

Southern Sudan reviews progress towards achieving MDGs

With only five years left until the 2015 deadline to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called on world leaders to attend a summit in New York in September to accelerate progress towards the MDGs.

Coming amid mixed progress and new crises that threaten the global effort to halve extreme poverty, "the summit will be a crucially important opportunity to redouble our efforts to meet the Goals," he said, referring to the targets adopted at the UN Millennium Summit of 2000, aimed at halving poverty, hunger, disease, maternal and child deaths and other ills by a 2015 deadline.

In preparation, Sudan is currently compiling an MDG Progress Report led by the National Population Council in the North, and the Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation (SSCCSE) in the South.

The process, which began back in May 2010, is being supported by UNDP and other key development partners.

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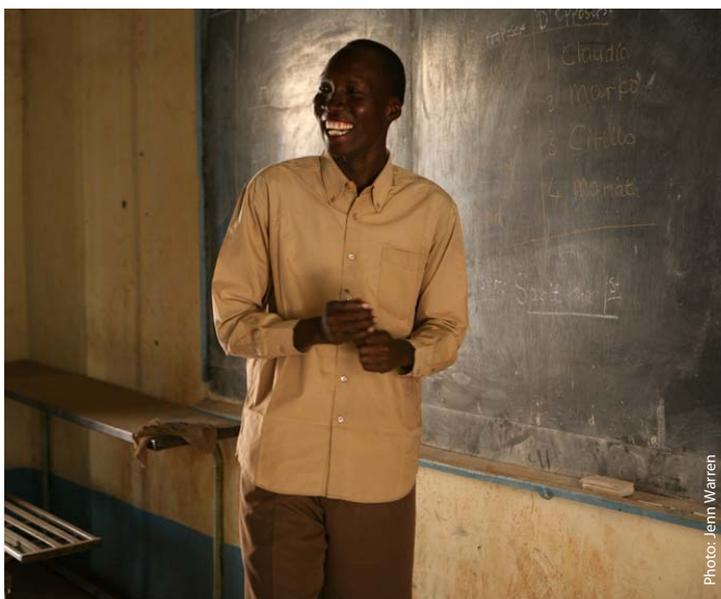


Photo: Jenn Warren

Education indicators in Southern Sudan are extremely poor. Only two percent of boys and less than one percent of girls complete primary school. The government is working to reverse this trend.

To ensure a participatory approach in developing the Report, the SSCCSE has established eight thematic working groups around each of the MDGs, chaired by a government agency and co-chaired by a development partner organization. The groups have been tasked with gathering baseline data, providing a context analysis (including detailing current interventions and programmes) and agreeing relevant indicators for their respective Goals.

A national project board has also been established to oversee the development of the Report. This will

make it possible for a consolidated draft to be completed by the end of August.

Similar work is taking place in other developing countries, and global review reports are also being produced by UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups. One such report (see summary on page 4) was published by UNDP earlier this year and makes specific recommendations about how to get the MDGs back on track. It is hoped that this information will contribute to making

the upcoming Millennium Summit a true success.

President Salva Kiir helps galvanize support for two important MDGs in Southern Sudan

Southern Sudan has one of the worst maternal mortality rates in the world. For every 100,000 live births, 1,700 women die. These figures are around 10 times higher than in Europe. Education indicators are also extremely poor with only two percent of boys and less than one percent of girls completing primary education. As a result, 76 percent of the population cannot read or write.

Recognizing that these issues threaten the achievement of the MDGs, H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Government of Southern Sudan, is placing special emphasis on tackling them in 2010 and beyond.

At his inauguration earlier this year, he explained that "in this day and age an uneducated society is a doomed society," and pledged free universal education for all by 2020. Health issues, which also feature high on the President's agenda, were mentioned as well. In particular, he promised to make "serious efforts...to ensure drastic curtailment" of endemic disease such as malaria and of child and maternal mortality rates.

UNDP supports key MDGs through dedicated programmes

UNDP Southern Sudan's Poverty Reduction and MDG Unit provides support to national and sub-national counterparts to plan, monitor, evaluate, and implement poverty reduction initiatives. The Unit also works to bring Southern Sudanese issues to the forefront of important global development debates. Through its management of resources from the *Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*, key health projects are being implemented as well.



Achieving the MDGs in a context of crisis – The Accra Declaration

Countries like Sudan face unique barriers and challenges when it comes to achieving the MDGs. This is why crisis and post-conflict countries are lobbying to get a prominent spot on the September 2010 Millennium Summit agenda. In particular, they are keen to highlight the critical role of peace-building and disaster relief in ensuring the achievement of the Goals.

To add weight to this request and ultimately feed into subsequent MDG achievement strategies, UNDP hosted a two-day consultative workshop in July for crisis countries to articulate their MDG-specific challenges and opportunity. The workshop – held in Ghana – drew participants from East and West Africa, Papua New Guinea, and East Timor.

Heading the Government of Southern Sudan's (GoSS) delegation was H.E David Deng Athorbei, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, who made a detailed presentation outlining his government's achievement since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. Most notably, Deng recognized the progress towards strengthening the national statistical system, gender equality and women's empowerment, and promoting access to basic education which has led to a current enrolment of 1.6 million children.

The Minister went on to speak about the three main challenges that Southern Sudan faces in achieving the MDGs in Southern Sudan – namely,

insecurity, capacity development, and the allocation of resources. "The complicated, lengthy and serious nature of conflict in Sudan means that it is necessary to focus on what is achievable in the short time left before the referendum, and prepare Southern Sudan to effectively integrate peace and stability in the development agenda for the remaining part and the post-CPA period," explained H.E. Deng.

Mandisa Mashologu, Head of UNDP Southern Sudan's Poverty and MDG Unit, also took part in this important event. Representing the Government of National Unity in the North was Professor Sittel-nafar Mahgoub, General Secretary of the Population Council, who has been leading the preparation of Sudan's MDG Progress Report.

What emerged from the workshop was the Accra Declaration – a document that articulates the key requirements for achieving the MDGs in crisis contexts. It also calls on leaders to participate in the MDG Review Summit and adopt the following specific measures:

- Recognize the specific challenges posed by conflict, armed violence, fragility and disasters;
- Support accelerated efforts in countries affected by conflict creating the necessary foundations and enabling



Insecurity is one of Southern Sudan's main challenges in achieving the MDGs according to H.E David Deng Athorbei, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning.

environment towards the MDGs; and

- Strengthen international partnerships to address these needs.

An action plan, to ensure the dissemination of the Accra Declaration, was also drafted.

It is hoped that this workshop will result in more focused interventions in crisis and post-conflict countries. For if the international community and development partners can provide more targeted support to deal with the root causes of conflict, it is possible to deliver on the collective promise towards the achievement of some of the MDGs.

For a copy of the Accra Declaration, visit: <http://tiny.cc/inak2>.

Better information means better poverty reduction policies



vides credible statistics on the incidence of poverty and includes specific information on access to health, education, agriculture and credit markets. The welfare measure for poverty is based on consumption.

At the launch, H.E Dr. Riek Machar, Vice President of Southern Sudan, said: “Decades

The fight against poverty requires a better understanding of what causes poverty, who is poor, and how poverty changes over time. Without this information, designing and implementing effective poverty reduction programmes can be very challenging.

To help address some of the data gaps that exist and measure the scope of poverty in Southern Sudan, the Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation (SSCCSE) produced the report *Poverty in Southern Sudan – Estimates from the 2009 National Baseline Household Survey* in June 2010. The document pro-

of conflict deprived our people of many opportunities. This report is an eye-opener and will guide the government in effective policy formulation on poverty eradication. We must make sure that rural areas receive their rightful share of the peace dividends.” Other senior officials, including the SSCCSE Chairman H.E Isaiah Chol, echoed this sentiment, and recognized the importance of the information in helping to design more robust and well targeted programmes to help reduce poverty in Southern Sudan.

The report is based on analysis of the 2009 National Baseline Household Sur-

Key results from the report include:

- **50.6%** of the population of Southern Sudan **lives below the poverty line**, calculated at 72.9 SDG*.
- **72.8%** (53.1 SDG) **of income is dedicated to food consumption***, with approximately 19.8 SDG for non-food consumption.
- **At 61.6%, poverty rates are highest in the Greater Bahr El Ghazal region** – as compared to Greater Equatoria (45.2%) and Greater Upper Nile (45.2%).
- The proportion of people identified as **‘poor’ in rural areas is more than twice** that of those identified in **urban areas**.

* per person per month

vey – the second major national survey of its kind undertaken during the CPA period – also produced by the SSCCSE with support from the African Development Bank, Statistics Norway, and UNDP. “We trust that the this report will support the debate on how the three levels of the Government in Southern Sudan will bring about human development and sustainable change,” said Joe Feeney, UNDP Southern Sudan’s Head of Office, in a statement.

UNDP and UNICEF team up to tackle HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in Sudan remained relatively low before 2005 because the civil war closed the region off from extensive interaction with neighbouring countries. The peace process – and the subsequent opening of Sudan’s borders – has, however, increased transmission of the disease dramatically due to increased mobility and the growth of urban centres.

UNDP’s *Global Fund Programme* currently manages four projects on behalf of the Government of Southern Sudan. One of these involves developing and expanding treatment, care and support services for people and

families living with HIV/AIDS. It is the only programme providing antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) – medications for the treatment of HIV – to people who have the disease in Southern Sudan.

With support from UNDP, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has put Voluntary and Counselling Treatment (VCT) and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT) services in place across the region. Health facilities have also been set up to improve the quality of maternal and newborn health services.

In 2009, UNICEF awareness campaigns targeted 71,882 youth with informa-

tion on HIV/AIDS and prevention for HIV and other sexual transmitted infections. In 2010, the primary and secondary school curriculums were redesigned to include a life skills segment, making awareness classes a regular component in school curriculum.

Before interventions from UNDP and UNICEF, the Juba Teaching Hospital in Central Equatoria had no HIV prevention services in place. After receiving support from UN partners, services have improved dramatically with nearly 70 percent of pregnant women getting testing for HIV/AIDS infection.

Knowledge Corner

Beyond the midpoint: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

We are now beyond the mid-point between adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the target date of 2015. Despite progress towards achievement of some of the targets, numerous Goals and targets are likely to be missed unless additional, strengthened or corrective action is taken urgently.

In light of a rapidly changing development environment and given a limited timeframe for achieving the MDG agenda, UNDP initiated a forward-looking MDG review to assess where emphasis should be placed over the next several years to support partners to meet the agreed MDGs.

The principal objectives of this review were to assess the factors that shape MDG progress in a country, identify the bottlenecks and constraints that have slowed progress, and assess how UNDP can best support its development partners in their efforts to make the achievement of the MDGs a reality. Building on the findings of 30 country MDG assessments, the Report also highlights key interventions

that have improved the capabilities, living conditions and well-being of the poor. And it identifies critical areas where capacity strengthening and policy coherence is required for progress towards the MDGs to be accelerated. The report is summarized as follows:

1. National ownership of the MDG agenda will be needed to ensure that progress is made and that development results are sustainable.
2. How a country articulates its development priorities, how it reflects these priorities in policies and programmes, and how it leverages its opportunities in the global system are fundamental in charting and shaping MDG progress at the national level.
3. At the macro-level, broad-based, inclusive growth policies should be pursued. Without this, growth often bypasses the poor completely. This impacts on the goal of income poverty reduction as well as on other goals too. This is because higher growth often results on increased government revenues, which can enable greater spending on public services that are critical for MDG progress, including education and healthcare.
4. The design of sector-specific policies and the selection of appropriate programmes are also critical for shaping MDG progress. For instance, despite food security being a key development objective in many countries, the agricultural sector has been ignored for decades. Not surprisingly, hunger prevalence remains a challenge.
5. Policy coherence, especially with respect to trade and finance, is required at the global level to support MDG outcomes at the national level.
6. Democratic governance plays a critical role as far as MDG achievement is concerned. Through the processes, institutions and systems that come with it, democratic governance creates an enabling environment for the achievement of development objectives.
7. Government capacity deficits are a critical factor in shaping MDG progress largely because many services needed for MGG achievement are publicly provisioned. Bolstering governance and implementation capacities is therefore very important.
8. Though domestic revenue mobilization is important and should be prioritized, accelerated progress towards MDG achievements will also require a substantial scaling up of investment by the international community from current levels.

Issues that threaten to erode MDG progress

Recent global developments such as the economic and financial crisis and the soaring prices of food and oil threaten to erode previous gains, reminding us in start terms that in an increasingly interdependent world no country is immune from external shocks, and that sustaining MDG achievements will require countries to adopt risk-coping and risk-management strategies to prevent setbacks or at least mitigate any negative effects.

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