to be considered as a tool to enhance support, alliances and political commitments in order to monitor the MDGs. Moreover, it can be a starting point for the Guatemalan society and the international community to share a vision of past performance and prospects of development future.

The second report[77], produced in 2006, is an effort by the Government of Guatemala to assess how deep the country has evolved in development by measuring the changes that the region has ten after the signing of the Peace Accords. The document has to be considered as innovative for three reasons: first, because an effort was made to incorporate the importance of cultural diversity in order to achieve the

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[76] *Metas del Milenio: Informe del avance de Guatemala*, the Republic of Guatemala, 2000, UN Website, (URL: http://www.gt.undp.org/content/dam/guatemala/docs/publications/UNDP_gt_1Informe.pdf)

[77] *Hacia el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio en Guatemala. II Informe de Avances*, the Republic of Guatemala, 2006, UN Website, (URL: http://www.gt.undp.org/content/dam/guatemala/docs/publications/UNDP_gt_ODM_2doInforme.pdf)

goals; second, because it addresses a significant importance to gender differences; third, because, in order to conduct it, projection of a costing had been proposed.

Finally, the latest report[78] had been prepared by a Segeplan[79] internal team of specialists, who worked in close interagency coordination with key departments involved in the MDGs. This document describes the progress made and challenges that remain in order to achieve the MDGs. One of the most innovative aspects of the report is the effort to disaggregate geographically all available statistical information, identifying, in this way, several specific areas in which it is necessary to focus on during the next five years.

The following table, whose sources are taken from the tree reports, indicates the improvements of the Guatemalan situation thanks to the implementation of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Analysing the data below, starting from the percentage of poverty, it is clear that in the first decade it was recorded a significant decrease in poverty and, if it keeps decreasing, in 2015 the incidence would be around 12%, thus the possibility to meet the Goal would be concreate.[80] Taking into consideration the Guatemalan education, we can observe from the table that in the last two decades, a significant evolution in the educational coverage in primary and secondary education. Moreover, looking at the parity of gender in schools, we can notice that girls are close to reach parity both in primary and secondary education, meeting, in this way, the MDG 3. In addition, taking into account the mortality rate of children under 5 years, it is possible to see that although the path to reach the Goal is long, the rate decreased by 62% from the base year. Furthermore, the reduction of maternal mortality too is a slow to achieve, even if

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[78] *Tercer inforce de avances en el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio*, the Republic of Guatemala, 2010, UN Website,

(URL:http://www.gt.undp.org/content/dam/guatemala/docs/publications/UNDP_gt_ODM_III%20Inform e%20ODM.pdf)

[79] Secretaría de Planificación y Programación de la Presidencia. For further information about the SEGEPLAN, see its website, (URL: http://www.segeplan.gob.gt/2.0/)

[80] *Tercer inforce de avances en el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio*, the Republic of Guatemala, 2010, UN Website,

(URL:http://www.gt.undp.org/content/dam/guatemala/docs/publications/UNDP_gt_ODM_III%20Inform e%20ODM.pdf), p.16

much progress have been made. Finally, the percentage of population with access to safe water and international cooperation have developed a positive trend: the first increased by 63% from the base year, while the second kept being seen as an important feature to care about.

| Indicators | 1989 (Base Year) | 2000 | 2006 | 2015 (Goal) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Extreme poverty (percentage) | 18.1 | 15.7 | 15.2 | 9.05 |
| General poverty (percentage) | 62.8 | 56.2 | 51.0 | 31.4 |
| Primary school enrolment rate (percentage ) | 71.6 | 85.4 | 93.52 | 100 |
| Proportion of pupils starting first grade and culminating sixth (percentage) | 43.7 | 50.3 | 63.3 | 100 |
| Percentage of girls to boys in primary education | 84 | 88 | 91 | 100 |
| Percentage of girls to boys in secondary education | 57 | 69 | 89 | 100 |
| Mortality rate of children under 5 years (deaths per 1000 live births) | 110 | 53 | 42 | 37 |
| Maternal mortality ratio | 219 | 153 | 136 | 55 |
| Percentage of HIV positive pregnant women | | 0.53 | 0.48 | Reducing |
| Percentage of population with access to safe water | 63 | 75 | 78 | 81 |
| International cooperation (US $): energy | 4.06 | 51.08 | 67.60 | Improving |

Sources:

Metas del Milenio: Informe del avance de Guatemala.

Hacia el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio en Guatemala: II Informe de Avances.

Tercer inforce de avances en el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio.

## 3.3   THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' INVISIBILITY IN THE MDGs

It is important to point out that Guatemala is making significant efforts to comply the Millennium Development Goals, but it still has troubles to achieve them completely. Although some indicators and targets have been met nationally, the Country is facing obstacles made by the large differences between ethnic groups in the region, which is 60% indigenous.[81] In history, indigenous have faced collective marginalization and, since they join the poorest category of the society, their possibility to have access to health and education facilities is below national standards.

Moreover, even though indicators show a significant progress in the Country, the MDGs have a significant effect on specific sectors of society, but they have not the same consequence on the traditionally most vulnerable group of people: indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and children.[82] Indigenous and tribal peoples should have the same right to benefit from the MDGs as everybody else, but they do not.  For this reason, a redefinition of the approaches to the implementation of the MDGs is needed, by including the perspectives and concerns of indigenous peoples' world.

Differences in Guatemalan ethnic groups make uncertain the success of all the MDGs in the Country, and, for this reason, it is required a more effort from the State and the international cooperation. Recognising that indigenous peoples have been excluded from the MDGs' implementation, some measures have been made and an international development debate started. Firstly, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)[83] dedicated its Sessions in 2005 and 2006 to focus on indigenous peoples and exploring how the MDGs can benefit them. During its fourth

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[81] *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Guatemala : Maya,* Minority Rights Group International, 2008, Refworld Website (URL: http://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d163c.htm)

[82] *Los pueblos indígenas y los objetivos de desarrollo del milenio - Estudio de Guatemala, Comunidad indígena El Porvenir II*, Mirian Soledad Bal Salazar-Francisco José Enríquez Narváez, 2006, ILO, ILO Website, (URL: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_100605.pdf), p.17

[83] For further information about the UNPFII, see its website, URL:http://undesadspd.org/indigenouspeoples.aspx

session on 2005, the UNPFII declared: "Indigenous peoples have the right to benefit from the Millennium Development Goals and from other goals and aspirations contained in the Millennium Declaration to the same extent as all others. Indigenous and tribal peoples are lagging behind other parts of the population in the achievement of the Goals in most, if not all, the countries in which they live, and indigenous and tribal women commonly face additional gender-based disadvantages and discrimination."[84]

A second measure has been made in 2007, when the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[85]. In its Articles 41[86] and 42[87], the Declaration provides an incentive in order to push Member States and the United Nations system to integrate indigenous visions into their obligation towards the achievement of the MDGs.

Moreover, UNPFII's researches showed that indigenous peoples are often excluded from the MDGs' implementation processes as well, counting that very few indigenous communities had the opportunity to contribute making the MDGs strategies relevant to their needs and priorities. Consequently, despite improvements in the overall development of Guatemala, indigenous peoples' living conditions can deteriorate. For this reason, since for indigenous peoples this process of participation is vital for their rights and needs to be fulfilled, the UNPFII stated that indigenous would be consulted in the processes for implementing the MDGs.

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[84] *Report on the fourth session*, UNPFII, 2005, UN Website (URL: http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/377/61/PDF/N0537761.pdf?OpenElement)

[85] *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2007, UN, UN Website (URL:http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

[86] Article 41 reads: "The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations shall contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through the mobilization, inter alia, of financial cooperation and technical assistance. Ways and means of ensuring participation of indigenous peoples on issues affecting them shall be established."

[87] Article 42 reads: "The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration."

In conclusion, before the target date for the eight MDGs to be achieved, the national and international social commitments should focus more concretely on meeting the needs of these indigenous populations and narrowing the gaps. However, as it has been done so far, economic investments are not enough; those investments should be made under the indigenous peoples' principles, priorities and worldview in order to be truly effective. If the MDGs are to be met, Guatemala needs to prioritise their situation.

## 3.4    NATIONAL SCEPTICISM

This last paragraph of my analysis aims at telling apart the real progress made by Guatemala in last years from how the Government wants Guatemala to appear.

According to the research "*Lejos de cumplir los Objetivos del Milenio*"[88] (Far from achieving the Millennium Development Goals) made by Luis Alfonso Leal Monterroso for IPNUSAC[89], Guatemala country reports (*los informes*) do not correspond to the national situation. National reality is different: misery, hunger and diseases have been exacerbated.

The study takes also into consideration the eight United Nations MDGs and their real effectiveness in the region. It affirms that all the Goals had been weakly performed but that improved during the years. Moreover, in terms of possibility to achievements, the research stated that Goals 1,2,4,7 could potentially be reached, while Goals 3, 5, 6 can unlikely be reached.

However, scepticism is clear not only outside the Government, but also within. In his speech, Mr. Jorge Briz Abularach, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, during the High-level Plenary Meeting of the 60th session of the General Assembly of the UN in New York in 2005, stated: "In Guatemala there have been advances in education, health, children nutrition and institution building. At the same time, we recognize that we have made no progress in reducing poverty". In addition, the President of the Republic during the Plenary Meeting High Level Event on the MDGs

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[88] *Lejos de cumplir los Objetivos del Milenio*, Análisis de la realidad nacional, Luis Alfonso Leal Monterroso, IPNUSAC, 2013

[89] For further information about the IPNUSAC, see its website, URL: http://ipn.usac.edu.gt/

in 2010 said: "I cannot stop recognizing that Guatemala improved and enhanced, but its growth rate is still insufficient, and, in some categories, its level is unsatisfactory to achieve minimum standards of development".

In conclusion, the diagnosis is not positive for Guatemala reaching its MDGs, since, also, its low decrease of Human Development Index: in 2000, it was 0.631, while in 2014 it is 0.628.[90] According to the "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals with equality in Latin America and the Caribbean: Progress and challenges"[91], "eradicate extreme poverty and hunger" is currently the hardest target to meet for Guatemala since that, as we can see from the chart below, the Country has the highest percentage of population undernourished within the Latin American region.
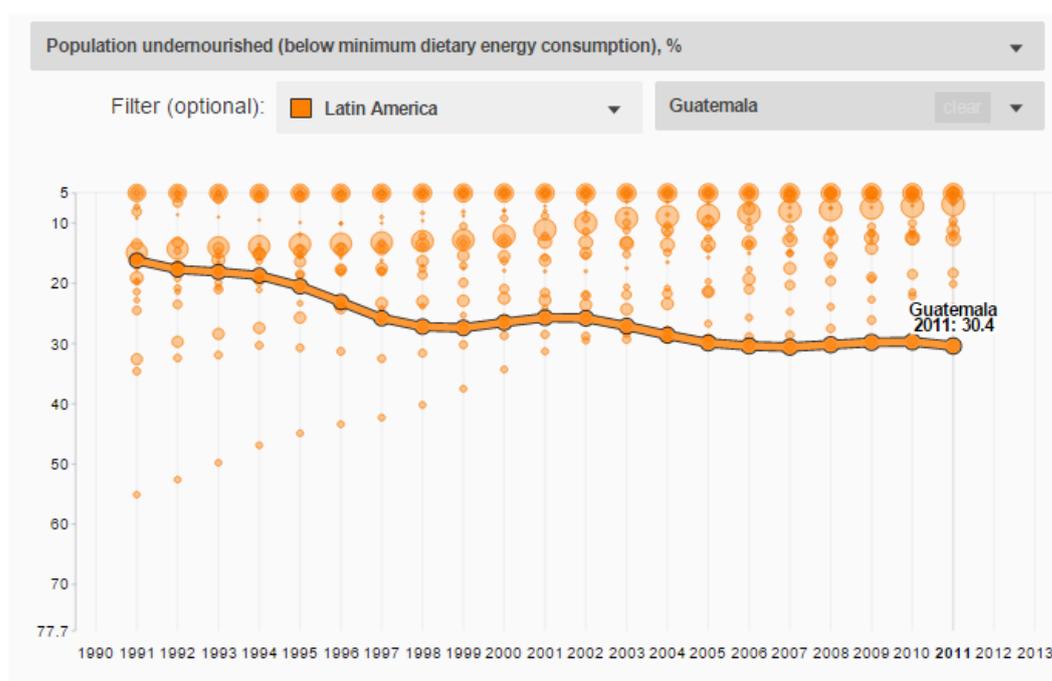


Source: United Nations

Although the United Nations asserts that the Millennium Development Goals have been a global success overall, many countries still face large barriers to achieve

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[90] World Bank Data, (URL: http://data.worldbank.org/country/guatemala)

[91] *Achieving the Millennium Development Goals with equality in Latin America and the Caribbean: Progress and challenges,* UN, 2010, UN Website (URL: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/MDG/english/MDG%20Regional%20Reports/LAC-Regional%20MDG%20Report%202010.pdf)

them, Guatemala included… no matter what their Governments declared and no matter how big the UN dream used to be.

*Conclusions*

*"The Millennium Development Goals have been the greatest anti-poverty push in history. New partnerships have been established. New actors have been engaged. Now we must finish the job."[92]*

With about one year to go until the Millennium Development Goal deadline, the above statement is what the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared at the High Level Event Convened by the MDG Advocacy Group.

During the past fifteen years, the Millennium Development Goals have been hailed as "the world's biggest promise"[93], or called "the most successful global anti-poverty push in history"[94], or, moreover defined as "the best idea for focusing the world on fighting global poverty that I have ever seen."[95]

Actually, the MDGs are a global success thinking that, before their creation, a common framework promoting universal development was unconceivable. Indeed, after the Cold War, many opulent countries cut their foreign aid budgets and focused on domestic priorities. The consequences were devastating: the world experienced a rising in poverty and child deaths, economic crises and an increase in inequalities. However, after the 2000s, thanks to the new targets, child mortality and extreme poverty rate have been nearly halved, parity of gender in schools has been almost reached in many countries, maternal mortality ratio dropped by 45% and 6.6 million people have been saved from HIV infection.[96]

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[92] *Launching new report, MDG Advocates outline challenges and opportunities for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by end of 2015*, United Nations, 2014, UN Website (URL:http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/advocates/pdf/MDG%20Leader%20Press%20Release%20-%20final.pdf)

[93] *The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): A Short History of the World's Biggest Promise*, David Hulme, University of Manchester- Book World Poverty Institute, 2009

[94] Quoted by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on *The Millennium Development Goals Report, United Nations*, 2013, UN Website (URL:http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf)

[95] Quoted by Bill Gates during his speech at the UN Headquarter, in 2008

[96] United Nations Data

However, despite its overall success, the Millennium Development Goals have not been completely achieved worldwide and the reasons are numerous. We should remember that the MDGs should be deemed as a tool or symbol of outcomes toward which the world should strive and not as a practical target. According to this view, it is not possible to argue that poor countries missing the MDGs are responsible of inaction or lack of aid, because every single Country committed itself in order to improve and enhance its situation. Nevertheless, the responsibility for their failure lies in the "overly-ambitious goals themselves and unrealistic expectations placed on aid."[97]

Actually, the UN targets are certainly well intentioned, but they are not realistic for all countries because each region has a different historical experience that forged and moulded it.

The ambitious and utopian dream that the United Nations cherished in the last almost fifteen years, cannot fits for everyone in the world… because "no size fits all".

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[97] *What's Wrong with the Millennium Development Goals?,* Michael Clemens and Todd Moss, Centre for Global Development, 2005, URL: http://www.cgdev.org/files/3940_file_WWMGD.pdf

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