



## Press Release

Ethiopia has made good progress in achieving most of the MDGs but still faces challenges and unfinished business

**Addis Ababa, October 2015**—Ethiopia has launched its latest Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report in Addis Ababa as part of the UN Week Celebrations activities that commemorate the establishment of the United Nations on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1945.

The MDG progress reports have in the past been used as a strong advocacy tool to accelerate progress and highlight key challenges in Ethiopia's bid to meet the 2015 deadline.

The current MDG Report highlights Ethiopia's progress, drivers and challenges as well as underlining the unfinished MDG agenda as the country transitions towards the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

According to the report, 15 years after the introduction of the MDGs, Ethiopia has recorded strong progress in reducing poverty and eradicating hunger.

Ethiopia has achieved the MDG target on the reduction of child mortality by two-thirds three years ahead of the 2015 deadline. The country has also achieved the MDG target on access to safe drinking water, also ahead of the deadline. Prevalence of HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis has also been reduced.

## **Drivers of Progress**

Ethiopia has managed to achieve progress on tackling absolute poverty primarily through sustained economic growth over the past decade that has placed the country as one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

This growth is based on the government's intensive public sector investment, including expansion of road infrastructure, rapid expansion of services, especially in agriculture, education as well as the health sector, which has seen a marked increase in the number of facilities and health workers at the local level.

The report recognized the government's significant financial allocation to pro-poor sectors. In particular, Ethiopia's health expenditure has witnessed an increase only 5.92% in 1995 to 11.1% in 2012, while external funding for the sector has grown to 50% by 2012.

The MDG 2015 report also acknowledged the role of development partners in helping Ethiopia expand its basic social services, especially in the areas of improving access to education and health.

## **Unfinished Business**

While Ethiopia transitions from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals in a stronger development position than it was in the late 90s, the country still faces a number of challenges and unfinished MDG business.

Over 20 million people still live in absolute poverty and urban unemployment remains high and 40% of children under five are stunted due to malnutrition.

Enhancing resilience to shocks also remains crucial to ensuring that Ethiopia is able to reduce poverty and embark on a sustainable development path.

Education, where Ethiopia is doing well in terms of a marked increase in enrollment rate and the provision of universal primary education, faces major challenge in terms of quality and high dropout rates.

The report notes that Ethiopia is lagging behind on MDG 3 that looks at promoting gender equality and empowerment of women, due mostly to persistence of early marriage, violence against girls, low level of parent awareness on benefits of education and unfair household chore burdens on girls.

Ethiopia is also lagging behind on MDG 5 on improving maternal health, where despite the increase in the number of health facilities, limited availability to medical utilities at these health posts and low skill level of the health extension workers continues to be a stumbling block to Ethiopia's efforts at sustainably scaling up its efforts in the health sector.

As the MDGs monitoring and reporting exercises have shown, improved availability of data is crucial for sound analysis and decision making.

As Ethiopia embarks on the implementation of GTP II and Agenda 2030, the MDG 2015 report underlines the crucial importance of investing in reliable and timely data to ensure strong monitoring of the new Sustainable Development Goals.

The report also stresses the need to scale up partnerships among government United Nations and development partners, civil society and the private sector in Ethiopia to complete the unfinished MDGs business and effectively rollout the SDGs in Ethiopia to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable human development.

\*For more information on Ethiopia's progress on the MDGs [download the report](#)

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