

DÓCHAS
The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations

PRESS RELEASE

23 September 2013

25 September: Millennium Development Goals Summit

UN Summit to highlight enormous progress on poverty and need to deliver on existing commitments

As world leaders are set to meet in New York for a special event on progress in the fight against extreme poverty, the UN's Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon has published a report showing that progress has been very impressive, particularly in the areas of food, water and education, while other areas are lagging behind.

According to the report, for the very first time in history, nine out of every ten children in the world go to school. Parity in enrolment levels between girls and boys has been achieved ahead of the 2015 deadline, wiping out inequality in classrooms the world over. The goal of providing people with access to safe drinking water has also been reached, with 89% of people across the world now having access. Some 200 million people living in urban slums now have improved living conditions due to the policies inspired by the Goals.

“However, much more needs to be done,” said UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. “For the first time in a long while, official development assistance (ODA) has fallen for two consecutive years”.

Commenting on the report, Hans Zomer, the Director of Dóchas - the umbrella group of Ireland's Development NGOs, said:

“In 2000, world leaders agreed that they would work together towards shared goals to fight poverty. Since then, the Goals have been very successful and led to incredible progress in the fight against poverty thanks to concerted and coordinated action by world's governments.”

“On 25 September, world leaders are likely to conclude that the global ‘recipe’ to make poverty history is working – and that the progress should not lead to complacency.”

As Dóchas has pointed out in its Budget 2014 Submission, the Millennium Development Goals require sustained investment by all UN member states. The first 7 Goals are the responsibility of governments of developing nations, and Goal 8 requires that industrialised countries support those countries' efforts.

“The UN report shows that aid very definitely works. And the work of Irish NGOs and Government are making a lasting impact on the lives of many in poor countries. At the same time, it also shows that the progress on Goal 8, which is the responsibility of the West, is falling short. The MDGs are a partnership, a contract. We cannot expect the Goals to be reached if not all parties are sticking to the agreement” said Hans Zomer.

The Dóchas Budget Submission highlights that for the first time since 2000, Ireland lacks a clear deadline for the achievement of the UN target of 0.7% ODA/GNI, and calls on the Government to ensure Ireland's aid budget does not fall below the 0.5% ODA/GNI threshold.

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NOTES FOR THE EDITOR

- Examples of many innovative ways in which Irish NGOs help achieve the Millennium Development Goals are available at:
<http://dochasnetwork.wordpress.com/2013/09/17/how-irish-ngos-are-contributing-to-the-millennium-development-goals/>
- To help spread the news about global development, Dóchas members have created “The World’s Best News” information service, showcasing the remarkable stories of what progress on the global Goals really looks like. The World’s Best News Facebook page is available at: www.facebook.com/TheWorldsBestNews
- Dóchas Pre-Budget 2014 Submission is available at:
www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/2/Dochas_Budget_2014_submission.pdf
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), agreed in 2000 at the United Nations, must be achieved by 2015. Many of the MDGs will have been achieved, but others will not be met by the 2015 deadline. On 25 September, UN member states will gather in New York to agree a new framework, to succeed the MDGs and to focus international efforts at fighting extreme poverty. For more information, see <http://dochas.ie/pages/resources/default.aspx?id=34>.
 - The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013 is available online at: www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/mdgs-report-2013.html.
 - A table charting progress towards all MDGs are available at: http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2013/Progress_E.pdf
 - A report by the MDG Gap Task Force: “The Global Partnership for Development: The Challenge We Face” is available at: www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2013_Gap_Report/MDG%20GAP%20Task%20Force%20Report%202013_English.pdf
- Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations. It provides a forum for consultation and cooperation between its 51 member organisations, and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues. For more information, visit: www.dochas.ie