

U.N. strategy for halving poverty by 2015

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UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 17 (UPI) -- A blue-ribbon panel of 265 leading development experts are handing U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan a strategy for combatting global poverty.

Annan returns to U.N. World Headquarters in New York Monday from Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster sites and the Small Island Developing States conference in Mauritius.

"Until now, we did not have a concrete plan for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, said Jeffrey Sachs, director of the U.N. Millennium Project, adding the experts have shown "We can still meet the goals - if we start putting this plan into action right now."

The goal is to halve poverty in the world by 2015.

The 74-page "Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals" says the goals can be met if action is taken by developing and developed nations in 2005, "the breakthrough year."

It says many of the tools are affordable and include bed-nets to fight malaria, vaccinations to combat infectious disease, antiretroviral therapies against AIDS and bore wells for safe drinking water. It also calls for fertilizers and agro-forestry to raise crop yields, and even diesel generators for village electricity.

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