

Progress towards the health-related Millennium Development Goals in the WHO European Region

Lunch break, Wednesday,
15 September 2010

Regional Committee for Europe Sixtieth session

Moscow, 13–16 September 2010

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Structure

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13:00	Chair TBC – representative of the Russian Federation	Introduction
13:05	Nedret Emiroglu, Director a.i., Division of Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Promotion/MDG focal point, WHO Regional Office for Europe	Overview of progress towards the health Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the WHO European Region and the need for health systems strengthening
13:15	Andrew Cassels, Director, office of the Director-General, WHO, Geneva	Global preparations for the United Nations High-level Plenary meeting on the MDGs (MDG Summit) and follow-up to World Health Assembly resolution WHA63.15 on Monitoring of the achievement of the health-related MDGs
13:35		Discussion panel on integrated care and equity in advancing the MDGs <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Integrated care (using MDG 6 as an example) – Denis Broun, Director, Regional Support Team Europe and Central Asia, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)– Health system strengthening, integrated care and MDG 6: highlights from national experience – Sabirjan Abdikerimov, Minister of Health of Kyrgyzstan– Equity and the social determinants of health (with particular reference to MDG 4) – Octavian Bivol, Regional Adviser on Health Systems and Policy, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)– Equity in advancing MDGs 4 and 5: highlights from national experience – Bekir Keskinliç, Deputy General Director of Primary Healthcare Services, Ministry of Health of Turkey
13:55	Representative of the European Commission; representative of Norway (both to be confirmed)	Maintaining official development assistance commitments and improving donor and aid coordination at country level for the MDGs
14:05		Audience discussion
14:15	Nedret Emiroglu	Concluding remarks

Why is this an important topic?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) constitute a historic framework, providing a focus for accountability in addressing some of the world's most pressing development challenges. The 53 Member States of the WHO European Region have made advances in meeting the health-related MDGs, particularly 4, 5 and 6 on reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (including TB), respectively. Nevertheless, action has stagnated in some areas and progress continues to be uneven between and within countries.

Why is it on the Regional Committee agenda?

With only five years left for the fulfilment of many of the MDG targets and in the light of such difficulties as the financial crisis and the economic downturn, commitment and action should be scaled up now more than ever before. The technical briefing will therefore review progress made thus far and discuss opportunities for accelerating the process. The Regional Office has devoted particular attention to the MDGs, in accordance with various resolutions, including World Health Assembly resolution WHA61.18, which requires WHO to engage in regular monitoring of MDG progress and make sure that support to Member States in that regard is integrated into its technical programmes.

What is the link between the technical briefing and the Regional Committee agenda?

The sixtieth session of the Regional Committee will address a range of topics relating to progress on the MDGs. These include the new European health policy that Member States and the Regional Office for Europe are developing with input from partners and the incorporation of health issues in foreign policy and development cooperation. The policy will promote the Region's values and aims for health, provide a coherent and integrated framework and road map for action on health and specify ways in which health systems can be strengthened and the wider determinants of health and health inequities can be tackled.

What has been done so far on this topic in Europe or globally and what are the next steps?

The United Nations will hold the MDG Summit on 20–22 September 2010, with the aim of adopting an action-oriented outcome document on accelerating progress towards achieving the MDGs. Member States, WHO and other agencies of the United Nations and partners such as the European Commission have taken complementary measures by focusing attention on what is required to scale up action on the health MDGs. Other measures have included the adoption of resolution WHA63.15. The Regional Office has also taken part in regional-level consultations and an interagency report for the Summit.

If there are gaps, how do we plan to fill them?

A critical question for all countries of the Region is how to address inequities and their social determinants in furthering the MDGs. It is for this reason that the European Review of the Social Determinants of Health and the Health Divide will include a focus on the MDGs. Other areas that require increased focus include, but are not limited to, the fuller incorporation of

MDG-related activities in all health-system functions, based on the values and principles of primary health care; improved provision of integrated care; more effective national health information systems and international efforts to monitor progress; and improved donor and aid coordination with a view to strengthening national health systems and encouraging greater coherence and alignment at country level.

These will be among the issues to be considered in the development of the European health policy. The Regional Office for Europe is also committed to increasing coordination with other United Nations agencies and partners in this regard, in a way that respects mandates and optimizes synergies.

Which related documents will be made available?

- *Millennium Development Goals in the WHO European Region: A situational analysis at the eve of the five-year countdown.* Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2010.
- *Health-related MDGs: An integrated approach.* Chapter coordinated and co-authored by WHO, with input from UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNAIDS, for the forthcoming report on the MDGs in Europe and Central Asia prepared by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe for the MDG Summit.