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Involving children is good for their own development and for improving their engagement in future political processes, and for development effectiveness and outcomes.

At the international level, post-2015 accountability processes must include follow-up mechanisms to ensure that governments and development agencies act on findings and recommendations which emerge from reviews that are conducted. International accountability processes must be universal, transparent and participatory, conducting regular reviews of country and global progress towards the agreed goals and targets.

## Conclusion

Global efforts to fight poverty under the MDG framework have been substantial, yet the challenge that the world faces over the course of the next 15 years is even greater. The post-2015 framework and associated implementation and accountability processes offer a unique opportunity to change the course of human history. To ensure the new framework achieves the ambitious goal of ending extreme poverty in all its forms by 2030, the commitment to leave no one behind must lie at its very core.

**By 2030, no post-2015 target should be considered met unless it is met for all.**

<sup>1</sup> Save the Children (2014). Framework for the Future: Ending poverty in a generation.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations (2013). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Save the Children (2015). The Lottery of Birth: Giving all children an equal chance to survive.

<sup>4</sup> Save the Children (2013). Getting to Zero.

<sup>5</sup> FAO, IFAD, WFP (2014). The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014.

<sup>6</sup> FAO, IFAD, WFP (2014). The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014.

<sup>7</sup> UNESCO (2015). Education for All 2000-2015.

<sup>8</sup> UNESCO (2015). Education for All 2000-2015.

<sup>9</sup> Save the Children (2013). Ending the hidden exclusion.

<sup>10</sup> Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (2014). Why children's protection from violence should be at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda.

<sup>11</sup> Save the Children (2013). Lives on the Line.

<sup>12</sup> Ranking of countries to improve maternal, newborn, and child health.

<sup>13</sup> Save the Children (2015). The Lottery of Birth.

<sup>14</sup> Save the Children (2015). The Lottery of Birth.

<sup>15</sup> Save the Children (2014). Leaving no one behind.

<sup>16</sup> Save the Children (2014). Leaving no one behind.

## 2030: A world without extreme poverty

### Tackling inequalities and ensuring accountability



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In the year 2000, members of the United Nations adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), taking the responsibility to halve poverty by 2015 and adopting specific commitments towards children. Even though the world has made some progress, in many countries some Goals are still a long way from being reached and inequality has increased. With the end date of the MDGs approaching, the international community is working hard to define a new **post-2015 agenda for sustainable development** which encompasses economic, social and environmental sustainability. In 2015 governments across the world are expected, through the post-2015 framework, to commit to end extreme poverty by 2030, ensuring that no child dies unnecessarily, every child gets a good quality education, and every child is protected from violence.

Save the Children participated actively in the global consultations that helped to shape proposals for the new agenda, including through developing a holistic proposal for 12 key development goals.<sup>1</sup> Save the Children is advocating for a new framework that ends extreme poverty in all of its forms and ensures that no one is left behind by progress, thereby realising every child's right to health, nutrition, education and protection.

**Save the Children's vision**  
An ambitious, equitable and implementable post-2015 framework, which leaves no one behind.

### What has been achieved under the MDG framework?

The world has seen unprecedented progress in poverty reduction over the past two and a half decades, including a halving of the number of people across the globe living in absolute poverty.<sup>2</sup> However, work to end extreme poverty remains unfinished. For example, despite the gap in child survival between income groups reducing in every region outside Africa, huge disparities persist between more advantaged and disadvantaged groups in countries across the world, and are increasing in too many countries. Research by Save the Children found that inequalities in child survival have grown in nearly 80% of countries included in the study, whether between income, geographical or ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup>



### Global progress in extreme income poverty reduction

The MDG target of halving the proportion of people living below the absolute poverty line of US\$1.25 a day was met in 2010, with rates falling from 47% of the world's population in 1990 to approximately 22% in 2010. While much of this progress stems from rapid rates of poverty reduction in China, the pace of poverty reduction across developing countries as a whole picked up in the 2000s, including in sub-Saharan Africa. Average rates of reduction outside of China stood at 0.4% a year in the late 1990s, but increased to 1% a year in the 2000s, lifting an extra 280 million people out of poverty.<sup>4</sup>

### Hunger

Since 1990, 63 countries have reached the MDG target to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. The latest FAO estimates indicate that global hunger reduction continues: about 805 million people are estimated to be chronically undernourished in 2012-14, down by more than 100 million over the last decade, and 209 million compared to 1990-92. In the same period, the prevalence of undernourishment has fallen from 18.7% to 11.3% globally and from 23.4% to 13.5% for developing countries.<sup>5</sup>

### Food insecurity in Haiti

Haiti has one of the highest levels of food insecurity in the world. More than half of its total population is chronically undernourished. Although there has been a decrease in the prevalence of undernourishment, from 61.1% at the beginning of the 1990s, the number of hungry people has increased from 4.4 million in 1990-92 to 5.3 million in 2012-14 because population growth has not been matched by sufficient levels of development. Food insecurity in Haiti is related to high levels of extreme poverty. In 2001, 62% of the population lived on less than US\$1.25 per day. With low rates of economic growth, poverty persists, and the latest estimates suggest that 40% of the population lived below the even more severe poverty line of US\$1 per day in 2011.<sup>6</sup>

### Education

The number of children and adolescents who are not attending school has fallen by almost half since the year 2000. An estimated 34 million more children now go to school as a result of this progress. However, 58 million children are still out of school globally and around 100 million children do not complete primary education.<sup>7</sup> Inequality in education has increased, with the poorest and most disadvantaged shouldering the heaviest burden. The world's poorest children are four times more likely not to go to school than the richest children.<sup>8</sup>

### Withdrawal from school in Nigeria

Evidence from Kwara State, Nigeria, suggests that many parents withdraw their children from school when they are unable to pay outstanding balances on their school fees. And for low-income families struggling with the costs of essential items, even parents who are able to afford to send one child to school may not be able to afford to send all their children.<sup>9</sup>

### Child protection

Children across the world continue to be victims of violence including neglect, physical aggression, emotional abuse, sexual violence and forced marriage. Violence against children not only violates their rights, but also compromises social progress and development.

### The costs of violence against children

Beyond the negative impact on individual child victims and their families, violence can destroy social and economic gains that took years and decades to build. Without freedom from violence, in all its forms, the sustainable social and economic development of nations cannot be fully achieved. In the USA alone, the total costs of maltreatment of children, including in the fields of health care, child welfare, criminal justice and lost productivity and earnings, are thought to be US\$124 billion every year.<sup>10</sup>

### Child mortality

The world as a whole remains off-track for meeting the MDG, goal of a two-thirds reduction in child mortality by 2015. An intensified global push is needed now to accelerate progress.<sup>11</sup>

### Ethiopia reached MDG4

Ethiopia's national child mortality rate fell from 204 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 64 in 2013, meeting its MDG 4 target ahead of schedule. However, not all social and economic groups have benefited equally from progress. Inequalities have been falling or remaining static between economic, urban/rural and ethnic groups since 2000, but regional inequalities are rising. Regional and wealth gaps are closing for most indicators on the coverage of services, although they remain worryingly high for some services. Skilled birth attendance is 22 times higher in the richest wealth quintile than the poorest, and 12 times higher in Addis Ababa (84%) than in the Afar region (7%). Ethiopia ranks 28 out of 31 Countdown countries<sup>12</sup> for equity in coverage of eight core maternal, newborn and child health interventions. While many poorly performing regions accelerated progress across MDG 4 indicators between 2005 and 2011 much faster than regions that are further ahead, regional progress is still extremely diverse. For example, coverage of diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus vaccination quadrupled in the Somali region, albeit from a very low base, but remained static in Oromiya.<sup>13</sup>

### What new path should be pursued under the post-2015 framework?

**The end of extreme poverty can only be reached if the post-2015 framework addresses the weaknesses of the MDGs**, including their neglect of inequalities between age, gender, social and economic, disability, and geographical groups.

Fairer and more equal progress often leads to faster progress. Save the Children research found that countries that reduced average child mortality rates while at the same time reducing inequalities between groups saw an average of 6% faster progress over ten years than those that allowed inequalities to rise.<sup>14</sup> Therefore Save the Children strongly promotes a development framework that is rooted in the fundamental human rights principles of **universality** and **equality**, with countries committing to pursue an end to extreme poverty in ways that reduce inequalities and leave no one behind.

**The promotion of equity should be embedded across the post-2015 framework, including through:**

- a commitment to consider no target met unless it is met for every social and economic group;
- indicators to track gaps between rates of progress between advantaged and disadvantaged groups for all target areas, including income poverty;
- the collection of disaggregated data by gender, age, region, urban/rural location, ethnicity, disability and other social groupings;

- a standalone goal and transformative targets to advance gender equality and empower women and girls;
- a standalone goal on open, inclusive and accountable governance, with a strong focus on accountability and ensuring that all people have the voice and power they need to monitor progress, influence decisions that affect their lives, and speak out when development processes are failing them;
- targets to forge a strong global partnership for development that reduces international inequalities, including through action to end illicit financial flows and reform international institutions.

In addition to measures to tackle inequalities within the post-2015 framework itself, the promotion of equity should be embedded within efforts to implement, monitor and review the new framework. This must include:

#### 1) Addressing inequalities through stepping stone equity targets<sup>15</sup>

To ensure that disadvantaged groups are not left behind by progress, interim stepping stone equity targets must be established to reduce inequalities between advantaged and disadvantaged groups by interim dates between 2015 and 2030. These would serve as benchmarks across all goal areas to ensure that disadvantaged groups are on track to achieve final targets and are catching up with more advantaged groups.

#### 2) Building a robust accountability mechanism<sup>16</sup>

A robust accountability framework must be an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda and not just an afterthought, with universal commitment to participate from high-, middle- and low-income countries alike. This framework must support national accountability between governments and their citizens, as well as monitoring and following up on progress internationally.

At the national level, transparent and accountable governance systems that are open to public engagement and scrutiny, and that have strong oversight institutions, are not only essential to ensure better public spending and service delivery, but are also central to human rights and dignity. Open, inclusive and accountable governance is essential for children, to ensure better outcomes in service delivery and the sustainable realisation of their rights.

Citizens have a critical role to play in monitoring, review and decision-making processes; their participation will ultimately make accountability systems more effective and help to ensure that states and other actors fulfill their commitments. Engagement in accountability processes must include measures to ensure children's participation - a right enshrined in Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.