

Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD-DAC)

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- › Aid Statistics
- › Aid Effectiveness
- › Conflict and Fragility
- › Environment and Development
- › Evaluation of Development Programmes
- › Gender Equality and Development
- › Governance and Development
- › Peer Reviews of DAC Members
- › Poverty Reduction
- › Aid for Trade

Back to

- › OECD home page
- › Department List

Related Topics

- › Development
- › Environment
- › Investment
- › Social and welfare issues
- › Sustainable development
- › Trade

Home: [Development Co-operation Directorate \(DCD-DAC\)](#) > [The OECD and the Millennium Development Goals](#)

The OECD and the Millennium Development Goals

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Bookmark this page: www.oecd.org/dac/mdg

Go straight to

[History: The OECD and the MDGs](#)

[Achieving the MDGs: The OECD's role](#)

- › [Financing the MDGs](#)
- › [Building a global partnership](#)
- › [Supporting strategic priorities](#)
- › [Actions that make a difference](#)

[Additional links and resources](#)

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) consist of **8 goals and 18 targets** to be achieved by 2015, agreed by 23 international organisations and 192 countries. These include reducing extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates, fighting disease epidemics, and building a global partnership for development.

History: The OECD and the MDGs

As early as 1996, in its strategy paper [Shaping the 21st Century](#) (pdf, 104.2kB), the OECD pioneered a set of concrete development objectives that could be measured and monitored over time. The OECD also proposed a global development partnership effort to achieve ambitious yet realistic goals.

Unprecedented international consensus culminated in 2000 with the first inter-agency blueprint, *A Better World for All*, and the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Millennium Declaration.

Since 2000, the OECD has played a key role in work to track progress on the MDGs. It was a founding member of the Inter-Agency Expert Group that tested and refined the MDG indicators, and has contributed to the UN's annual MDG progress reports and the MDG "gap" reports devoted to Goal 8, which tracks global partnership efforts in support of the MDGs. A vital part of this work has been to supply statistics and commentary on aid flows.

Achieving the MDGs: The OECD's role

The OECD's work is intrinsically linked to supporting the MDG effort, specifically through work related to financing the MDGs, building a global partnership for development, and supporting strategic areas contributing to progress in the MDGs.

Financing the MDGs

Official development assistance (ODA) is a necessary and complementary source of finance for development: over the past decade, ODA from donors in the OECD's [Development Assistance Committee](#) has been on an overall rise. A changing international landscape - including emerging donors, philanthropic organisations, special purpose funding initiatives, innovative financing instruments and sovereign wealth funds - has created new sources of development finance and new challenges to understanding the patterns and systems of aid flows.

The OECD works to:

- **Track aid commitments:** analysing how much aid is delivered, where and for what purpose. Donors have pledged to increase their aid in support of progress towards the MDGs, and the OECD closely tracks performance against these commitments.
- **Understand the architecture of global development:** through a birds-eye view of development finance flows and objective analysis and guidance for a better division of labour, the OECD examines how innovative financing can accumulate development resources and creatively engage the new players in the changing aid arena.

Building a global partnership for development

In a complex and changing international aid system, the development community needs to work together in partnership to achieve the MDGs – a priority outlined in MDG 8.

The OECD is [building partnerships](#) that are broader and more inclusive to drive the international agenda across a range of development issues.

Supporting strategic areas of progress

The MDGs can be achieved by 2015, with accelerated development policy implementation and intensified investment in targeted areas by all development actors. The OECD is committed to working with a range of partners to catalyse political will, distil and promote international best practice and support effective policy implementation in strategic MDG-related sectors.

- **Economic growth and social protection:** meeting the MDGs on poverty and other objectives needs economic growth to be more pro-poor, so that poor women and men can participate, contribute and benefit from growth.
- **Conflict and fragility:** countries experiencing conflict and fragility are furthest away from achieving the MDGs. A strategy towards putting these countries on track for the MDGs should support them as they recover from conflict, and prevent further conflict by building sustainable livelihoods for the poor, foster statebuilding and social participation, and support security and justice.
- **Gender equality and women's empowerment:** investing in women and girls yields the highest returns of all development investments, and brings about reduced maternal mortality rates, better educated and healthier children and higher household incomes and economic growth paths.
- **Improving health outcomes:** progress towards health-related MDGs remains too slow - particularly when it comes to maternal and child health. Developing countries still experience constraints on health systems and limited capacities for delivering health outcomes. Dedicated action is needed.
- **Climate change and development:** climate change will exacerbate droughts, floods and extreme weather which can contribute to food shortages, infrastructure damage and the degradation of natural resources. Millions of livelihoods - especially of the poor and marginalised - depend on adapting to climate change. Mobilising sufficient finance to address climate change and effectively delivering and channelling this finance in line with national and local priorities is key.
- **Improving domestic resource mobilisation:** taxation plays a key role in mobilising resources for tackling the MDGs and in promoting responsive, accountable governments. Tax receipts provide governments with the funds needed to invest in development and, in the longer term, offer an antidote to aid dependence in the poorest countries and a predictable fiscal environment to promote growth.

Actions that make a difference

The work of the OECD aims to achieve the MDGs across the board. A set of key actions can accelerate progress:

- **Build smarter partnerships:** Partnerships lie at the heart of MDG success stories. From public-private partnerships to South-South co-operation, these alliances leverage maximum development impact from development resources, including aid. [Here's how.](#)
- **Finance climate change:** Climate change effects threaten to limit and even reverse progress towards the MDGs, especially among the poorest. Policy responses to climate change risks require significant investment that must be balanced with other development support. [Here's how.](#)
- **Invest in women and girls:** Progress towards all of the MDGs can be multiplied by ensuring equality between women and men and increasing empowerment of women and girls. It is time to back political promises with the investments and resources needed. [Here's how.](#)

Additional links and resources

The OECD Development Assistance Committee's [Development Co-operation Report](#)

The OECD Observer: [Articles on development and the MDGs](#)

PARIS21: [A Better World for All](#)

UNDP: [UNDP work on the MDGs](#)

United Nations: [Official MDG website](#)

United Nations: [The United Nations Millennium Project](#)

United Nations: [The United Nations site for MDG Indicators](#)

World Bank: [Data on the MDGs](#) (including the *Global Monitoring Report*)

Contact us at dac.contact@oecd.org.

Also available:

- [L'OCDE et les Objectifs du millénaire pour le développement](#) (French)

Related documents:

- [Building partnerships for development](#) (English)
- [The OECD and the Millennium Development Goals: Addressing key challenges in development](#)

