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## Meeting Millenium Development Goals

By Purity Kago

KENYA is one of four pilot African countries chosen undertake a comprehensive assessment of the cou level needs for achieving the Millennium Developm Goals (MDGs) recently launched.

The government hopes to eradicate extreme pover hunger, achieve universal primary education, prom gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a Global partnership for Development.

The report makes an assessment of Kenya's perfor in relation to each of the eight MDGs, identifies wh problems are, analyses what needs to be done to r the problems and offers concrete proposals actions accelerate progress towards achieving the goals.

The process further offer an opportunity for govern consolidate the results of several years of costing c programme work and also move to new frontiers ir account their associated costs.

Vice-President Moody Awori during the launch note the road towards achieving the MDGs can only be r by strengthening the partnerships between the dev and developing countries adding that a lot of supp needed to achieve these goals by year 2015.

The Minister for Planning and Development, Prof Ar Nyong'o reiterated that, apart from the education c possibly HIV/AIDS, and at the current pace of deve with limited resources, Kenya may not meet most c goals by 2015 due to inadequate resources

Poverty remains a major impediment to fulfilment c needs of Kenyans, especially women and children, has greatly undermined the government's effort to the pressing needs in such critical sectors as prima health care, nutrition and basic education.

It is reported that the proportion of Kenyans living the poverty line is on the increase with the urban population accounting for the highest proportion of increment. Poor governance, corruption , and suffic

of public resources still remain critical barriers to the achievement of the national targets of poverty reduction.

The government in realisation of the MDGs should invest in agricultural production and access to food storage facilities improving post-harvest receipt system to encourage agricultural production.

The NARC government's policy of free and compulsory primary education will substantially contribute to meeting the MDGs goal of universal access to primary education by the year 2015.

However the education sector is faced with many challenges including, finance, lack of adequate teachers, insufficient learning facilities among others that may hinder the government in achieving this goal. Inadequate provision of education to children with disabilities owing to the weak identification and assessment mechanisms also pose a great challenge to the government that need to be addressed if universal education is to benefit all Kenyans.

The third MDG goal is to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. But in a country where violation of women rights, domestic violence and sexual violence is rampant, the government has a long way to go in fighting this vice that is deep rooted in our societies.

Thus if this is to be achieved, Kenyans need to be sensitized on the importance of educating girls and giving them equal chance with their male counterparts in all area and encouraging the election of women to leadership positions.

In the area of health and nutrition, there has been a general decline in the provision of health and services. However the Minister for Health Charity Ngilu said that 56 per cent of the population live below the poverty line, meaning they cannot afford basic services including health.

The health indicators in Kenya have been declining over the last two decades. The Kenya Demographic and Health Survey further confirm this and unless drastic actions are taken Kenya is unlikely to achieve the MDGs.

The achievement on other goals heavily depend on the attainment of health, they are: reduction of child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

To reduce child mortality, programmes that address the main causes of infant and child mortality should be reinforced with particular emphasis on post- neonatal mortality diseases like diarrhoea, and malaria. There is

need to improve access and quality of maternal and child-care services and put in place an effective referral system. Training and updates for health workers and Traditional Birth attendants is required to enhance essential obstetric care.

Biodiversity and environment have to be adequately addressed. Environmental degradation is also related to rural poverty that leads to over exploitation of natural resources. If the MDG goal number seven is to achieved, the government should protect biological diversity and restore the forest cover.

There is urgent need to put in place properly directed pro-poor natural resources conservation program in a manner that ensures sustainability of livelihoods and ecosystem management.

Developing a global partnership for development, the government should develop an open rule based predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system to encourage more investors and donors. This include a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction.

Although the government has shown it's commitment in eradicating corruption, mismanagement of national resources among other ills, there is a need for more political will and practical action to root out these vices.

It should work together with development partners and stakeholders to create awareness and promote MDGs vision in the country. With determination and commitment of all stakeholders these goals can be achieved.

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