



PRESS RELEASE

UN Zambia calls for accelerated action with 1,000 days to go on Millennium Development Goals

5 April, 2013, Lusaka, Zambia— The United Nations in Zambia is today observing the milestone of 1,000 days to the end of 2015 – the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Starting today (5 April) – the actual milestone date – through to Friday 12 April, UN offices around the world are working with governments, civil society and international partners to mark “MDG Momentum: 1,000 Days of Action” in a variety of ways.

“The MDGs are the most successful global anti-poverty push in history,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said. “The Goals have helped set global and national priorities, mobilize action, and achieve remarkable results.”

The eight time-bound MDGs address poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, combatting AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability and a global partnership for development.

In Madrid, Spain, the Secretary-General and young people from the Spanish and European Youth Councils observed the moment at a special event today, joined by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and other heads of UN agencies and programmes who were visiting for a senior-level UN meeting.

Since the MDGs were adopted by all UN Member States in 2000, governments, international organizations and civil society groups around the world have helped make tremendous progress to improve people’s lives.

Zambia has witnessed steady progress on a number of MDG targets. The country has already attained the primary education target with about 94 per cent of school enrolment rate and the national HIV prevalence rate, which is below the 15.6 per cent target.

Challenges remain in meeting other targets such as those on adult literacy, maternal and child mortality, sanitation and achieving gender parity in higher education. There is a very high drop-out rate (2/3 of those enrolled do not complete grade 12) at the secondary level and HIV incidence rate (three per hour, two of whom are women) is alarming. MDG one remains one of the toughest to budge, with 42 per cent of Zambians still living in extreme poverty, and the MDG target of reducing this to 29 per cent is a long ways off.

To build on the success achieved and accelerate action, the Secretary-General called on the international community to: increase targeted investments in health, education, energy and sanitation; empower women and girls; focus on the most vulnerable people; keep up aid commitments; and re-energize efforts from governments to grassroots groups to make a difference.



The 1,000-day milestone is an opportunity to amplify awareness of MDG achievements and the commitment to continue global progress, including Zambia

“Zambia’s economic growth has been promising in recent years; building on this success, now it is crucial for Zambia to provide a laser-focus on those areas where it is lagging behind to achieve the MDGs by 2015,” the UN Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative in Zambia, Ms. Kanni Wignaraja said.

Forty-five countries are now using the MDG Acceleration Framework to identify pragmatic solutions to speed up progress on lagging MDGs, and to reduce disparities in progress to date. “The more the world can achieve on the MDGs, the more it will be possible to build confidence and support for a bold and ambitious post-2015 development agenda,” the UN Development Group chair and UNDP Administrator Helen Clark said.

#MDGmomentum

Social media is playing a major role in observing the milestone and promoting MDG momentum and the need to rally the world to step up efforts to achieve the eight Goals as 2015 approaches.

Today, UN Zambia is also taking part in a 1,000-minute **#MDGMomentum** Twitter Rally as part of a joint, global campaign with UN and international organizations.

The UN’s MDG gateway has a dedicated page promoting the various social media materials and initiatives being organized by a number of UN agencies and partners. The website is: www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

Media contacts:

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Notes to Editors

Since they were adopted by all UN Member States in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have helped to set global and national priorities and prompt action on the ground. They have raised awareness and shaped a broad vision that remains the overarching framework for development work across the world.

Enormous progress has been made towards achieving the eight time-bound MDGs – covering poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, combatting HIV/AIDS and other diseases, environmental sustainability and a global partnership for development.