

19, January, 2010, United Nations Development Programme - Beyond the Midpoint: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals is UNDP's forward-looking review of the factors that shape MDG progress, along with the constraints and bottlenecks that have hampered MDG achievement in many countries. The findings build on MDG assessments in 30 countries that were undertaken for this review.

The report shows that while there has been notable progress on many targets and indicators across countries, it is clear that much more needs to be done for MDG achievements to be realized by 2015.

Beyond the Midpoint stresses that there are four key factors that shape progress at the country level:

1. Policy choices and programme coherence
2. Governance and capacity deficits
3. Fiscal space constraints and aid effectiveness
4. National ownership: political will and partnerships

Accelerated MDG achievements will depend on unlocking constraints in all four of these areas. Since each country faces a unique context and set of challenges, breaking the bottlenecks will require a country specific approach.

The report shows that progress has been most successful in countries where economic growth has been broadly distributed and where national ownership of the MDG agenda is strong, especially within civil society. Policies and interventions targeted for the rural sector and generating employment for the poor have been shown to be particularly effective at promoting inclusive growth. Most often, a layered combination of policies and programmes is needed to ensure that growth benefits are broadly shared and that different groups of vulnerable populations are reached.

Effective democratic governance underpins MDG achievements because it addresses how the goals can be translated into outcomes. This includes ensuring that communities are able to freely participate in the governing process, where they can hold officials to account and promote more accountable and transparent institutions. More effective decentralization and highly capacitated state institutions can also lead to increased efficiency of MDG service delivery.

In contrast to prevailing thinking, pursuing the MDG agenda in conflict-affected countries can be a powerful vehicle to mobilize recovery efforts, as long as the process does not aggravate tensions. The report also shows that while increased, predictable and efficient aid cannot be over-emphasized, enhancing domestic fiscal space is a key factor to achieve accelerated progress.

Finally, the assessments also show that hard fought gains can be reversed. Any plan for accelerated progress must consider ways to protect existing gains.

For a full report click [here](#)