

A Gender Analysis of the Millennium Development Goals

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Introduction

It was at the threshold to the new millennium, that heads of state from all the 189 member states of the United Nations gathered in New York (Sept. 2000) to commit to eight Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs as they are widely known.

The MDGs are the centerpiece of the Millennium Declaration that each member state signed on to, which also includes a commitment to “promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.”

Three of the eight MDGs specifically identify gender equality and women’s empowerment as an important aspect for progress in the new millennium. Each of the eight “time-bound, measurable” Goals shown (Box 1) are linked to 18 corresponding targets and 48 indicators that should be met by the year 2015. All member states of the UN are expected to report regularly (every two years) on progress towards achieving the MDGs.

Box 1

Millennium Development Goals

(Achieve by 2015)

- Goal 1:** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2:** Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3:** Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4:** Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5:** Improve maternal health
- Goal 6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7:** Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8:** Develop a global partnership for development

The MDGs have drawn from the major international conferences and conventions of the 1980s

Box 2

Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action

- 1- Women and poverty
- 2- Education and training of women
- 3- Women and health
- 4- Violence against women
- 5- Women and armed conflict
- 6- Women and the economy
- 7- Women in power and decision-making
- 8- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- 9- Human rights of women
- 10- Women and the media
- 11- Women and the environment
- 12- The girl-child

and 1990s. Yet they have been criticized for not building substantively upon frameworks present at the time such as the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (PfA)¹ in which women's rights are recognized as integral to human rights, the 1979 UN Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the 1994 Cairo Platform of Action² and a number of international treaties and conventions. Critics contend that the targets and indicators for each of the Goals do not address

gender concerns and issues, and do not link up to CEDAW and Beijing PfA as is evident by the absence of sex disaggregated data and gender mainstreaming across all the Goals. Lobbying and advocacy efforts by civil society organizations and women’s groups with national governments and at regional and international were successful as targets and indicators were formulated to make the MDGs more gender-sensitive.

¹ The outcome of the Fourth World Conference of Women at Beijing in 1995

² Negotiated at the International Conference on Population and Development

Gender Equality as an Integral Principle of Development

It is now well established through empirical evidence and ample research that economic, social and political development is linked to the integration and full participation of women in these sectors. The '70s established that many development programs had actually skewed development more often than not. This led to a greater focus on women as beneficiaries of development interventions (Women in Development-WID- Approach) but moved on to seeing women and other marginalized populations as active participants in development. The focus on women, and their relative position as compared to men in all aspects of socio-economic and political life led to the recognition of gender as “a key organising principle in the distribution of labor, property and other valued resources in society” (Kabeer 2003) - often known as the gender and development or GAD approach. Institutions hitherto assumed to be gender neutral (such as the market and the state) were on careful analysis found to be gender discriminatory (e.g. restricting credit and access to markets, or state policies that saw women as non-economic agents, despite participation in the agricultural and the informal economy). Despite the progress made through the 1990s on gender research and analysis in all sectors, the focus of governments and of international organizations remained on gender disparities in the social sectors especially in primary education and in reproductive health (maternal mortality). Yet evidence has mounted, as have analytical approaches (Sen 1999, Kabeer 1996, HDR 1995) that closing gaps in education or health is only partially successful if women are not valued- economically and socially. Thus for example, creating well equipped and staffed health facilities will only go so far if a woman in need of emergency obstetric care cannot avail the healthcare if permission from the family is not forthcoming, or a female medical officer is not available. Sen's capabilities approach that distinguishes between functionings (e.g. availability of nutrition) and capabilities (the conditions which make choice and so realization of potential a possibility), is particularly relevant in understanding how growth of individuals and countries can be stifled by persistent “unfreedoms”. It is sobering indeed to realize that persistent and severe gender inequalities, as reflected in social and economic indicators, are geographically aligned³ with societies that exhibit greater social, cultural and political unfreedoms.

Thus it is important to review the MDGs through a gender lens and to set gender sensitive indicators to measure progress against each goal and target⁴. This requires, of course, political will and commitment backed up with the necessary planning and financial resources. The next section uses a gender lens to review Pakistan's progress against the MDG goals and targets, especially those that the government of Pakistan has deemed as priority goals for itself.

Pakistan and the MDGS

The MDGs are the centerpiece of development efforts of the Government of Pakistan. Specifically, the MDGs have been incorporated into the Government's two important macroeconomic frameworks. The Medium Term Development Framework (MTDF), which covers a five-year period from 2005-2010, is the Government's key planning document on development. The other is the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) which is a framework

³ “geographies of gender”- Kabeer 2003

⁴ An excellent resource is Waldorf 2004: this Unifem /GTZ document pulls together CEDAW, Beijing and the MDG's. (see references at end of this paper)

for social and economic policies. Finally the MDG's reflect the priorities included in the Pakistan National Plan of Action (2002) and the National Policy on the Development and Empowerment of Women (NPDEW).

The 18 global targets and 48 indicators adopted in 2000 have been translated into 16 national targets and 37⁵ indicators (*Annex1 Table 1*) based on Pakistan's specific conditions, priorities, data availability and institutional capacity (CRPRID 2006). Though some progress has been made on the targets set by GoP, quite a few appear to be falling short, and especially Goal 3 (Gender Equality and Empowerment) which is noted as being "off-track" (UNDP MDG monitor, 2008 status given in accordance with national government reporting- <http://undp.org.pk/global-mdgs.html>). Goal 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) is noted as "very likely to be achieved". For all the others it appears that targets are "possible to achieve if some changes are made". What can those changes be? If we look at Goals 2, 4, and 5 these have a direct and strong gender component i.e. primary education enrollment, child mortality and maternal mortality: we could meet our targets by increasing the focus on facilitating access of women and girls to affordable, quality services.

Goal 1, reducing poverty, does not have targets and indicators explicitly linked to gender, though a large number of the 40% of the most vulnerable in Pakistan are women. As the Pakistan report on the MDGs (Planning Commission 2006, p 5) notes "It is now increasingly recognized at a policy level that poverty can only be reduced permanently if income/non-income inequalities in a society are seriously addressed and reduced." These include gender inequalities that limit women's capabilities (Sen 1999) and keep vulnerable households clustered around the poverty line in a state of chronic or severe poverty. As the global Millennium Taskforce on poverty has noted, "one of the greatest barriers to human capital transition is the denial of basic human rights to a significant part of the population, and this applies broadly to women" (cited in Waldorf 2004). Labor force participation rates for women are estimated at almost 40% (Pakistan Time Use Survey, 2007); 70 % women are employed in the informal sector which accounts for almost 70% of the non-farm employment (MTR / MTRDF 2008). Interventions targeting the very poor and women, such as micro-credit, cash transfers, have been introduced. By facilitating the small home based worker enterprises, which employ large numbers of women, providing them with credit or supply/trade links this target can also be met. However given the cultural constraints related to women's mobility (limiting employment and access to markets), such initiatives will not yield lasting results. Mobility affects access to opportunities- whether education, health, work, or information. Restrictions on women's mobility are partially the outcome of transgressions against their person, which while rarely punished by the law, carry heavy social penalties.

The 2006 report also looks at consumption, education (literacy, gross and net enrollment), and health (low birth weight infants and pre/ante natal visits) as non-income measures of poverty. Though it does a good job of comparing the lowest quintiles (i.e. 20% of the population) with the highest quintiles to show how income, education and health inequalities have grown- i.e. improvements in the indicators are because the top 20-40% of the population is consuming more, increasing educational attainment and health indicators- it does not disaggregate it by sex. So we

⁵ Some GoP sources show it as 37, others as 34 indicators.

do not know how women or children of these categories are faring as compared to men and in comparison to other women and children across the quintiles.

Poverty, through its many dimensions is inextricably linked to women's work loads, nutritional status, and educational attainment, maternal and neo-natal health.

Goal 3 has three indicators for measuring progress explicitly towards women's empowerment. The first is the first indicator is Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary, secondary and tertiary education. As noted earlier, social constraints combined with gender blind, or at best gender "neutral" policies limit girl's access to schooling. While there has been progress towards this goal it appears that a concerted commitment is needed to realize the goal. The GPI of 1 in the literacy rate (it was at 0.67 in 2006) is also untenable in the current circumstances. The budgetary allocations for education have been revised downward; while this affects boys as well as girls, the latter are disproportionately affected given that the facilities (infrastructure, human resources) for their education are already fewer and they lag behind. The third indicator is the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector, presently around 10%. Recognition of the informal sector, as done in the PRSP and the MTFDF requires going beyond to recognize and provide for workers rights and safety nets. An economic crunch actually pushes more workers into the informal sector, increasing their vulnerability and livelihood insecurity. The final indicator, proportion of seats held by women in national parliament is one that Pakistan is likely to achieve due to the mechanism of reserved seats.

Goal 7, ensure environmental sustainability is linked to women as well- as users and managers of natural resources. This goal targets emissions and pollutants, reforestation and conservation, water and sanitation and improving the lives of slum dwellers. As the Millennium Taskforce on the environment has noted, "when women lack the knowledge, means or authority to manage the natural resources on which they directly depend, degradation of these resources is more likely to occur"(Waldorf 2004). This goal is also linked to the previous goals and has a particular gender dimension. Safe water and sanitation affects the health of infants and children; as health providers within the family, poor women's work load further increases when children fall sick; high infant mortality is also linked to high fertility, increasing the likelihood of maternal deaths or morbidity.

The main **challenges** have been the continuing security issues, compounded by the high inflationary rate and the increasing inequitable distribution of income, both of which have impeded poverty reduction efforts. Disparities in social indicators are evident across the topmost and the lowest population quintiles, as well as across gender. Availability of sex-disaggregated data is limited, even though it is an essential tool for gender-sensitive measurements, and for qualitative and quantitative indicators, in order to set benchmarks and targets, to monitor and report on progress towards the MDGs.

However what is clear is that there has been a consistent under-allocation of resources to achieve a decent standard of living and quality of life for the children, women and men of Pakistan. The social sector allocations, between 0.5-1% of GDP do not compare favorably with countries who have made progress, even within the region. The current economic crisis further squeezes the

fiscal space available for pro-poor public expenditure that would move Pakistan closer to achieving its MDG targets.




The global UN Report 2009 on the MDGs identifies several areas where progress fall short of targets, reflecting some of the gaps noted above for Pakistan: “productive and decent employment for all, including women and young people” and , extremely low employment opportunities for women; that rising poverty has affected food availability for the poor, which social policies should address; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary schooling is at risk; maternal mortality lags far behind targets particularly in South Asia which accounts for a third of all such deaths. Access to sanitation, reducing urban poor/ slums, and addressing sustainable environment remain elusive targets. Resource constraints at national level as well as the lag in international commitments (instead of 0.7% of GDP the developed economies have been able to contribute only 0.25% of GDP) have also slowed down the envisaged progress.




Conclusion


A lesson from the progress made so far is that targeted interventions, increased funding for service delivery where it is most needed has led to dramatic improvements in the goals. Interventions that require a strong and sustained political will and funding as well as structural changes, show only slight improvements. Addressing gender inequalities, whether in health, education, access to resources, employment, consumption, access to a safe and healthy environment require more than just financial outlays: without a strong commitment on the part of all stakeholders, including the government, even achieving the target of universal primary education for girls is at risk. As Kabeer (2003) emphasizes in her analysis, policy makers need to take heed of “the central role that women’s agency can play in achieving many of the MDGs. Enhancing women’s access to various resources and ensuring that greater social value is given to their contributions lies within the domain of policy-makers and its pay-offs are likely to be enormous”.


Annex 1

MDG Goals, Targets and Progress
Table 1

Global MDG Goals, Targets & Indicators	Pakistan Targets & Indicators	Pakistan: Progress against MDGs
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger 		
Target 1a: Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day		
1.1 Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) per day 1.2 Poverty gap ratio 1.3 Share of poorest quintile in national consumption	Proportion of population below the calorie based food plus nonfood national poverty line: reduced to 13%	Consumption Share of poorest 20% is 4 times less than that of the richest 20% in Pakistan (PSLM 2005); 40% of the poor remain vulnerable.
Target 1b: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people		
1.4 Growth rate of GDP per person employed 1.5 Employment-to-population ratio 1.6 Proportion of employed people living below \$1 (PPP) per day 1.7 Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment		
Target 1c: Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger		
1.8 Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age 1.9 Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	-Reduce prevalence of underweight children under five to < 20 -13%	
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education 		
Target 2a: Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling	MTDF target of 77%	very ambitious and there is little possibility that the target would be met.
2.1 Net enrolment ratio in primary education 2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary 2.3 Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men	-Net primary enrolment ratio -Completion/survival rate to grade 5 -Literacy rate 88% (M:89, F:87)	-Net enrolment ratio in primary education (% both sexes): 65.6 -Percentage of pupils starting Grade 1 and reach Grade 5 (% both sexes): 69.7 -The literacy rate in 2004-05 has been 53 percent and the target of 77 percent by 2010 looks unachievable as does the MDG target of 88 percent by 2015
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women 		
Target 3a: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015		
3.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education	-Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary, secondary and tertiary	-Gender parity Index in primary level enrolment (ratio of girls to

3.2 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 3.3 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	education: Primary: 1.00, Secondary: 0.94 -Youth literacy GPI -Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector: 14% -Proportion of seats held by women in National Assembly and Senate, provincial assemblies and local councils	boys): 0.8 -Literacy rates of 15-24 years old (% both sexes): 70.0 -share of women in wage employment in non-agri sector: 10% -Seats held by women in national parliament (%): 21.3
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality 		
4.1 Under-five mortality rate 4.2 Infant mortality rate 4.3 Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles	-Under-five mortality rate:52 -Infant mortality rate:40 -Proportion of fully immunized children aged 12-23 months >90% -Proportion of children under 1 year immunized against measles>90% -Proportion of children under five who suffered from diarrhea in the last 30 days <10% -Lady Health Workers' coverage of target population 100%	-Mortality rate of children under 5 years old (per 1,000 live births): 97 -1-year-old children immunized against measles (%): 80
Goal 5: Improve maternal health 		
Target 5a: Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio		
5.1 Maternal mortality ratio 5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	Proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendants	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 births): 320
Target 5b: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health		
5.3 Contraceptive prevalence rate 5.4 Adolescent birth rate 5.5 Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits) 5.6 Unmet need for family planning	-Contraceptive prevalence rate -Total fertility rate -Proportion of women 15-49 years who had given birth during last 3 years, and made at least one antenatal care consultation	
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases 		
Target 6a: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS		
6.1 HIV prevalence among population aged 15-24 years 6.2 Condom use at last high-risk sex 6.3 Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS 6.4 Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years	-HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women -HIV prevalence among vulnerable groups (e.g. active sex workers)	People living with HIV,15-49 yrs old (%): 0.1
Target 6b: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it		

6.5 Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs		
Target 6c: Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases		
6.6 Incidence and death rates associated with malaria 6.7 Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide-treated bednets 6.8 Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate anti-malarial drugs 6.9 Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 6.10 Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course	-Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures- 75% in 19 high risk districts -Incidence of tuberculosis per 100,000 population:45 -Proportion of TB cases detected and cured under Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS):85%	-Prevalence of tuberculosis (per 100,000 people): 263
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability 		
Target 7a: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources Target 7b: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss		
7.1 Proportion of land area covered by forest 7.2 CO2 emissions, total, per capita and per \$1 GDP (PPP) 7.3 Consumption of ozone-depleting substances 7.4 Proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits 7.5 Proportion of total water resources used 7.6 Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected 7.7 Proportion of species threatened with extinction	-Forest cover including state-owned and private forest and farmlands:6.0 % -Land area protected for the conservation of wildlife: 12% -GDP per unit of energy use (as a proxy for energy efficiency) -No. of vehicles using CNG fuel:920,000 -Sulphur content in high speed diesel (as a proxy for ambient air quality):0.5-0.25%	-Land area covered by forest (%): 2.5 -by 2004-05 the proportion has increased to 11.5 percent the target is expected to be met -Carbon dioxide emissions per capita (metric tons): 0.8090 -use of energy per unit of GDP and number of vehicles running on CNG is on target. - Sulphur content to decline by one half but so far there has been no progress towards this direction.
Target 7c: Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation		
7.8 Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source 7.9 Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility	-Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural : 93% -Proportion of urban and rural population with access to improved sanitation: 90%	-Access to improved drinking water sources (% of total population): 90 -Safe water not well defined; most of the drinking water in Pakistan not classified as safe. -Sanitation: current 54%, MTDF target of 70% too ambitious.
Target 7d: Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020		
7.10 Proportion of urban population living in slums	Proportion of katchi abadis (slums) regularized: 95%	At present 60 percent of katchi abadis have been regularized.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development		
<p>Target 8a: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally</p> <p>Target 8b: Address the special needs of the least developed countries Includes: tariff and quota free access for the least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction</p> <p>Target 8c: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States</p> <p>Target 8d: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term Official development assistance (ODA)</p>	<p>Market Access</p> <p>Debt Sustainability</p> <p>ODA Assistance</p>	
<p>8.1 Net ODA, total and to the least developed countries, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income</p> <p>8.2 Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)</p> <p>8.3 Proportion of bilateral official development assistance of OECD/DAC donors that is untied</p> <p>Market access</p> <p>8.6 Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duty</p> <p>8.7 Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries</p> <p>8.8 Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their gross domestic product</p> <p>8.9 Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity</p> <p>Debt sustainability</p> <p>8.10 Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)</p> <p>8.11 Debt relief committed under HIPC and MDRI Initiatives</p> <p>8.12 Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services</p>		
Target 8e: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential		

drugs in developing countries		
8.13 Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis	-Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis	
Target 8f: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications		
8.14 Telephone lines per 100 population 8.15 Cellular subscribers per 100 population 8.16 Internet users per 100 population	-Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 populations. -Personal computers in use per 100 population and internet users per 100 population	-Internet users (per 100 people): 7.6
<p><i>Sources:</i> <i>UNDP MDG Monitor:</i> <i>Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2005 & 2006</i> <i>Mid-Term Review of Medium Term Development Framework 2005-10. May 2008. Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan.</i> <i>Labor Force survey 2005-6 and different statistical reports of CRPRID</i></p>		

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Web Resources:

Summaries of the CEDAW sessions for each country can be found at:

<http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord2003/index.htm>

National MDG reports can be found at: http://www.undp.org/mdg/country_regionalreports.html

A wide range of resources on gender equality and the MDGs can be found at:

<http://www.mdgender.net/>

Reports of the Millennium Taskforces: <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/reports2.htm>

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