

*EDITORIAL***ETHIOPIA SUCCESSFULLY ATTAINING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejhs.v25i2.1>

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, one hundred eighty nine Member States adopted the Millennium Declaration and pledged to reach the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. This represented an unprecedented consensus by world leaders on the major global challenges of the 21st century as well as a common commitment to meet these challenges. The MDG provided a road map and vision of a world free from poverty and hunger, with universal education, better health, environmental sustainability, freedom, justice and equality for all.

Being on the last year for the targets, performance on the MDGs has varied by region and country; some regions are meeting the targets, some are closer to meeting the targets, while others not. But some countries in Africa have accelerated progress on the MDGs despite unfavorable initial conditions. An assessment of performance based on effort reveals that most of the top best performers are in Southern, East, Central and West Africa.

As one of the 189 countries that ratified the Millennium Declaration, Ethiopia has made commendable progress towards reaching most of the MDGs. Apart from the overall decline in poverty, positive gains have been made in terms of education, health indicators including HIV and AIDS. These advances are owed largely to the Government's efforts, with substantial support from the UN.

Now a days, Ethiopia is frequently mentioned, mostly for positive reasons, as it has basically reached almost all the MDG goals. Ethiopia is one of the few African countries that achieved under-five mortality (U5MR) by two-thirds three years before 2015. One year before the target year, it is announced that Ethiopia has achieved MDG 4- reducing the maternal

mortality rate (MMR) through the use of low-cost impact interventions.

The use of the community health extension program, which provides health care services in rural areas, has been critical to succeed in Mother and Child Health area . The program has succeeded in bringing services closer to the people, particularly rural dwellers who historically have had challenges in accessing health services and who have contributed more to the U5MR and MMR than urban dwellers. Despite all these, access to skilled birth attendants and postnatal care are still very low in Ethiopia. On the other hand, the country reduced malaria and HIV/AIDS incidence significantly since the millennium declaration.

Though big gain is made, there is still long way to go on MDG 7, considering that the proportion of Ethiopians using improved sanitation facilities is still very low; though halving the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in good progress.

All in all, Ethiopia is one of better performers in the region, especially considering its initial conditions in 1990. Assessing progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals Analysis of the Common African Position on the post-2015 Development Agenda the key policy lesson from Ethiopia seems to be the adoption of a relatively inclusive growth approach by government officials, particularly over the past decade. However, there is room for broader and extended development-oriented policies, considering the high economic growth trajectory exhibited by the country over the same time period.

While celebrating the success, Ethiopia should utilize her experience of achieving the

MDGs to outshine on the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

The current issue (Vol. 25, No 2), the second issue Of the 25th year anniversary of EJHS contains nine original articles on varied subjects and four case reports focusing on different areas. I invite readers to read through these articles and appreciate or utilize the contents. I also encourage readers to forward comments and suggestions.

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