The beginning of the new millennium witnessed the adoption of the United Nations Millennium deceleration by the General Assembly. In the Deceleration, representatives of the United Nations Members States committed their nations to a new global partnership for development by establishing a series of time-bound targets, with a deadline of 2015. The adoption of this deceleration led to subsequent elaboration of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Eight MDGs marked a significant step in the International development agenda as they offered a unique opportunity for focusing International Policies and economic resources on achieving progress on human development priorities around the world. They contributed to cementing a new global partnership to tackle key development challenges and to galvanizing International attention and resources to address those challenges.

5.1. Uneven Progress across Regions, Countries and Indicators

Since 2000, the Implementation of MDGs has contributed to reducing extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease, expanding women’s and girl’s opportunities, as well as promoting an environmentally sustainable society. These impressive results partly reflect their focus on the implementation of clear targets. However, this focus on

2 United Nations System Task Team on Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, 2012; *Realizing the Future We Want for All*: Report to the Secretary General, New York.
targets, particularly those monitored in terms of national and global averages can mask growing disparities.

With regards to the overall progress in the implementation of the MDGs at the global level, several targets have already been achieved or are close to achievement by the 2015 deadline.\textsuperscript{3} This includes the poverty reduction target, parity between boys and girls in primary education and access to improved water sources. However, there has been slow progress in other areas as the selected indicators in figure below show. For example, the proportion of own-account and unpaid family worker in total employment, which is considered a proxy for vulnerable employment, has dropped from 67 percent in 1991 to an estimated 58 percent in all developing regions in 2011 (MDG Report 2012). Although maternal mortality has considerably declined between 1990 and 2010, this reduction is still far from the 2015 target. Furthermore, the number of both Undernourished people and slum dwellers has continued to grow. The estimated number of people suffering from hunger in developing regions has increased from 791 million in the 1995-97 period to 836 million in 2000-02, and reached 850 million in 2006-08 (MDG Report 2012), which was comparable to that of the 1990-92 period.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid. 1
Note: The graphs present aggregated values of selected MDG indicators of all developing regions which include North Africa, Southern, East, West and Central Africa, Latin America and Caribbean and Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, South East Asia, Western Asia and Oceania.

**Figure 28: MDG progress across selected Indicators in Developing Country Regions**

The progress towards the achievement of MDGs has not only varied across different targets and indicators, but has also been unequally distributed across regions, sub-regions and countries, as well as among different population groups within countries. The regional disparities are shown in the progress chart below (Fig 11). The chart provides information on progress in the implementation of 14 indicators in 7 sub-regions, according to four categories: (a) Target already met or expected to be met by 2015; (b) Progress insufficient to reach the target if prevailing trends persist; (c) no progress or deterioration; and (d) missing or insufficient data. Given that different regions are characterized by different initial development conditions and face different development challenges, caution should be taken when comparing their performance. Thus, a region may appear to lag behind other regions, but it may have actually made considerable progress when compared to its historical record, and given its initial conditions and development challenges.5

Figure III shows that some sub-regions have experienced greater progress than others. For example, East Asia is the best performer among the nine sub-regions. Out of 16 targets, it has already achieved or is expected to achieve 14 targets by 2015. This sub-region is followed by South Eastern Asia which has achieved or expected to achieve 10 out of 16 targets, and Northern Africa and Latin America and Caribbean both of which have achieved or will achieve 9 out of 16 targets. Within the Asian continent as a whole, there has also been mixed progress toward the achievement of MDGs, ranging from East Asia with the highest number of targets expected to be achieved by 2015, to South Asia (7 Targets) and western Asia (3 Targets).6

5 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 66/288, 2012; The Future We Want.
6 Author’s explanation based on the data.
**Table 82: Progress of Millennium Development Goals across Regions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals &amp; Targets</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Latin America &amp; Carr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce extreme poverty by half</td>
<td>Low poverty</td>
<td>Very high poverty</td>
<td>Moderate poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive &amp; descent employment</td>
<td>Large deficit in descent work</td>
<td>Very large deficit</td>
<td>Large deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce hunger by half</td>
<td>Low hunger</td>
<td>Very high hunger</td>
<td>Moderate hunger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 2 Achieve universal primary education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal primary Schooling</td>
<td>High enrollment</td>
<td>Moderate enrolment</td>
<td>High enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender parity at primary enrollment</td>
<td>Close to parity</td>
<td>Close to parity</td>
<td>Close to parity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s share of paid employment</td>
<td>Low share</td>
<td>Medium share</td>
<td>High share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 4 Reduce child mortality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce under-5 mortality by two thirds</td>
<td>Low mortality</td>
<td>Moderate mortality</td>
<td>Low mortality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 5 Improve maternal health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce maternal mortality by three quarters</td>
<td>Low mortality</td>
<td>Very high mortality</td>
<td>Low mortality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to reproductive health</td>
<td>Moderate access</td>
<td>Low access</td>
<td>High access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Low incidence</td>
<td>High incidence</td>
<td>Low incidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halt and reverse the spread of tuberculosis</td>
<td>Low mortality</td>
<td>Moderate mortality</td>
<td>Low mortality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halve the proportion of population without improved drinking water</td>
<td>High coverage</td>
<td>Low coverage</td>
<td>High coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halve the proportion of population without sanitation</td>
<td>High coverage</td>
<td>Very low coverage</td>
<td>Low coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the lives of slum dwellers</td>
<td>Moderate proportion of slum dwellers</td>
<td>Very high proportion of slum dwellers</td>
<td>Moderate proportion of slum dwellers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Target already met  No progress or Deterioration
Progress insufficient to reach the target  Missing or insufficient data by 2015

Apart from sub-regional disparities, the differences appear also between countries within the sub-regions. This is the case for many MDG indicators, if not all, at a national level. One clear example is gender equality in primary school, an indicator that is at parity in South Asian sub-region. Nonetheless, the ratio of girls to boys in primary education remains unevenly shared in different countries in the sub-region. The gender parity index in primary level enrollment ranged from 0.71 in Afghanistan to 1.06 in Sri Lanka in 2012. Another example demonstrating country disparities is the under-fire mortality rate per 1000 live births which ranged from as low as 9.6 per 1000 live births in Sri Lanka to 102 per 1000 live births in Afghanistan in 2012. Likewise, the country disparities also exist in the prevalence of tuberculosis which was as low as 65 per 100,000 population in Maldives and as high as 434 per 100,000 population in Bangladesh in 2012. Similarly, there are significance disparities in other indicators like share of women in national parliament, Maternal Mortality rate, adolescent birth rate, proportion of population with access to safe drinking water and sanitation etc.

Figure 29: Country Disparities in the achievement of selected indicators

Source: Author calculations based on data from countries

7 Ibid.
Within the region, almost all the countries have made extra ordinary progress, improving the lives of millions of people. Some countries have made more rapid progress in achieving most of the targets, while others have lagged behind. The Table below provides information on the progress made by SAARC member states towards 16 indicators according to four categories: (i) Achieved (ii) On Track (iii) Off Track and (iv) No progress or regressing. It is evident from the chart that many disparities exist among SAARC countries in progress towards the targets. Within the region, Maldives has been a success story in achieving 11 out of 16 indicators and being on track for other four indicators followed by Bhutan which has achieved 10 out of 16 indicators and Srilanka which has achieved 9 out of 16 indicators. Afghanistan provides a sorry figure which has achieved only one out of 16 indicators and is off track for majority of the indicators. Likewise, other countries of the region also have made progress towards the attainment of some indicators, but are going to miss others by their target date of 2015. As such, after 2015, there will be therefore a significant “Unfinished agenda”.

9 Author’s explanation based on data.
Table 83: Progress of SAARC countries on selected indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poverty head count ratio at national Poverty line</td>
<td>Under Weight Children’s</td>
<td>Primary Enrollment</td>
<td>Reaching last grade</td>
<td>GPI at Primary</td>
<td>GPI at Secondary</td>
<td>GPI at Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>@</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Bhutan</td>
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<td>India</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Srilanka</td>
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<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= Achieved  @=Off Track  @=On Track  €=No Progress or Regressing
5.2. Barriers in Achieving MDGs in SAARC Member State

The South Asian Countries face many barriers to achieving the MDGs, some unique and country-specific, others broadly shared. Some of the problems faced by these states in achieving MDGs are discussed below:

1. The original MDG framework was, driven by the triad ‘United States, Europe and Japan’, and co-sponsored by the World Bank, IMF and OECD. The political process involved in the formulation of the MDGs has not been considered inclusive and participatory. Since their inception, the MDGs have been perceived as the expression of a top-down, North-centered approach to development managed mainly by the UN secretariat and the big multilateral players, rather than a genuine reflection of the aspirations of developing countries. The different development needs and initial conditions of countries were not reflected in the selection of targets. The MDG framework does not take into consideration the differences in efforts that countries would need to make in order to achieve the same relative of degree of progress or to accelerate progress, nor does it account for differences in population, size and the scale of existing deprivation.

2. Deficit in Governance is among the major factors that impede the achievement of MDGs in South Asia region. As a whole, the South Asian countries are unable to face the challenges ahead because of lack of “good governance”. In those countries which have functioning democracies, the ruling parties often do not follow the rules of the game. Of course, countries like India and Sri Lanka had planned development (e.g. the Five Year Plan in India) and were able to achieve substantial progress, political parties based on religion, caste, ethnicity or region follow sectarian policies. Moreover,

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bureaucracies tend to be status quoist, and promote corruption in league with political leaders and contractors.\textsuperscript{13}

3. South Asian countries are marked by continuous inter-state and intra-state conflict. Conflict not only stops development, but reverses progress, exacerbating hunger, poverty and diseases. Weak states pre-occupied with quelling violence or staving off coups cannot focus on important development goals. Peace, however fragile, provides an opportunity to make rapid progress.\textsuperscript{14}

4. While the attainment of the MDGs was declared as a national objective by all the countries of South Asia, they were not embedded in a sufficiently robust institutional framework or strong enough institutions. For example, civil society organizations in Pakistan assess the MDG secretariat in the planning Commission as not sufficiently high powered. Attainment of the MGDs is not specifically monitored by cabinet or a parliamentary committee suggesting a broader lack of political will.\textsuperscript{15}

5. Richness in material and human resources has warranted a constant interaction between countries in South Asia and the outside world. South Asian states have been aware of their geopolitical advantages and the need to integrate into a regional force. A culmination of such an understanding was the creation of the South Asian Association for Region Cooperation (SAARC). One of the purposes of SAARC was to foster a common regional identity and a cooperative growth strategy making optimum use of intra-regional trade and social and political development. Established with a vision to forge social and economic integration, SAARC has been unable to fulfill its purpose owing to continuous inter-state conflict.\textsuperscript{16} While intra-regional trade of major trading blocs has grown tremendously over the last

\textsuperscript{13} Anil K Singh, Ram Gati Singh, 2009; \textit{SAARC Development Goals: Commitments and Achievements}, South Asian Network for Agricultural and Social Development. p 159.

\textsuperscript{14} Eric MU OZ, 2008; \textit{The Millennium Development Goals: Facing Own Challenges}, briefing paper. (www.bread.org).


one and half decades, SAARC has been miniscule compared to other regional trading blocs in this region.  

6. Given the fixed pool of financial and physical resources, enhanced spending on military related items necessarily makes a dent into the resources available for civil expenditure. Military expenditure has risen substantially, across the board. Even in South Asian countries which have to devote progressively greater resources to improve the life chances of its people, military spending increased from 21.9 billion USD in 1990 to 30.9 billion USD in 2008, registering a growth of 41% in real terms over the said period. The confrontation between India and Pakistan specifically is responsible for a large chunk of the military spending in the region. In 2012, for the first time Asia outpaced Europe in its military spending. That year, the world’s top five importers of armaments all came from Asia: India, Pakistan, South Korea, and the city of Singapore. According to SIPRI estimates, India ranked 8th out of the 15 countries with the highest military expenditure in 2012. It spent 46.1 billion USD on armaments in 2012 which constitutes 2.5% share of GDP.

7. As a consequence of this huge defense spending, the problem which arises is that governments in these states are mobilizing staggering amount of resources towards social sector. This is evident, for example from India. The social sector expenditure in financial year 2012-13, which consists of rural development, elementary education, health and family welfare, women and child development and water and sanitation, has gone up from 181.46 billion (USD 3.299 billion) in 1990-2000 to 1,788.22 billion (USD 32.513 billion) in 2012-13. However, as a proportion of total expenditure, expenditure for health and family welfare has fallen from 9.10% in 2000-01

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19 John Feffer 2014; World cuts back Military Spending, But not Asia, Inter Press, Service News Agency.
to 7.01% in 2012-13. During the same period the share going to water and sanitation has declined from 9.8% to 7.73% and the share to social welfare and nutrition has declined from 5.07% to 4.75%. Only the share allocated to education has increased from 10.89% to 14.6%. Even in this area, the goal of spending 6% of GDP on education remained unfulfilled. 

8. Although all the countries of the region have made progress in reducing material deaths. However, the progress has been insufficient and much needs to be done. The most effective way to reduce maternal mortality is to have births attended by skilled health personnel. Among other things, ensuring antenatal care of prospective mothers at health centers & recommended dose of IFT are important factors that help improve maternal health & reduce life risk during pregnancy. However, except Srilanka and Maldives, in all other countries of South Asia, the proportion of delivers attended by skilled health personnel has been rather low.

9. Economic growth driven by industry and manufacturing, has largely relied on the exploitation of natural resources. At the same time, the patterns of consumption and production have become increasingly unsustainable and are taking a severe toll on the environment. Water supply issues are also becoming more complex and difficult.

10. Extreme poverty rates have fallen in South Asia with Maldives having less poverty rate of 1.7% in 2012 followed by Srilanka having just 6.7% of population living below national poverty line in 2013. However, the region is still home to a large number of poor people. Besides, the gains in economic development have been unevenly shared between different groups. Income inequalities are evident between Urban and rural areas, between men and women, and among different caste, ethnicity and language groups. One reason why the region continues to experience significant levels of poverty and rising inequality is that economic growth is not generating sufficient decent and productive employment. This is due to the nature of growth and the pattern of structural change in many countries.

in which workers move from agriculture into low-productivity services. A consequence has been that many people are in vulnerable employment-working on their own or contributing to family work. Without adequate system of social protection, they have to take whatever work they can find or generate, no matter how unproductive or poorly compensated or unsafe. 

11. The region is the world’s most disaster prone area and faces increasing risks of disaster. Due to its geo-physical and climate conditions, South Asia is exposed to a number of natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, flash floods, landslides, draughts, tsunami, storm surge and cyclones. The region has experienced some of the worst disasters in the past which resulted in unprecedented human and economic loss. During 1971-2009, 1017 natural disasters that meet the criteria of EMDAT occurred. These events have cumulatively affected two billion people and have caused 800,000 deaths in the region. Direct economic loss recorded amounted to over 80 billion USD. This figure does not include the indirect loss. The World Risk Report 2012 shows that all the SAARC countries are vulnerable to disasters with Bangladesh being the most disaster risk prone country in the region. Almost all the countries have high to very high level of lack of adaptation and coping capacities.

12. Climate change and its variability is an emerging risk in the region and it is predicted that due to climate extremes there will be increase in the number of disaster events such as intense rainfall, floods and droughts. Climate change has impact on monsoon dynamics which affect the rainfall pattern thereby affecting the overall agricultural production. Since the region has not managed its natural resources well, some of the increasing problems faced in the region are water scarcity, food insecurity, loss of biodiversity, land and soil degradation, salinity intrusion etc. South Asia’s susceptibility to climate change has been an agenda in SAARC forum since 1987. The SAARC Action Plan on Climate Change (as adopted during the 16th

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24 Ibid. p 1.
25 Ibid. p 3.
SAARC Summit) provides the necessary strategies for mitigating impact of climate change in the region. However, very little progress has been made in implementing these action plans on ground.27

13. The region is still a long way from achieving gender equality despite the success in achieving gender parity at primary and in some countries at the secondary educational levels. Across the region, women face serve deficits in health and education and in their access to power, voice and right. In many countries, households have strong preferences for male children, and take measures to exercise these.

Women in South Asia are also less likely than men to own assets or participate in non-agricultural wage employment. They also tend to be informal workers- a consequence of their limited skills, restricted mobility and existing gender norms. In addition, women have the load of unpaid domestic work to which they devote large amounts of time and energy.28

14. Another hurdle to achieving MDGs in South Asia is the lack of engagement of Youth in the original MDG framework to shape their future. Young people between the age group of 10 and 24 years formed nearly one-third of the population in most South Asian countries. To help achieve the MDGs, the youth should not be taken as only the users of services and limited to the discussion of sexual reproductive health and rights, but should be engaged in broader developmental agenda such as the discourses on poverty & debt.29

15. The eighth Goal is to Develop a Global Partnership for Development. This was crafted as an enabling driver for the achievement of the other MDGs. It aimed to establish more conductive conditions of International cooperation, generate adequate resources, create new opportunities, and help build the capacities and skills needed to deliver on the first seven MDs.30 However, the imprecise definition of Goal 8 limits the accountability of donor

27 Ibid. pp 5-8.
30 Supranote 28. p 14
countries and there is lack of coordination among donors and an absence of accountability mechanisms for their interventions.\textsuperscript{31}

The financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009 and the euro zone turmoil led many governments of donor countries to implement austerity measures and reduce their aid budgets.\textsuperscript{32} ODA from DAC countries to all developing and least developed countries fell 4 percent in 2012, after falling 2 percent in 2011. This is the first time since 1997 that ODA has experienced two consecutive years of decline. Total net ODA flows from DAC countries amounted to 125.9 billion USD in 2012 in current dollars, down from 134 billion USD in 2011. The decrease in ODA has meant a further widening of the gap between the United Nations target of disbursing 0.7% of donor GNI and the actual flows. In 2012, the combined DAC donors’ ODA was equivalent to 0.29% of their combined GNI, widening the delivery gap to 0.41 percent of GNI from 0.39% in 2011. The decline in AID from donor countries is hampering the social sector investment and infrastructure development of the developing countries, thereby limiting their capacity to achieve the MDGs.\textsuperscript{33}

16. Even though SAARC countries have been able meet the target of enrollment ratio and the associated gender parity index, secondary and tertiary education enrollment and the issue of gender parity remains serious cause of concern. Furthermore, despite impressive progress in Net enrollment ratio in primary education in all the counties of South Asia, survival to last grade of primary has, however, not kept pace with the impressive progress achieved so far in the case of NER. The dropout rates are particularly high among the girls who are compelled to leave school and take part in house work.\textsuperscript{34} There are multiple factors responsible for poor

\textsuperscript{31} A Civil Society Review of Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in Commonwealth Countries, National Report, Pakistan 2013.
\textsuperscript{32} OECD 2013; Aid to poor countries Slips further as governments tighten their budgets, OECD.
\textsuperscript{34} Anil K. Singh, Ram Gati Singh 2009; SAARC Development Goals: Commitments and Achievements, South Asian Network for Agricultural and Social Development. p 158.
performance in education like insufficient educational services, especially in rural areas, incompetent and untrained teachers (mostly recruited on the basis of political recommendation), poor quality of education, poverty, lack of community participation, illiterate parents and lack of political commitment and good governance.\(^\text{35}\)

17. A series of programmes for alleviating poverty and hunger and providing social services to people have been taken by all the countries of South Asia. While there has been some success, the impact of these schemes is far from satisfactory. One reason for poor performance of these schemes is that the cost of administration of these schemes is high and has been increasing steadily over the years, resulting in less funds going to actually intended purposes. For example, under the MGNREGA scheme, which received 1,665.16 billion between 2006-07 and 2011-12, only 66% of this amount was spent on actual wage employment and 34% was used for administration and other purposes. Further, there are host of problems with respect to the schemes, such as leakage, misappropriation of funds, inefficiency, corruption and so on.\(^\text{36}\)

18. The rate of population growth is very high in the countries of South Asia. Because of this, development efforts that might otherwise succeed are “undone” by population increases. An effective programme for population control is necessary, and would encompass many sectors including education, maternal health and reproductive health.\(^\text{37}\)

19. Very high debt servicing in almost all the countries of South Asia contributes to macroeconomic crisis. So much revenue goes to debt servicing that there is not enough money available for development.\(^\text{38}\)


\(^{38}\) Reporting on the MDGs- UNDG (2010); (www.undg.org/.../MDG -report-final-16-September-2010-clean-copy-B.doc.)
20. Availability of reliable data still remains a challenge and there is still reliance on estimations using modeled data. National averages tend to mask sub-national variations and variations between rich-poor, rural-urban etc. Very few data are reported that have age and sex disaggregation. These averages thus mask the vulnerabilities facing populations in the poorer sections in rural areas, in lower age groups and women. Increased attention and investments are needed to get reliable information at country level for meaningful analysis, comparisons and most importantly use for local decision-making.39

21. The region is committed to reduce the incidence and deaths associated with malaria, tuberculosis and HIV and move towards elimination of these diseases. Much progress has been made by almost all the countries of the region to contain these life threatening diseases. However, stigma and discrimination and punitive legal frame works continue to haunt progress in expansions of HIV prevention and care services among the high risk population groups. Likewise, poor surveillance, low quality drugs, fake/counterfeit drugs, mono-therapy and poor managerial and technical capacity for malaria control and elimination are restricting the progress towards malaria elimination.40

5.3. A Post-2015 MDGs Debate: Development Agenda beyond 2015

The MDGs, which were adopted in 2000, will expire in September 2015. As we approach the 2015 deadline of the MDG, debates on future development frame work post 2015 are in full swing. The current debate offers a unique opportunity to take stock of the achievements of the MDGs, review progress, focus in achieving remaining goals and devise priorities, for any successor frame work to the MDGs.41

After the MDG were adopted, dozens of developing country planning ministries, hundreds of international agencies, and thousands of civil society organizations (CSOs) rallied behind them. Together, they have contributed to

40 Ibid.
remarkable achievements; half a billion fever people are in extreme poverty; about three million children’s lives saved each year; four out of five children now get vaccinated for a range of diseases; Maternal morality gets the focused attention it deserves; deaths from malaria have fallen by one quarter; contracting HIV is no longer an automatic death sentence. In 2011, 590 million children in developing countries - a record number - attended primary school.

Given this success, it would be a mistake to start a new development agenda from scratch. There is much unfinished business from the MDGs. Some countries achieved a great deal, but others, especially low-income, conflict affected countries achieved much less. So the new development agenda should carry forward the spirit of the Millennium Declaration and the best of the MDGs. It would send an unfortunate signal if the MDGs were dropped from the post-2015 agenda as the progress in many areas is likely to fall far short of the 2015 target in many low income countries. Moreover, for sustaining the achievements in those areas where good progress has been made, efforts need to be continued and preferably strengthened.

The roots of the post-2015 MDG debate can be traced to the 2010 High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the MDGs. The outcome document of the meeting required the Secretary-General to initiate thinking on a post-2015 development agenda and include recommendations in his annual report on efforts to accelerate MDG progress. In June 2012 at RIO+20, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, UN Member states adopted ‘The Future We Want’ outcome document, which set in motion many of the inter-governmental processes for the post-2015 development agenda, including the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, and the High-level Political Forum.

Governments are in the midst of negotiating, and civil society, young people, businesses and others are also having their say in this global conversation. The UN is working with governments, civil society and other partners to build on the momentum

generated by the MDGs and carry on with an ambitious post-2015 sustainable development agenda that is expected to be adopted by UN member states at a summit in September 2015. To foster an inclusive global conversation, the UN Development Group has coordinated national, global and thematic consultations. To date more than 100 consultations, involving partnerships with multiple stakeholders, including local ministries, businesses and civil society groups, have been supported by the UN. Civil society organizations from all over the world continue to engage in the post-2015 process, while academia and other research institutions, including think tanks, remain particularly active.

Through the ‘MY World Survey’, the United Nations global survey for a better world, millions of people have already voted on which six development issues most impact their lives, and the number of voters continues to grow. Complementing My World is the ‘World We Want’ online platform, where citizens have engaged further in the various consultations on the post-2015 development process.45

Regional organizations are conducting consultations to formulate regional positions on the post-2015 development Agenda.46 The five Regional Commissions - Economic Commissions for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) - have come together to propose a joint regional perspective on the ongoing global debate on the post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda.47 Besides, national consultations on the post-2015 Development Agenda were held which were designed to open to crowd sourcing the usually closed multilateral negotiation process. The consultations generate inputs into global policy making from individuals and grouping in 88 countries through meetings and conferences, on line discussions, and larger public debate.48

46 Background Page, United Nations Millennium Development Goals.
5.4. United Nations on Post-2015 Development Agenda: Appointment of High level Committees

On 31 July 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed a 27 person High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons (HLP), co-chaired by Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (President of Indonesia), Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (President of Liberia), and David Cameron (Prime Minister of United Kingdom) to make recommendations on the development agenda beyond 2015. The Panel conducted its work for nine months during which it spoke with people from all walks of life. The Panel reviewed almost one thousand written submissions from civil society & business groups working around the world. Experts from multilateral organizations, national governments and local authorities were consulted. On 30 May, 2013, the HLP on the post-2015 Development Agenda released a report entitled “A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development”. The panel believes that the post-2015 agenda is a universal agenda and needs to be driven by five big transformative shifts. The first four shifts are where the focus for action is mostly at the country level, while the fifth transformative shift, forging a new global partnership, is an overarching change in international cooperation that provides the policy space for domestic transformations. The transformations are described below:

1. **Leave No One Behind**: The new agenda must move from reducing to ending extreme poverty, in all its forms. No person—regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, race or other status—must be denied universal human rights & basic economic opportunities. The Panel believes that the goals should be designed that focus on reaching excluded groups, for example, by making sure that the progress is traced at all levels of income, and by providing social protection to help people build resilience to life’s uncertainties.

2. **Put Sustainable Development at the Core**: The Panel believes that we have to integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. We must act now to slow the alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity.

3. **Transform Economics 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.

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. The Panel calls for a fundamental shift- to recognize peace and good governance as a core element of wellbeing, not an optional extra.

5. **Forge a New Global Partnership:** A new spirit of solidarity, cooperation & mutual accountability 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 centered on people, including those affected by poverty and exclusion, women, youth, the aged, disabled persons, and indigenous people. It should include CSOs, multilateral organizations, local and national governments, the scientific and academic community, business and private philanthropy.49

The Panel believes that bold commitments in these five areas would allow the international community to keep the promises made under the MDGs, raise the bar where experience shows we can do more, and add key issues that are missing. Together, these would be significant steps towards poverty eradication as an essential part of sustainable development.

The Panel recommends that a limited number of goals and targets be adopted in the post- 2015 development agenda, and that each should be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time- bound. The targets in the post- 2015 agenda should be set for 2030. Longer time frames would lack urgency and might seem implausible, given the volatility of today’s world, while shorter ones would not allow

the truly transformative changes that are needed to take effect. To achieve its vision to end extreme poverty in all its forms in the context of sustainable development and to make the goals most transformative, the Panel has recommended an illustrative list of 12 goals and 54 targets, the achievement of which would dramatically improve the condition of people and the planet by 2030. The illustrative goals and targets mentioned below are offered as a basis for further discussion.50

*Table 84: Illustrative list of Post-2015 Goals and Targets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Targets</th>
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</table>
| 1. End Poverty                                                      | 1a. Bring the number of people living on less than $1.25 a day to zero and reduce by x% the share of people living below their country’s 2015 national poverty line  
1b. Increase by x% the share of women and men, communities, and businesses with secure rights to land, property, and other assets  
1c. Cover x% of people who are poor and vulnerable with social protection systems  
1d. Build resilience and reduce deaths from natural disasters by x% |
| 2. Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality              | 2a. Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against girls and women  
2b. End child marriage  
2c. Ensure equal right of women to own and inherit property, sign a contract, register a business and open a bank account  
2d. Eliminate discrimination against women in political, economic, and public life |
| 3. Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning                  | 3a. Increase by x% the proportion of children able to access and complete pre-primary education  
3b. Ensure every child, regardless of circumstance, completes primary education able to read, write and count well enough to meet minimum learning standards  
3c. Ensure every child, regardless of circumstance, has access to lower secondary education and increase the proportion of adolescents who achieve recognized and measurable learning outcomes to x%  
3d. Increase the number of young and adult women and men with the skills, including technical and vocational, needed for work by x% |
| 4. Ensure Healthy Lives                                             | 4a. End preventable infant and under-5 deaths  
4b. Increase by x% the proportion of children, adolescents, at-risk adults and older people that are fully vaccinated |

50 Ibid.
| **4c.** Decrease the maternal mortality ratio to no more than x per 100,000 |
| **4d.** Ensure universal sexual and reproductive health and rights |
| **4e.** Reduce the burden of disease from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases and priority non-communicable diseases |
| **5a.** End hunger and protect the right of everyone to have access to sufficient, safe, affordable, and nutritious food |
| **5b.** Reduce stunting by x%, wasting by y%, and anemia by z% for all children under five |
| **5c.** Increase agricultural productivity by x%, with a focus on sustainably increasing smallholder yields and access to irrigation |
| **5d.** Adopt sustainable agricultural, ocean and freshwater fishery practices and rebuild designated fish stocks to sustainable level |
| **5e.** Reduce postharvest loss and food waste by x% |
| **6a.** Provide universal access to safe drinking water at home, and in schools, health centres, and refugee camps |
| **6b.** End open defecation and ensure universal access to sanitation at school and work, and increase access to sanitation at home by x% |
| **6c.** Bring freshwater withdrawals in line with supply and increase water efficiency in agriculture by x%, industry by y% and urban areas by z% |
| **6d.** Recycle or treat all municipal and industrial wastewater prior to discharge |
| **7a.** Double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix |
| **7b.** Ensure universal access to modern energy services |
| **7c.** Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency in buildings, industry, agriculture and transport |
| **7d.** Phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption |
| **8a.** Increase the number of good and decent jobs and livelihoods by x |
| **8b.** Decrease the number of young people not in education, employment or training by x% |
| **8c.** Strengthen productive capacity by providing universal access to financial services and infrastructure such as transportation and ICT |
| **8d.** Increase new start-ups by x and value added from new products by y through creating an enabling business environment and boosting entrepreneurship |
| 9. Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainably | 9a. Publish and use economic, social and environmental accounts in all governments and major companies  
9b. Increase consideration of sustainability in x% of government procurements  
9c. Safeguard ecosystems, species and genetic diversity  
9d. Reduce deforestation by x% and increase reforestation by y%  
9e. Improve soil quality, reduce soil erosion by x tonnes and combat desertification |
|---|---|
| 10. Ensure Good Governance and Effective Institutions | 10a. Provide free and universal legal identity, such as birth registrations  
10b. Ensure people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest and access to independent media and information  
10c. Increase public participation in political processes and civic engagement at all levels  
10d. Guarantee the public’s right to information and access to government data  
10e. Reduce bribery and corruption and ensure officials can be held accountable |
| 11. Ensure Stable and Peaceful Societies | 11a. Reduce violent deaths per 100,000 by x and eliminate all forms of violence against children  
11b. Ensure justice institutions are accessible, independent, well-resourced and respect due-process rights  
11c. Stem the external stressors that lead to conflict, including those related to organized crime  
11d. Enhance the capacity, professionalism and accountability of the security forces, police and judiciary |
| 12. Create a Global Enabling Environment and Catalyze Long-Term Finance | 12a. Support an open, fair and development-friendly trading system, substantially reducing trade-distorting measures, including agricultural subsidies, while improving market access of developing country products  
12b. Implement reforms to ensure stability of the global financial system and encourage stable, long-term private foreign investment  
12c. Hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, in line with international agreements  
12d. Developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20% of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries; other countries should move toward voluntary targets for complementary financial assistance  
12e. Reduce illicit flows and tax evasion and increase stolen-asset recovery by $x  
12f. Promote collaboration on and access to science, technology, innovation, and development data |

Endorsing the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development entitled “The Future We Want”, the General Assembly established a 30 member Open Working Group (OWG) on 22 January, 2013 to design Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a successor of the MDGs. The General Assembly also established an Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing in January 2013 with a view to preparing a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving Sustainable development objectives.

The UN Open Working Group responsible for crafting the SDGs has handed down its final proposal, containing a list of 17 goals and 69 targets to be achieved by 2030. The list includes a reworking of the eight millennium development goals that expire in 2015, such as eradicating poverty and hunger, improving education, and achieving gender equality as well as new goals on water and sanitation, affordable energy, safer cities and climate change.

The SDGs are action oriented, global in nature and universally applicable. They take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognize their inter-linkages in achieving Sustainable development in all its dimensions. The proposed SDGs are mentioned in the table below:

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Table 85: Sustainable Development Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>End poverty in all its forms everywhere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 2</td>
<td>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 3</td>
<td>Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 4</td>
<td>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 5</td>
<td>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 6</td>
<td>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 7</td>
<td>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 8</td>
<td>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 9</td>
<td>Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 10</td>
<td>Reduce inequality within and among countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 11</td>
<td>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and Sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 12</td>
<td>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 13</td>
<td>Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 14</td>
<td>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 15</td>
<td>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 16</td>
<td>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 17</td>
<td>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing submitted its report to the General Assembly on 8 August, 2014. Building on the modalities and spirit that led to the Rio Declaration and the Monterrey consensus, the Committee consulted widely with a range of stakeholders, including civil society, the business sector and other major groups. The Committee in its report made it clear that current financing and investment patterns will not deliver Sustainable development. In particular, expected returns on investments associated with Sustainable development are often not as attractive as other opportunities, especially in the near term. At the same time, there are many competing demands on public resources, and
governments have not been able to mobilize adequate public financing to undertake necessary investments that profit-seeking investors eschew.

The report concludes that there is no one simple policy solution, instead, a basket of policy measures will be necessary.\textsuperscript{55} The report recommends following precepts to overcome impediments to investment in sustainable development:

1. Each country is responsible for its own development. The implementation of Sustainable development strategies is realized on the national level. However, national efforts need to be complemented by international public support as necessary, and an enabling international environment.
2. Effective institutions and policies and good governance are central for the efficient use of resources and for unlocking additional resources for Sustainable development.
3. Meeting financing needs for Sustainable development requires optimizing the contribution from all flows, including public, private, domestic and international. Maximizing synergies, taking advantage of complementarities, and building on an optimal interplay of all financing sources is essential.
4. ODA plays a crucial role for countries where needs are greatest and the capacity to raise resources is weakest. The use of financing instruments and their concessionality should be appropriate to the level of development of each country, their specific conditions, capacities and capabilities, as well as the nature of the project.
5. Finance should support the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of Sustainable development. This requires policies and incentives to incorporate Sustainable development into financing strategies and implementation approaches.
6. Different Sustainable development objectives often overlap. Financing should be designed to exploit synergies across the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of Sustainable development.
7. Consultations with all stake holders, including civil society and the private sector, will enable governments and policymakers to better appreciate the

diverse needs and concerns of people in the formulation and implementation of Sustainable development policies at all levels.

8. Transparency and accountability must underpin all financing to enhance legitimacy and effectiveness. Government providers of assistance and partner countries should strive for a more harmonized and coherent mutual accountability, with improved data collection and strengthened monitoring, while ensuring country ownership. Private financial flows should be monitored more effectively and made more transparent.56

In the lead up to the summit in September 2015 where world leaders are expected to gather to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, the Secretary-General and the UN system will keep supporting UN Member States as intergovernmental deliberations will continue. Results from consultations, key reports, and other processes in 2014 will feed into the Secretary-General’s Synthesis Report, which is expected by the end of 2014. The secretary general’s Synthesis Report will be presented to Member States to set the stage for negotiations leading up to the September 2015.57

56 Ibid. pp 18-19.