

INDIA AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

Ques - What are the Millennium Development Goals?

Ans. The Millennium Declaration adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000 reaffirmed its commitment to the right to development, peace, security and gender equality, to the eradication of many dimensions of poverty and to overall sustainable development. Heads of States at the General Assembly of the United Nations pledged to adopt new measures and join efforts in the fight against poverty, illiteracy, hunger, lack of education, gender inequality, infant and maternal mortality, disease and environmental degradation. The Millennium Declaration adopted eight development goals and eighteen time – bound targets. In the year 2000, 189 nations, including India made a promise to free people from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations. This pledge became the eight **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015.**

Ques – What are the eight MDGs?

Ans. The eight MDG goals are to:

- 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- 2) Achieve universal basic education;
- 3) Promote gender equality and empower women;
- 4) Reduce child mortality;
- 5) Improve maternal health;
- 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
- 7) Ensure environmental sustainability;
- 8) Develop a global partnership for development.

Health constitutes the prime focus of the MDGs. While three out of eight goals are directly related to health, the other goals are related to factors which have a significant influence on health. Hence the goals and targets are inter-related in many ways. **The MDGs are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 further subdivided into 18 numerical targets and these targets measured by 40 quantifiable indicators.**

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger?

Ans. Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Current efforts:

Ever since India's independence in 1947, various national health schemes, programs, and policies have been launched with the view to improve the health status of people. like the Integrated Child Development Scheme or ICDS (1975) and National Mid-Day Meal Scheme .It is crucial to capture India's achievements toward attaining the MDGs and to analyze the challenges and policies with reference to the goals and targets. These are as follows:

- The most recently launched National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in 2005 aims to improve and strengthen the existing rural health care

- In order to eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger a number of antipoverty programs have been launched to decrease the incidence of poverty in India.
- National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)
- *Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana* (SGSY) or Golden Jubilee Rural Self Employment Scheme,
- Indira *Awaas Yojana* (IAY) or Indira Housing Scheme. Programs launched in the urban areas include Jawahar Lal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission,
- Integrated Housing and Slum Development Program and *Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana* (SJSRY).
- In addition food security programs for the poor include the Targeted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS), the *Antyodaya Anna Yojana* and Grain Bank Scheme
- Restructuring and Strengthening ICDS Scheme envisaged during the 12th Five Year Plan

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to achieve universal basic education?

Ans. Goal 2: Achieve Universal Basic Education

Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Current efforts

- The government has committed to reach the goal of elementary education for all by 2010 by means of “*Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*” (SSA) campaign on education for all which was launched in 2000, thus aiming to make free and compulsory education to the children of 6- to 14-year age group, a fundamental right.
- Other schemes include *Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh* (PSK) to help finance the government's commitment to quality basic education
- District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) –to revitalize the primary education system and setting up of institutions for teacher education.

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women?

Ans. Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Current efforts: Two targeted schemes for girls have been initiated under the SSA; The National Programme for the Education of Girls at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL)

- *Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya* (KGBV).
- *Mahila Samakhya* (MS) laying down the foundation of woman empowerment
- Apart from programs and policies related to enhancing female literacy, the Government initiated the National policy for the empowerment of women in 2001.
- Currently operating schemes for economic empowerment include *Swa-shakti*, *Swayamsiddha*, *Swaslamban Programme*, support to Training and Employment Programme(STEP) which aim to bring out socio-economic development and

empowerment of women through promotion of women SHGs, micro credit, and income generating activities.

- Rajiv Gandhi Programme for empowerment of adolescent girls

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Reduce Child Mortality?

Ans. Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Current Efforts: The government is directing intensive efforts to improve child health. Most notable of these are the child health interventions under the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme. These include the following:

- Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses (IMNCI)**
- Home-Based Newborn Care (HBNC):** This model health care strategy, which has proved to decrease childhood mortality rate in Gadchirolli, is now being implemented in five high focus states - M.P., U.P., Orissa, Rajasthan, and Bihar..
- New Born Care Scheme (NBCS):** Under the NBCS, in addition to 80 districts under RCH phase I, 60 more districts have been covered under RCH phase II wherein the existing neonatal care facilities have been upgraded.
- Immunization:** To ensure injection safety, autodisposable syringes (Ads) have been introduced.
- Promotion of Infant and Young Child Feeding**

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Improve Maternal Health?

Ans. Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

According to estimates by World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF), the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) was 570 per 100,000 live births in 1990, which dropped down to 254 per 100,000 live births in 2006. The target for MMR under the MDG has been quantified to be 200 by 2007, and 109 by 2015.

The government has intensified the maternal health care facilities under RCH II and NRHM. Some of these specific initiatives include the following:

- Essential obstetric care: Under RCH II, all the Community health centers (CHCs) and 50% of the primary health centers (PHCs) have been proposed to provide round-the-clock delivery services.
- It is committed to provide skilled attendance at every birth at both the institutional and community level by training of community level health functionaries.
- All the first referral units (FRUs) are to be equipped to provide emergency obstetric and neonatal care.
- An 18-week training program is being implemented to train MBBS doctors in anesthetic skills for emergency obstetric care.
- Provision of quality manual vacuum aspiration abortion facilities at all CHCs and 50% of the PHCs.

- f. Provision of *Janani Suraksha Yojana*, (JSY) which is a safe motherhood scheme under NRHM.
- g. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases?

Ans. Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases

According to 2006 estimates, the national adult HIV prevalence in India is approximately 0.36%, which amounts to between 2 and 3.1 million people

Current efforts

- India has taken an aggressive step toward HIV/AIDS control by implementing the third phase of its National AIDS Control Programme (NACP), which is designed to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2012. The National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) has collaborated with Hindustan Latex Limited (HLL) on a Condom Vending Machine (CVM) Project.

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Halt by 2015 and Begin to Reverse the Incidence of Malaria and Other Major Disease?

Ans. Goal 7: To Halt by 2015 and Begin to Reverse the Incidence of Malaria and Other Major Disease

Current efforts

- Malaria: The National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) frames technical policies and guidelines for the control of malaria in the country.
- Tuberculosis: India accounts for nearly one fifth of the global burden of tuberculosis, which amounts to 1.9 million cases.
- The RNTCP (Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program) implementing the Directly Observed Treatment Short course (DOTS) strategy was launched in India in the year 1997 phase II (2006-2011) of RNTCP which is in line with the new WHO stop TB strategy for TB control is a step toward achieving the TB-related MDGs in terms of reducing the prevalence of TB by 50% by 2015.

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Ensure Environmental Sustainability?

Ans. Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Current efforts: The Ministry of Nonconventional Energy Sources is running several programs to provide better systems for cooking and lighting. Joint Forest Management schemes are in operation wherein rural women living below the poverty line are provided with financial assistance to raise nurseries in forest areas.

- The *Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana* started in the year 2005 aims to provide all rural households with access to electricity .

- The National Urban Renewal Mission was launched in 2005 as a program meant to improve the quality of life in 60 select cities.
- Other programs include *Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana* (VAMBAY) and National Slum Development Programme (NSDP).
- Efforts of the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission
- Promotion of rural sanitation is managed by the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)

Ques. – What are the current efforts being under taken by GOI to Develop A Global Partnership of Development?

Ans. Goal 8: Develop A Global Partnership of Development

India's diverse economy ranges from traditional village farming to a wide range of modern industries, and a multitude of services. The promotion of e-governance on a massive scale is one of the important areas of concern of the National Common Minimum Needs Programme of the Government.

Conclusion: Despite the existence and launch of various programs and policies to address the major areas of concern under the MDGs, the progress toward achieving these goals appears to be rather slow in most of the areas, with the exception of education and global economic progress. It has been observed that the utilization of services offered by different programs is rather low. With only about 2 more years to go toward the set time for achieving these goals, the only way to do so would be to further intensify our efforts in reaching out to the unreached populations and ensuring uniform distribution of resources.