

MDG PROGRES REPORTS FOR FIVE DISTRICTS

A Brief Summary on the Current Status of the MDG Indicators



BACKGROUND

The level of poverty and human development widely varies by area, caste/ethnicity and economic groups of Nepal. Therefore, planning and monitoring efforts have to take into account such a diversity of geographical and socio-economic features. With such a premise, National Planning Commission and UNDP initiated the process of localisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The first step in this direction was to take a stock of the MDGs indicators at district level.

In the process of localisation of the MDGs, district level progress report has been prepared for following five districts: Bhaktapur, Morang, Chitwan, Banke and Kanchanpur. The overall objective of this initiative was to incorporate MDGs and their indicators in policy and plans of districts.

The reports were produced with the joint effort of National Planning Commission, respective District Development Committee and UNDP. At the district level, the information was analysed and compiled with the cooperation and active participation of district stakeholders including district line agencies, representatives of political parties, media and civil society.

The report was prepared with the main objective of facilitating localisation of the MDGs in support of the government's decentralisation policy. In order to contribute to the process of localisation, the report has focused on two tasks: (i) provide baseline data on MDGs for the year 2005 which will serve as benchmark for tracking the MDGs in subsequent years; and (ii) to determine district level targets of the MDGs. In order to perform these two tasks, several activities have been undertaken, chief among them include following:

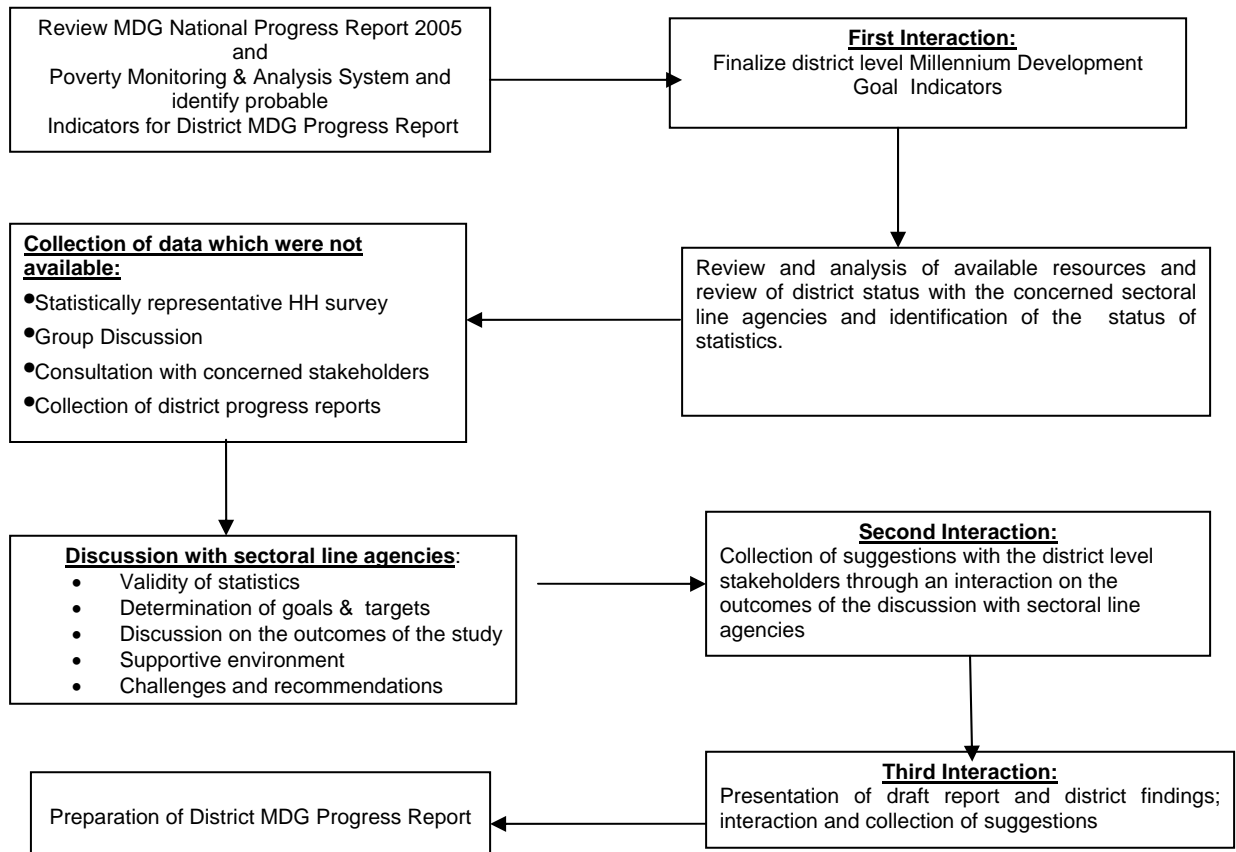
- Document status of MDG targets and progress made on MDGs indicators in district since 1990;
- Undertake comparative analysis of development situation of district against MDGs and targets;
- Review district periodic plan; and identify district level priorities, opportunities and challenges in the process of policy reforms, institutional and capacity building against the perspective of MDGs; and
- Prepare district level MDGs targets and their indicators linking them with national level target and indicators, and consult with district stakeholders for developing other indicators.

It is expected that the report will facilitate concerned district stakeholders to incorporate MDG targets and indicators as reflected in district periodic and annual plans.

METHODOLGY

MDG district progress report was prepared following a participatory interaction and discussion at the coordination of District Development Committee (DDC). All the concerned district stakeholders were invited by DDC for interaction and discussion to finalise the goals and targets,

to evaluate progress on the MDGs, and to determine future programmes for attaining the MDGs and their targets. The discussions were held at three stages as shown in the Exhibit below. Government staff was involved for collection of official records to provide information. Besides, primary data were collected conducting household survey and focus groups discussions.



A SUMMARY ON THE PROGRESS OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN FIVE DISTRICTS

The MDG district progress report indicates the status of a district against the goals, targets and indicators of the MDGs. Like national MDG progress report, the district progress report analyses progress of a sample district against 1990 as base year. Moreover, district targets have been set for some goals in consultation with district stakeholders.

This brief summary provides a comparative analysis of the situation of five districts against the MDGs indicators in the year 2005. Such an analysis is presented for each of the seven national goals. The range of the values have been identified for most of the indicators of the seven MDGs, and some key findings relating to supporting environment and challenges of the districts have been noted briefly. For further details it is recommended to go through the individual district progress reports.

Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Target 1: Halve, between 1990 & 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than 1\$ a day

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Proportion of population below 1\$ (ppp) per day	19.8	24.9	5.4	23.0	24.3
Proportion of population below national poverty line	35.1	31.0	8.8	30.0	36.3
Poverty gap ratio	43.8	45.2	32.7	40.4	32.7

There are two targets for the goal on poverty and hunger. The first target is about income poverty and the second about hunger. The proportion of population below poverty line has been found widely varying across five sample districts, ranging from about nine percent in Bhaktapur to 36 percent in Kanchanpur. Thus, the poverty incidence in Kanchanpur is four times as high as that of Bhaktapur district. However, poverty gap ratio which measures depth of poverty – how far individuals are below poverty line – was found same in both districts. This indicates that although there are fewer individuals below poverty line in Bhaktapur, there are some individuals who are far below the poverty line there. However, the depth of poverty is further high in Morang and Chitwan where the level poverty incidence is less than that of Kanchanpur.

Target 2: halve, between 1990 & 2015, the people who suffer from hunger

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Proportion of under-weight children (6-59 month)	39.7	37.8	25.5	46.5	50.3
Proportion of stunted children (6 - 59month)	39.1	40.3	39.2	44.9	36.4
Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	6.8	5.8	9.9	8.7	8.5

A close correspondence is found between level of poverty incidence and child anthropometry. Proportion of underweight children was found lowest in Bhaktapur (26%) and highest in Kanchanpur (50%), where poverty incidence was also highest. On the other hand, the proportion of stunted children was found lowest in Kanchanpur rather than Bhaktapur, implying that children of Kanchanpur have comparatively larger height but are thin. Similarly, a strong relationship does not exist between the proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy

consumption and underweight children. This could be due to difference in care of children across study districts. It seems that although Bhaktapur is less food secure, children are better fed and nurtured there. This result is similar to that of the WFP and World Bank (2006) study which used small area estimation for poverty and nutrition related indicators

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

Target 3: Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
NER in Primary Education	89.6	96.4	93.1	87.0	84.8
Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	67.1	43.5	..	77.4	49.0
Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds	85.7	87.2	94.6	75.7	81.4

Three indicators are measured for analysing the status of primary education. Like the indicators of goal 1, variation exists in the values of indicators of goal 2 across the districts. For example, the net enrolment (NER) ranges from 85 percent in Kanchanpur to 96 percent in Chitwan. This further indicates that NER is related with poverty incidence. However, the district which has the highest NER comes up with lowest proportion of pupils completing the primary cycle of schooling, implying a higher drop out. This hints that mere increase in NER will not serve fully to attain the MDGs unless children continue their studies. Among the youths, the literacy rate was found highest in Bhaktapur but lowest in Banke (95 % vs 76%).

Goal 3: Promote gender equality & women empowerment

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education	0.91	0.95	0.96	0.78	0.91
Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education	0.89	0.90	0.98	0.70	0.67
Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 year olds	0.93	0.88	0.99	0.85	0.82
Share of women in wage employment	25.40	34.30	38.00	26.70	28.70

As to the gender equality, the situation is better in Bhaktapur, Morang and Chitwan as compared to other two districts, Banke and Kanchanpur. The ratio of literate female youths to their male counterparts is almost one in Bhaktapur, implying no gender difference there. But there is significant difference in Banke and Kanchanpur where only four youth females are literate as compared five literate male youths. This finding further corroborates poor situation of women in mid and far-west development regions of the country.

The gender difference further widens at higher level of schooling. For example, Kanchanpur has 91 girls per 100 boys at primary level which further reduces to 67 girls per 100 boys in secondary level of schooling.

On the economic front, it seems that the women of Bhaktapur and Chitwan are in better position compared to those of other districts as the share of women in wage employment is higher there ranging to 34 to 38 percent. This is however just one-fourth in a district like Morang which excels in terms of many other MDG indicators.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under five mortality rate

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Under five mortality rate	...	...	...	...	...
Infant mortality rate	...	...	...	...	...
Proportion of 1 year children immunised against measles	81.4	71.9	63.8	79.3	77.7

Goal four is on child mortality which has three indicators, two on mortality and one on immunisation. Estimation of mortality rate at district level is not plausible given the small sample size and therefore their values are not available. On the immunisation, the proportion of children immunised against measles ranges from 64 percent in Bhaktapur to 81 percent in Morang. It is surprising to note that the situation of Bhaktapur is weaker in respect of immunisation as compared to other indicators.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Maternal mortality ratio	...	...	...	...	...
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	21.3	42.9	13.7	20.6	14.2

On the maternal health, proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel ranges from as low as 14 percent in Bhaktapur and Kanchanpur to as high as 43 percent in Chitwan district.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and began to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Prevalence of HIV among 15-49 year olds	...	...	...	...	29.0
Contraceptive prevalence rate	64.0	54.7	67.9	39.7	39.8

Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Prevalence of malaria (affected rate per 100,000 risk population)	15	3	..	4	..
Ratio of TB identified	63	93	48	97	..
TB cured by DOTS	89.5	88.9	89.4	86.7	89.5

Although HIV prevalence was low in Nepal at national level, its concentration to certain age groups has become a challenge for Nepal. Therefore, apart from safe use of injectables, there is an urgent need for increasing contraceptive prevalence rate. The rate is about 40 percent in the two study districts of Mid- and Far West-Development regions; however, it is higher in the Morang and Bhaktapur, 64 and 68 percent, respectively.

In respect of other diseases, prevalence of malaria was found higher in Morang. The proportion of cases found with TB was higher in Chitwan and Banke than other districts. However, the success rate of TB treatment is high in all districts, close to ninety in all but Banke.

Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Indicator	Morang	Chitwan	Bhaktapur	Banke	Kanchanpur
Proportion of land area covered by forest	..	61.5	14.41	..	..
Area protected to maintain biological diversity (sq. kms)	..	908.8	..	2254	305
Proportion of people using wood as their main fuel	62.6	80.0	48.8	68.7	81.4

Lack of data on forest coverage in most of the study districts does not allow for a meaningful comparison of two of the three indicators. However, in terms of use of wood as the main source of energy, the proportion was found highest in Chitwan and Kanchanpur and lowest in Bhaktapur. The result is plausible given the differences in the availability of wood by districts of Nepal.

On the whole, Bhaktapur has been found with higher progress and Kanchanpur with lower progress in relation to most of the indicators of the MDGs. Compared to other districts Kanchanpur was found better only in case of very few indicators such as proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption and literacy rate.

CHALLENGES

A summary of the district level challenges of the five districts are given by goals as follows.

Eradication of Poverty and Hunger

- The amount fertile land is decreasing because of haphazard urbanisation and industrialisation leading to construction of houses and opening of factories including brick factory in fertile land; river cutting, etc.
- Ineffective service delivery and only better off households are benefited from services such as that from agriculture pocket package programmes
- Lack of institutionalisation of data base that could generate data for measuring and tracking progress on poverty incidence and poverty gap, as the district PMAS has not yet been implemented.
- Differences in wage rate by sex
- Inflow of labourers from India and therefore poor families including Freed Kamaiya lack employment opportunities
- Uniform programmes for the Village Development Committees which are located in hills and those which are located in the flat land part of a district.

Universal Primary Education

- Lack of resources and instruments for early childhood development
- Poverty and lack of awareness on the importance of girl education, and positive opportunity cost of children
- Decreasing quality of education
- Difficulty in reaching to hard core poor population
- Lack of adequate incentives including free text book, scholarship, mid-day meals and school uniforms
- Incentives given to schools are tied up only with the enrolment of children and not with student retention and drops outs.
- Difficult to get reliable estimates of net enrolment rate as the Education Management Information System does not record students migrated from or to the district.
- Higher importance attached to accessing land, home and getting employment than education by the very poor families including Kamaiyas.
- Lack of adequate programmes for disabled, orphans and street children

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

- Existence of poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, remoteness, social and cultural practices, caste and religion, at times, serve as barriers for the women empowerment
- Lack of adequate political representation of women at national and local levels
- Differences between wage rate of males and females
- Lack of adequate participation in decision making even within households, and lack of control over resources
- Gender discrimination practices including early marriage of girls, sleeping in cowshed during menstruation, lack of nutritious food during pregnancy, dowry system, and differences in wage rate between male and female.
- Decrease in girl to boy children ratio with the increase in level of schooling

Reduction of Child Mortality

- Lack of adequate care and nutrition owing to poverty and lack of income earning opportunities
- Differentiation between boy and girl and children in relation to their care and nurture
- Difficulty in monitoring the progress of child and infant mortality because of lack of data at the district level
- Difficulty in proper estimation of incidence of diarrhoea, acute respiratory infection because of the in- and out-migration from district
- Control from the centre over the resources including essential medicines affect the implementation of programmes including immunisation programmes
- Expansion of government services in rural areas
- Lack of safe drinking water and sanitation
- Lack of access of the hard core poor to health services
- High neo-natal mortality

Improvement in Maternal Health

- Lack of access of poor, Dalit and indigenous women to safe motherhood programmes including emergency obstetric services
- Lack of adequate health services in rural and hills and mountain areas
- Intra-household food insecurity to women
- Lack of data on maternal mortality rate
- Higher maternal mortality during pregnancy because of delay in decision making or the provision of services on following three aspects: (i) medical treatment, (ii) access to appropriate health services, and (iii) provision of services of health institutions.
- Lack of NGOs operating in maternal and child health programmes.
- Lack of awareness on antenatal care visit to health institutions
- Lack of adequate resources at local level health institutions

Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- Maintaining secrecy about the HIV/AIDS
- Migration of population, girls trafficking, exchange of needles and increased prostitution
- Lack of targeting for the awareness programmes
- Lack of coordination between donors and the ministry of health and population
- Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and various natural and social factors leading to risks
- Lack of adequate rights to women
- Haphazard settlement
- Poor hygiene and sanitation
- Lack of adequate resources including insecticides for the control of malaria at the local level health institutions

Environmental Sustainability

- Forest Act 1992 and Forest rules 1994 have discouraged tree plantation in private land because the owner has to register at district forest office
- Low forestland-man ratio
- Wood as main source for fuel and expensive alternative sources of energy
- Implementation of forest policy 1993 in Terai has resulted into conflict between community and partnership forestry programmes
- Discrepancies in statistics on drinking water and sanitation from service providers and users
- Decrease in budget allocation to forest and drinking water resources
- Lack of safe drinking water, and low focus on sanitation
- Lack of effective implementation of community forestry programme because of difficulty in correctly identifying users, lack of forest demarcation line, lack of realistic operational plan, lack of people's participation during needs identification, formulation of forest plan and their implementation; and policy barriers relating to cutting trees and sale of logs.

Besides, conflict appeared as generic challenge for all the goals. It is expected that with the long lasting peace rural development activities will resume will improve the living condition of people.