



Somalia Millennium Development Goals Progress Report

by Transitional Federal Government

Summary by Abdallah Katunzi

Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia to the west, Djibouti to the northwest, the Gulf of Aden to the north, the Indian Ocean to the east, and Kenya to the south west. It has a population of around 10 million.

Somalia is one of the least achievers as far as MDGs progress is concerned, notes the report. The report shows that out of the eight (8) goals, Somalia is probable to achieve one goal - of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The other goals are unlikely to be met.

Regarding enrolment ratios in primary education, Somalia has one of the lowest in the world. The report indicates that primary school gross enrolment has upped from 10 percent in 1990 to 21 percent in 2008. The lowest enrolment rate is attributed mainly to persistent insecurity, economic collapse and lack of governance in the country. If the recent rate continues, by 2015, the net enrolment will reach 24 percent, which falls short of the MDGs target.

On gender equality and women empowerment, girls are poorly represented in enrolment rates in primary, secondary and tertiary education. This is attributed to early marriage, timing of classes and economic constraints which force many girls to leave school early. Consequently, the report notes 'women are forced to take up informal and menial employment, which further aggravates their economic situation and marginalizes them from professional employment opportunities.'

The report further indicates that women control most of the retail businesses in markets, with a notable absence of women in the higher levels of government positions, which in turn, impacts their ability to participate and influence decision making process in the country.

On child and maternal mortality, Somalia presents amongst the worst infant, child and maternal mortality rates in the world. A survey by UNICEF in 2006 estimated that the under-five child mortality rate is at 224 per 1,000.

On environmental sustainability, the report indicates that Somalia's forest cover has been reduced in the last few years and natural forest regeneration is sluggish due to the arid climate. The cutting down of acacia trees for charcoal production has made a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the pastoralist livelihood, and the activity is likely to go on as long as an alternative source of energy for cooking is not found.

Although the report indicates that Somalia is unlikely to achieve the 7 goals, it does not fall short of recommending measures to be taken in order to move the country to a better situation. The recommendations, among others, include promotion of community participation in environmental and natural resources management, increasing availability and accessibility of antenatal services, introduction of equitable selection policy at secondary schools and higher education institutions for girls and boys to share 50 percent of places.

Source: http://www.so.undp.org/index.php/Download-document/290-MDGRWORKSHOP_PROCEEDINGS.html.