



## Africa Lags Behind Schedule

**The East African Standard** (Nairobi)

NEWS

January 18, 2005

Posted to the web January 18, 2005

By Benson Kathuri  
Nairobi

Sub-Saharan Africa may end up as the only region that will fail to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations has said.

[The UN Millennium project 2005](#) reveals that the region has lost track of all the goals that were agreed upon by heads of state in New York five years ago.

But as sub-Saharan Africa stumbles, North Africa including Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco remain firmly on track, the report says.

These countries have, for example, made good progress in halving the proportion of their populations without safe drinking water in urban areas.

The MDG blueprint says the fight against poverty and hunger remains Africa's biggest challenges.

It says Sub-Saharan Africa is facing the worst forms of poverty despite efforts that are being made to curb mass impoverishment.

The UN says the level of poverty remains high in Africa with no visible change five years since the launch of MDG programmes.

Though achieving universal primary education is off the track, some progress has been noted in countries like Kenya that has introduced universal primary education programmes.

Africa is also doing badly on the gender parity front with girls' enrollment in both primary and secondary schools lagging far behind those of boys.

Women's participation in the political leadership is extremely low in a region that also has the highest child mortality rates.

The report notes that though immunization had picked up in the 1980s decline has occurred exposing millions of children to preventable diseases.

"Sub-Saharan Africa, most dramatically, has been in a downward spiral of Aids, resurgent malaria, falling food output per person and deteriorating shelter condition," the UN says.

The report warns that climate change could worsen the situation by increasing food insecurity, spreading vector-borne diseases, and increasing the likelihood of natural disasters.

Though the UNDP insists that Millennium Development Goals are too important to fail, Sub-Saharan Africa still faces the highest maternal mortality rate in the world.

---

Copyright © 2005 The East African Standard. All rights reserved.  
Distributed by AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).

---