



# Making the Millennium Development Goals Happen

Perspectives from Global Aid Workers & Development Professionals on Achieving the MDGs

A Special Report by Devex and the United Nations Foundation

# About Devex and the United Nations Foundation



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**The United Nations Foundation**, a public charity, was created in 1998 with entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner's historic \$1 billion gift to support UN causes and activities. The UN Foundation builds and implements public/private partnerships to address the world's most pressing problems and works to broaden support for the UN through advocacy and public outreach.

Through campaigns and partnerships, the organization connects people, ideas and resources to help the UN solve global problems. The campaigns reduce child mortality, empower women and girls, create a new energy future, secure peace and human rights and promote technology innovation to improve health outcomes. These solutions are helping the UN advance the eight global targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For more information, visit [www.unfoundation.org](http://www.unfoundation.org).

# What are You Doing to Help Achieve the MDGs?

## Introduction & Summary



Photo by: Ivan M. García / Oxfam International / CC BY NC-ND

**What are YOU doing to help achieve the MDGs?** This was the fundamental question posed to Devex's community of more than 500,000 aid and development professionals through an online conversation launched in partnership with the United Nations Foundation, called **Making the Millennium Development Goals Happen**.

In 2000, led by the United Nations, world leaders came together to set ambitious targets for reducing poverty and improving social and economic conditions around the globe by 2015. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a commitment to establish peace and a healthy global economy by focusing on major issues such as children's health, empowerment of women and

girls, education, sustainability, disease and more. Progress toward achieving the eight MDGs has been impressive, despite the many challenges posed by conflict, climate change and financial calamities.

Ten years later, these same world leaders came together during the 2010 UN General Assembly to host the first-ever Millennium Development Goals Review Summit. However, this time, it wasn't only voices inside the UN walls that were part of the conversation. Like never before, this momentous summit provided the new media community a chance to be heard on every issue critical to the world's development agenda. By capitalizing on the power of blogs and online information, this was a historic opportunities for people all around the world to learn, interact and benefit from one another's perspectives.

In this special report, Devex and the United Nations Foundation spotlight some of the key points made by aid workers during the MDG online dialogue. These voices – their ideas and questions – offer an important body of learning for the entire development community. Over a six month period the conversation amassed a highly diverse set of contributions:

- Thousands of international aid and development professionals from over 175 countries visited the conversation website: [mdg.devex.com](http://mdg.devex.com).
- Hundreds of development professionals contributed their stories of real-world successes and challenges working on global development projects.
- Participants represented a diverse array of development sectors including global health, microfinance, transportation, human rights, water and sanitation.

# What are You Doing to Help Achieve the MDGs?

Often the voices of policymakers and pundits are the most prominent views on development issues. This global online dialogue shed light on the experiences of aid workers, health practitioners, entrepreneurs and others who address on a daily basis some of the most challenging issues of our time. Their stories and on-the-ground perspectives provide us with a unique lens through which to examine the MDGs.

Participants in this online dialogue included representatives from the American Red Cross, CARE USA, Microsoft Corporation, Plan International, UNICEF and many others. The compendium offered here is merely a glimpse into the hundreds of perspectives – each which merit attention – that will continue to stimulate the critically important and ongoing conversation about global poverty.

Please visit [mdg.devex.com](http://mdg.devex.com) to see these contributions in addition to many more from other local and global organizations.



# Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

## Fighting Poverty One Acre at a Time



Photo by: Ray Witlin / World Bank

The first MDG acts as the glue that binds together all the other goals. As it focuses on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, it represents the MDG's ultimate aspiration.

In 2009, the World Bank estimated that the global financial downturn left an additional 50 million people in extreme poverty. According to the [Financial Times](#), this bucks a two-decade trend that saw global poverty reduced, particularly in East Asia, India and Latin America.

Overall, [agricultural investment and aid](#) has increased the last few years after being neglected for decades by governments and donors. Also, more [enlightened food aid programs](#) aimed at

breaking dependency on donors are emerging. A growing number of [partnerships](#) between agribusiness, micro-lenders, donors and scientists are trying to address hunger holistically.

At [mdg.devex.com](#), more than 100 members of the Devex community - from grassroots nonprofits to multinational firms such as Microsoft - shared their views on how to curb poverty and hunger.

Key themes from the field:

- Food Security is a topic that must be addressed at the small farmer and household levels.
- Even modest investments in job creation are achieving results in many critical places.
- Corruption must be addressed if poverty eradication programs are to be successful.



**Nazmul Chowdhury** of **Practical Action**, a UK based NGO that develops technologies for the poor in countries like Bangladesh, shared his view of how the MDGs will become a reality:

'To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger we must think of alternative approaches and solutions based on local demand, developed in a participatory manner...'



# Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

## Fighting Poverty One Acre at a Time



**Microsoft Corporation** discussed how the MDGs help build global partnerships:

‘Microsoft views the MDGs as an important strategic framework because they provide a unified and concrete set of goals for public-private partnerships to realize practical impacts that change lives and reduce global poverty.’

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**Sajowa, O. A.** of **Food For All**, a Nigerian NGO, discussed how corruption impedes progress towards poverty reduction:

‘My organization believes that one of the quickest [ways to achieve this MDG] is to eradicate corruption from the whims and caprices of the world leaders, especially Africans. This will definitely enhance proper channeling of national earnings into projects and policies that are people oriented.’

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Many participants also shared how their work is helping to improve the lives of the poor at both the local and national levels. Greater food security was a recurrent theme:

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**Bastian A. Saputra** at the **Association for Advancement of Small Business** helps Indonesian farmers grow their agro-business and access markets:

‘In my point of view, if we understand the specific context of the characteristics of poverty in an area such as where they live and their way of life, and finding ways to link their energy as businessmen to increase their income, that’s where the road to eradication of poverty can begin.’

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**William P. Mott**, President of **Agland Investment Services**, explained how an initiative in Peru to improve vegetable exports was a catalyst for improving farmers’ livelihoods:

‘We believe that economic development through job creation is essential to the long-term viability of projects to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. New sources of income allow small farmers to pull themselves from the cycle of poverty and provide food for their families.’



## Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

### Fighting Poverty One Acre at a Time

'In [one] example, a modest investment of \$250,000 by USAID and its partners led to over \$60 million of farm income,' said Mott.

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**Ian Chingwalu**, an official at the **Department of Human Resource Management and Development in Malawi**, highlighted the dramatic food security success his country has achieved:

'The fertiliser subsidy programme in Malawi has greatly transformed the lives of small scale farmers in Malawi from food deficit to food sufficient. This is a good lesson for many African countries if they are to achieve MDG Goal 1... There is therefore need for G8 countries to continue supporting Malawi and other African countries to ensure food security at the household level.'

In 2007, **Malawi** exported 280,000 tons of maize, and child malnutrition dropped an impressive 80 percent. A major part of this success was due to a fertilizer subsidy program for farmers led by the government and funded by the World Bank.

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There is a lot of progress to be made and serious challenges remain for the MDG's ambitious 2015 objective. But every day, a tireless and resilient global community of aid workers, health professionals, entrepreneurs are bringing MDG 1 closer to fruition.

More stories and perspectives on fighting poverty and hunger can be read here: <http://mdg.devex.com/topic/goal-1-eradicate-extreme-poverty-and-hunger/>.



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## Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education As More Kids Attend School, Retention Becomes Crucial



Photo by: Kate Cummings

In the past decade, important breakthroughs have been made in getting adolescent children into school programs, particularly in Africa and South Asia.

According to the UN, enrolment in primary education in the developing world as a whole rose by 5% from 2000 to 2007. In many cases, the UN cites increased national education spending as a catalyst for improved school enrolment.

As equally important as it is to enroll children in school, it is that important to keep them involved for the long-term while ensuring that the education they receive is high quality.

Members of the Devex community shared their field experiences in how to reach and maintain MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education. The contributors include Plan International, CARE USA and many other notable organizations focused on education as a solution.

Key themes from the field:

- Creating incentives for children to stay in school is crucial to long-term success.
- Giving children and teenagers a second chance at going to school is an equally important component of element of successful programs.
- Focusing on opening educational access to girls in particular is a cornerstone of achieving MDG 2.



**John Engels**, Senior Publications and Information Resources Officer for **International Relief & Development**, a global aid NGO, shared his organization's work to maintain school enrollment through feeding programs:

'In Cambodia, IRD encouraged school enrollment, attendance, and completion in 51 schools in Kampong Chhnang province by working with school committees to prepare healthy on-site meals. In addition, in schools where there was a gender imbalance, take-home rations were provided for girls and high-performing teachers. Also in Cambodia, through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, IRD supports school feeding as well as construction of school rainwater harvesting systems, wells, and latrines...'



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## Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education As More Kids Attend School, Retention Becomes Crucial



**Nigel Chapman**, CEO of **Plan International**, focused on the need for safety as in-school violence hinders enrollment rates:

‘Plan’s research has found that violence and fear of violence in schools is preventing UPE [universal primary education] from becoming a reality. Violence in schools stops children enrolling, and experiencing bullying by peers, gang violence, corporal punishment or abuse by teachers, leads to them dropping out...’

According to Chapman, Plan International’s **Learn Without Fear** campaign has ‘contributed to changes in legislation which now protect over 390 million children from corporal punishment, bullying and sexual violence...’



**Karen Sugar**, Executive Director of the **Women’s Global Empowerment Fund**, a micro-lender in Uganda that uses its services for adults as a means to support children’s access to education, noted that:

‘By empowering women [through] microfinance and education, you are creating the opportunity for her children to attend school. Our clients attend literacy classes twice weekly, where they can bring their children who also receive the opportunity to read and play. The number one goal of our clients is to pay for their children’s school fees... By supporting women, creating economic opportunity, you are ensuring that girls will be educated, lifting the entire family out of extreme poverty.’



**Stephanie Baric**, Senior Technical Advisor at **CARE USA**, shared an example of special boarding schools designated to help girls who have dropped out of school:

‘In India, CARE has implemented accelerated learning camps for girls called Udaan (meaning to soar). These residential camps are designed to give girls from remote and marginalized communities who have missed out on school a chance to catch up and transition to upper primary and secondary school. Udaan camps have led to significant academic improvements in language skills, math, and other competencies and opened doors to educational opportunities previously regarded as completely out-of-reach for the girls...’



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## **Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education** **As More Kids Attend School, Retention Becomes Crucial**

More stories and perspectives on achieving and sustaining universal education can be read here:  
<http://mdg.devex.com/topic/goal-2-achieve-universal-primary-education/>.



## Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women Men Must Help Close the Gender Gap



Photo by: The Asia Foundation

Globally, closing the gender gap between men and women has seen uneven success in the past decade.

On the progress front, legitimate efforts have been made and are currently underway to reduce the gender disparity across a variety of important areas. For example, a host of global aid donors and developing country governments are instituting studies to analyze how certain aid projects impact women differently from men. This is significant as we have known for a while that one aid program that has seen success in one country may not have the same outcome in another. It is increasingly important that we focus on the micro-level as more studies are released examining the

disparity in supporting the different genders.

Enthusiastically, political progress and economic leadership for women has also improved dramatically. Specific case studies, from Rwanda and Liberia for example, paint this picture and show that many of the world's emerging democracies are being led by women.

However, everyday challenges remain. About 70% of the world's poorest people are female. According to UNIFEM, illiterate women still outnumber illiterate men. In India and China – perhaps the two greatest examples of poverty reduction in modern history – gender inequality is threatening to undermine long-term progress, according to [The Economist](#).

The targets for MDG 3 are to even the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; increase the share of women holding paid jobs in non-agricultural sectors; and boost the proportion of nationally-elected positions held by women.

Key themes from the field:

- Greater equality must include access to education, economic empowerment and shifts in cultural attitudes.
- Outreach to men and boys to help them better understand equality issues are vitally important.
- Empowerment sought by women at the community level may be different from what is envisioned at a global level by aid workers and donors – a conversation that brings these groups together is necessary if sustainable progress can be achieved.



## Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women Men Must Help Close the Gender Gap



The **UN Millennium Campaign** shared a story from India about newly-passed legislation aimed at getting girls and boys in school:

‘...The recently enacted Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, which guarantees free and universal elementary education, marks a momentous step in India’s journey to fulfill the fundamental right to education. The Bill will ensure that more than eight million children and young people, most of them girls, between the ages of six and 14 will now get the opportunity to go to school. The passage of the Act signifies a huge step for accelerating India’s progress on the Millennium Development Goals...’

**Sunirmal Ray**, an independent consultant in Afghanistan, shared the story of how a donor aid program helped women business owners connect to global markets:

‘Development aid can bring significant difference to the life of women especially in the conservative society, where they are most oppressed, by empowering them... Shaima Sadat, a 62 years old physically challenged lady, was trained by the design centre to make jewelry and she also displayed her produce in the show organized by the design centre. Afghanistan SME Development (ASMED) project, funded by the USAID, invited three buyers from United States and organized their visit to producers of Afghan handicraft. They were fascinated by Shaima’s work and ordered [9,000] pieces of necklace made of semiprecious stones. Shaima appointed 21 physically challenged women to work in her outfit to execute those orders in phases.’



**Reem N. Bsaiso**, CEO of **World Links Jordan**, an education-focused nonprofit, emphasizes reaching out to men as a means of empowering women:

‘Equally important to empower women, is to empower men, in our parts of the world, in male-dominated domains, he is the brother, father, husband...who can hinder a woman’s progress or support it. He is a key player in this equation.’



## Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women Men Must Help Close the Gender Gap

**Chris Mboho** of **Brooks Microfinance Bank** in Nigeria gave an example of how micro-lending is helping women become more financially independent:

‘...I have seen women evolve from extreme poverty to a relative live of adequate daily needs being met as in the case of a woman who had nothing doing for many years after the death of her husband but only relied on her only son who buys and sells fuel on the road side for the local motor cycle (aka uke) operators. After counseling her and giving her the first loan of N15,000 (\$100), she has over the next three cycles been able to have what to do buying and selling rice, garri, beans. Our last visit to her she was full of prayers and excitement.’

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**Shradha Shah**, a former communications manager for **CARE Nepal**, wrote about how the aid community must listen to the voices of women in the developing world to facilitate lasting change:

‘When we were doing a short survey before launching a women empowerment project in two districts of Nepal, we realized empowerment sought by local women was very much different from what was envisioned at a global level. Some of the interesting findings from women interviewed were their definition of Women Empowerment itself...’

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More stories and perspectives on promoting gender equality and empowering women can be read here: <http://mdg.devex.com/topic/goal-3-promote-gender-equality-and-empower-women/>.



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## Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

### Child Health is Reaching New Heights



Photo by: Tiggy Ridley/IRIN

The majority of child deaths in developing countries are preventable through low-cost measures that thwart disease and provide nutritious food.

For example, according to the World Health Organization, a higher rate of measles vaccinations resulted in a 78% drop in measles deaths between 2000 and 2008 worldwide. In countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique and Niger, child deaths have dropped dramatically since 1990. Significant progress, using antiretroviral medicines and basic health education, has been made in preventing mother-to-child transmission of the HIV.

Healthy children are the [cornerstone of a new global health strategy](#) that was unveiled by the UN's Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, during the [2010 United Nations Millennium Development Goals Summit](#). Titled, "The Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health," this plan identifies financing, policy and delivery of health services as the three key areas where action is required immediately.

Devex asked its thousands of members, among them global health and development experts, to recount how their work is helping achieve MDG 4: Reduce child mortality. Participants from grassroots nonprofits such as India's Ejkut, the American Red Cross and CARE USA shared their practical solutions and stories.

Key themes from the field:

- In-school feeding programs are helping children avoid malnutrition and stay focused during the school day.
- Strides are being made in preventing HIV positive mothers from passing on the virus to their new born children, making this an important focus.
- Educating women's groups on basic and preventive health issues that include pregnancy and birth concerns is proving successful in reducing child deaths in places like India.



**Sharon McCarty-Painter** of **Project HOPE**, a US global health nonprofit, highlighted how closely related Goal 4 is to the progress of the other MDGs:

'Infant and child deaths are preventable. The best defense a mother has to prevent



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## Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

### Child Health is Reaching New Heights

childhood disease or death is to ensure that she is educated, empowered, and has access to professionally trained health care workers and essential health care services - not just for her child but for herself as well.'



**Sikta Majumdar** of **Ekjut**, an Indian nonprofit that educates women's groups on pregnancy and childbirth, shared the results of a study published in the Lancet that showed how its model is saving newborns' lives:

'The effects of the interventions were dramatic: by the second and third years of the trial, the neonatal mortality rate in the areas where the participatory women's groups existed had fallen by 45%. These areas also saw a significant reduction (57%) in moderate depression amongst mothers by the third year of the trial.'

Women's groups have the potential to create improved capability in communities to deal with the health and development difficulties arising from poverty and social inequalities, said Majumdar.



**Catherine Connor**, Director of Public Policy at **The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation** explained how scaling-up programs that prevent the transmission of AIDS from mother to infant is crucial to reaching Goal 4:

'Preventing HIV infection is a critical first step toward ensuring a child's long-term health and survival...Antiretroviral medicines (ARVs) given to HIV-positive women during pregnancy and to their infants during breastfeeding can significantly reduce the potential of transmission of HIV to their infants.'

To date, the Foundation had provided close to 10 million women with access to these critical services, preventing millions of new HIV infections in children, according to Connor.



**James Lutzweiler** of **Joint Aid Management** (JAM) International, a South African based aid and development nonprofit, emphasized the link between food security and child health:

'Through JAM's program, children receive approximately 70 percent of their recommended daily Kcal dietary intake. This is critical especially for pre-school



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## Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

### Child Health is Reaching New Heights

aged children as they develop cognitively and become better equipped to learn in school.'

School feeding initiatives like JAM's have been replicated globally by other organizations such as the UN's World Food Programme.

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More stories and perspectives on solutions to children living healthier can be read here: <http://mdg.devex.com/mdg4-topic1-reduce-child-mortality/>.



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## Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health Midwives Make Safe Births a Reality



Photo by: Nancy Palus/IRIN

After a long period of stagnation, deaths due to pregnancy are turning a corner in the developing world.

Globally, the rate of maternal and newborn mortality has decreased. Access to reproductive health services is increasingly seen as a human right, and leaders from both the developing and industrialized countries have pledged to provide free care to pregnant women and young mothers. Maternal health was a major focal point during 2010 Millennium Development Goals Review Summit and remains at the heart of the UN's overall strategy.

Despite these gains, more progress is needed. More than half of all baby deliveries in the developing world occur outside of a proper facility and/or without the attendance of a skilled medical provider. The simple act of having births supervised by trained and equipped health workers can and will greatly reduce the risk of maternal deaths.

The Devex community of global aid and health professionals shared their experiences and perspectives on how to achieve MDG 5: Improve maternal health. Aid and health organizations such as Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children and UNICEF contributed to the online forum.

Key themes from the field:

- More training and better equipping of health workers and midwives is needed to further reduce maternal mortality by ensuring that births are assisted.
- Creative solutions to linking mothers to the right maternal care are emerging and merit attention.
- Long-term access to basic reproductive health care is needed in order to prevent maternal deaths.



**Defa Wane**, Maternal and Newborn Health Advisor at **Save the Children USA** outlined the major hurdles to improving maternal health and described a model to overcome these challenges:

'Despite a notable progress in maternal mortality reduction...many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are still off track in achieving Millennium Development Goal 5



## Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health Midwives Make Safe Births a Reality

to improve maternal health. This is due to poorly functioning health infrastructure, inadequate numbers of health workers, slow adoption of evidence-based health policies and insufficient focus on quality of care...'

'In response to these issues, Save the Children has developed and implemented the Household to Hospital Continuum of Care (HHCC) model that links families and households to the care they need. As a result of the HHCC program, a significant increase in maternal care services and family planning has been made throughout communities in Vietnam, Mali, Guinea, and Nigeria.'



**Gary Forster** of **TransAid** gave an example of how his organization's partnership with Nigeria's National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) is helping pregnant women receive emergency care:

'...Union members are trained how to [recognize] signs of a maternal emergency, how to lift a pregnant woman, the importance of minimizing delay and basic vehicle maintenance. In four states where the system has been established, we have seen more than 1,000 women transferred in the past 12 months.'



**Population Action International**, a global health advocacy group, estimated the total funding needed to achieve better reproductive health on an annual basis:

'Achievement of MDG5 requires both financial and political backing. Donor nations should invest around \$6.7 billion to meet international family planning goals and the U.S. government should invest its fair share of \$1 billion annually. Sustained and coordinated financial and political support is needed to make commitments to universal access to reproductive health and family planning a reality.'



**Jaya Vadlamudi**, a Senior Communications Officer at **International Medical Corps**, shared the importance of building health professionals' capacity in developing countries.

'...By training locals, International Medical Corps infuses communities with skilled workers who can provide basic health services, as well as transfer their knowledge onto their peers.'



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## Goal 5: Improve maternal health Midwives Make Safe Births a Reality



**Lori Reid**, Knowledge Manager at **Abt Associates**, recounted the story of Noreen, a midwife in Pakistan whose schooling through a donor funded program helped save a newborn:

“The feeling of saving a life is unlike any other,” Noreen said. “It was really the happiest moment of my life, and I never could have done it without the skills I acquired during the training.”

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Many of the participants echoed Reid’s and Vadlamudi’s emphasis on training health workers to provide basic maternal services as a primary pathway to achieving Goal 5.

More stories and perspectives on reproductive health can be read here: <http://mdg.devex.com/mdg5-topic1-improve-maternal-health/>.



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## Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases Progress Against Major Diseases at a Crossroad



Photo by Valentina Buj / CC BY SA

The global fight against HIV and other diseases has given tangible benefits and hope to millions of people, despite growing questions about the sustainability and evolution of these efforts.

The momentum is driven by improved access to HIV/AIDS treatment and malaria prevention initiatives. According to the [United Nations](#), the number of new HIV infections has fallen by nearly 20% in the last 10 years, AIDS-related deaths are down by nearly 20% in the last five years, and the total number of people living with HIV is stabilizing. In addition, the production of anti-malarial bed nets has also increased significantly in part due to various campaigns linking grassroots donors to the issue.

Members of the Devex community shared their on-the-ground perspectives on what is working and what obstacles remain in reaching MDG 6: Combat HIV/ AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Contributors included UNICEF, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance and other global aid and development organizations.

Key themes from the field:

- In order to make greater progress fighting and preventing infectious disease, a combined effort on all initiatives related to health and the MDGs is needed.
- Strengthening health systems at the national and local level is imperative.
- Strong programs already exist to distribute bed nets and are effectively reducing the number of annual malaria cases.



**Alvaro Bermejo**, Executive Director of the [International HIV/AIDS Alliance](#), wrote that health issues cannot be siloed and that better integration of all the health MDGs must be a priority:

‘In these difficult financial times, it is critical we achieve value for money. To do this we need to tackle MDG 6 on HIV, TB and malaria in conjunction with MDGs 4 and 5 on maternal and child health and in a way that puts patient needs at the center of our responses... Health cannot be “projectized.” We need better, joined up responses if we are to be effective. Working towards better integration of the health MDGs 4, 5 and 6 must be a priority.’



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## Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases Progress against Major Diseases at a Crossroad



**Kelly S. Willis, Sr**, Vice President at **Accordia Global Health Foundation**, discussed how training and certifying health workers in Uganda is improving care and treatment for all major diseases:

‘In Africa, the shortage of health workers remains one of the greatest challenges to the delivery of quality prevention and care of infectious diseases... In close partnership with the Ugandan Ministry of Health, Accordia’s Integrated Infectious Disease Capacity Building Evaluation (IDCAP) has developed a training program aimed at improving quality of care by providing mid-level health practitioners with the skills needed to facilitate their performance of tasks usually reserved for doctors. The training is integrated across diseases to achieve efficiencies in the course duration, and greatly improved impact on clinical reasoning skills among trainees.’



**Penny Campbell** at **UNICEF** commented on Cambodia’s great strides in treating HIV/AIDS despite on-going challenges in emerging from debilitating conflict:

‘Although the country has been at peace for the past decade, its infrastructure, including its health care infrastructure, was shattered or had fallen into decay. Cambodia was also one of the nations hardest hit by HIV and AIDS in East Asia and the Pacific, peaking at 3.3 percent in 1998. However, in response, the country implemented one of the most effective national responses, resulting in a decline attributed to increased condom use and high treatment rates amongst people living with HIV and AIDS...’



**Dr. Karin Hatzold**, Director of HIV Services for **Population Services International**, shared stories of how a partnership between donors and the new unity government is helping to reduce the spread of HIV through voluntary male circumcision:

‘Demand for MC [male circumcision] services in Zimbabwe is high; recruitment for the pilot relied solely on word of mouth and the referral of HIV-negative males from PSI’s New Start testing and counseling sites. About 7,000 Zimbabwean men were circumcised within the first few months of operation at three of the initial pilot sites...’

According to Hatzold, 7,000 male circumcisions could translate into 1,000 HIV infections averted.



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## Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases Progress against Major Diseases at a Crossroad



**Jeffrey W. Mecaskey**, Managing Director of **Health Partners International**, focused on Nigeria's success in scaling up a malaria prevention program:

'To turn the tide, Nigeria's National Malaria Control Programme has marshaled a drive to reduce by one half the burden of malaria by the end of 2010. With the support of the UK Department for International Development (DFID), HPI is working with partners to strengthen Nigeria's capacity to go to scale in the use of insecticide-treated bednets, intermittent preventive therapy during pregnancy and access to appropriate treatment... Early results are promising. By the end of Q1 2010, the Programme had delivered 16 million of the 63 million bednet target; as the campaign gains momentum, Q2 results are expected to be more promising still....'

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**Michael Hollingdale**, a global health consultant in Washington, DC, argues that medical breakthroughs must be coupled with strong health systems to bring about real change:

'I have long experience in malaria vaccine development, since the first clinical trial in 1986...But the greatest lesson I learned as did others is that these [initiatives] must rely on in-country health systems. So, I believe a major goal remains strengthening health systems at the same time as developing the drugs, vaccines or other measures that are required, but cannot be effectively delivered without a functioning health system. So, perhaps the real heroes are those working at this primary level.'

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More stories and perspectives on public health challenges can be read here: <http://mdg.devex.com/mdg6-topic1-combat-hiv-aids-malaria-and-other-diseases/>.



## Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability Global Development and the Planet can Coexist



Photo by: Enrique Castro Mendivil, EuropeAid

Despite political gridlock on climate change issues, a new generation of aid workers, activists and entrepreneurs are moving forward to address environmental decay.

The United Nations recognized the economic value of thriving ecosystems in its 2004 [Millennium Ecosystem Assessment](#), a landmark review of products and services such as clean drinking water and waste decomposition. Many aid initiatives, such as the [Millennium Villages Project](#), consider environmental sustainability a key component of rural development. Others are leveraging international capital markets and local micro-enterprises to promote environmental sustainability.

MDG Goal 7 focuses on reducing climate change, protecting biodiversity and improving access to clean drinking water. Global development leaders in the Devex community shared their experiences working toward achieving Goal 7 through initiatives both large and small. Participants included development organizations such as TechnoServe, International Land Systems and SNV.

Key themes from the field:

- Economic development and conservation are goals that can and must work hand-in-hand.
- Innovative technologies to mitigate climate change and provide clean energy at a local level are gaining traction.
- Clean water is not only an environmental goal but a health objective as it relates to safe drinking water and sanitation issues.



**Andrew Eder** of **TechnoServe**, an NGO that helps small farmers gain business skills and market access, talked about how economic development does not have to conflict with conservation:

‘For example, to lessen the impact of coffee processing on water resources, TechnoServe has helped farmer groups to install ecological wet-milling machines that can use up to 90 percent less water than traditional disc-pulping machines’.



## Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability Global Development and the Planet can Coexist



**Ankita Gandhi** from **SNV/Netherlands Development Organisation** described how their support of biofuels and biogas is creating new markets for clean energy in developing countries:

‘SNV’s approach prioritises the participation and empowerment of communities over the management of natural resources, and advocates for a market based approach to help ensure that environmental programmes are community owned and can be locally sustained.’

SNV’s most prominent biogas program in Nepal facilitated the installation of more than 200,000 plants since its inception in 1992 and has qualified for two Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM), the first carbon trades in the country, added Gandhi.

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More stories and perspectives on improving environmental sustainability can be read here: <http://mdg.devex.com/mdg7-topic1-ensure-environmental-sustainability/>.



## 8 Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development Linking the Poor to New Possibilities



Photo by: Joao Araujo / U.N.

The eighth MDG focuses on partnerships to increase foreign aid, open global markets and improve access to life-saving medicine and information technology for the poor.

Over the past decade, such global partnerships have become a norm with multi-billion dollar collaborations between private, public and nonprofit actors. For example, the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis works with an array of institutions to improve access to life-saving drug treatments.

Access to technology is also on the rise. Cell phone subscriptions worldwide will reach five billion in 2010, according to a recent UN study. In

Kenya and the Philippines, partnerships between mobile phone companies and financial institutions are providing cheap and easy ways for migrants to transfer money back home. These remittances are a lifeline for many poor families.

‘Despite strained budgets in donor countries as a result of the financial crisis, net disbursements of official development assistance remained relatively stable in 2009,’ according to the [Financial Times](#). Although official development aid is expected to drop slightly in 2010, major donors have yet to slash their foreign assistance budgets.

Members of the Devex community of global development professionals spoke of their experiences on how to build partnerships to reduce poverty and improve health. Dozens of innovative organizations participated in the online dialogue, including global social enterprises and local NGOs.

Key themes from the field:

- Innovative partnerships between the private sector and governments are yielding results, but must be accelerated.
- While consensus exists about the need for transparency and effectiveness, partnerships to better coordinate aid and financial information among donors and governments still have a long way to go.
- New and appropriate technologies are helping the poor gain better access to health care, communications and financial services.



## Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development Linking the Poor to New Possibilities



**Claudia Elliot** at **Publish What You Fund**, a UK based nonprofit, sees greater transparency as a way to better coordinate aid:

‘In order to promote more effective aid, all donors need to provide aid information in a common format to help donors to better coordinate aid. Comparability is what transforms more aid information into better aid information. It would also help recipient governments to see the combined flows of all aid into their country and link it to their budgets.’

Publish What You Fund is working towards a global partnership for the disclosure of aid information.



**Wayan Vota**, Senior Director at **Inveneo**, outlined the constraints inherent to bringing information technology to impoverished, rural users and how to address them:

‘Along the way, we’ve found that appropriate technology and human constraints are the greatest limitation in integrating ICTs [Information and Communication Technologies] to increase social and economic development. ICTs need to be designed for challenging environments and need to have local organizations with rural ICT expertise for ongoing support and expansion of these systems.’

According to Vota, Inveneo and its partners have brought ICT access to more than 1.5 million people in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Haiti.

**Nazir Ahmed Vaid**, Chairman of **eHealth Services** in Pakistan, discussed how his firm is helping connect the rural poor to doctors via teleconferencing:

‘The patients go to their nearest [eClinic] and are examined by the Professors/Consultants, hundreds of miles away in Karachi - real time...This saves the trouble of patients’ traveling to urban areas for getting quality healthcare. Over last 5 years we have served over 30,000 patients.’

Vaid is looking to expand his firm’s telemedicine model to more regions of Pakistan and beyond.



## Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development Linking the Poor to New Possibilities

More insights on how people around the globe are building development partnerships are here:  
<http://mdg.devex.com/mdg8-topic1-develop-a-global-partnership-for-development/>.

Devex and the United Nations Foundation invite you to further explore these crucial issues and learn more about what development professionals are doing every day to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by visiting [mdg.devex.com](http://mdg.devex.com).



WASHINGTON, DC (Headquarters)  
1341 Connecticut Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20036 USA  
T +1.202.249.9222  
F +1.202.318.2456

BARCELONA  
Carrer de París, 162, 5. 2  
08036 Barcelona, Spain  
T +34.93.184.5551  
F +1.202.318.2456

TOKYO  
1-20-10 Pine Shinjuku 5F  
Kita-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku  
Tokyo 169-0074 Japan  
T +81.3.6231.0341  
F +81.3.6231.8924

MANILA  
1901 The Orient Square Building  
F. Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Center  
Pasig City 1605 Philippines  
T +63.2.687.0231  
F +63.2.325.0225

[info@devex.com](mailto:info@devex.com)  
[www.devex.com](http://www.devex.com)



MAIN OFFICE  
1800 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 400  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
T +1.202.887.9040  
F +1.202.887.9021

NEW YORK OFFICE  
801 Second Ave. Suite 1300  
New York, NY 10017  
T +1.212.697.3315

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