

> Scaling up of well-known effective interventions is urgently needed

Health outcomes are unacceptably low across much of the developing world. Sub-Saharan Africa is worst affected, but there are extreme and acute pockets of ill-health in all poor countries. If current trends continue, few low-income countries will achieve the health MDGs. Many speakers pointed specifically to the urgency of addressing issues of equity and access for the poor, particularly women.

The MDGs continue to be very helpful in providing political focus on and momentum for development while serving as a common framework for both debate and action. But while the MDGs give us outcomes, they say little about the means required in order to achieve these outcomes.

While the situation in health, ten years away from the year 2015, is particularly serious there is a strong consensus on what actually needs to be done. Much of the burden of disease can be prevented or cured with known, affordable technologies. Key challenges are that these interventions reach the people who need them, in particular the poor, and that health services are scaled-up in an equitable way.

> Access to reproductive health services is critically important

As was pointed out by the panelists, reproductive health services are critically important for making progress on the maternal health goal and it was suggested to add a target on access to these services, as well as specific indicators to track coverage of basic health system functions. Tracking progress and monitoring impact continues to be important for informing policy and measuring performance. In most cases the necessary data, including for indicators on access to reproductive health services at country level, is already available.

> Strengthening health systems lies at the heart of the challenge

At the centre of the failure to provide these technologies is a crisis of health systems. In too many countries the health systems needed to do this either do not exist or have collapsed. As one panelist said in responding to a question the Tc0.r1us. oD:rl otfor mpec.060.0st 1.1mrrming policy and

'brain drain' from developing countries, it was agreed that simple regulatory measures alone would not lead to the intended results.

> HIV/AIDS is still far from being under control and threatens progress in other areas

The AIDS pandemic is the most immediate and biggest threat to global health and development itself. Affecting women disproportionately and Sub-Saharan Africa bearing the by far heaviest burden, substantial additional investments are critically needed but have not been forthcoming at the pace and volume necessary. Further, many countries don't have in place the financial and administrative capacity to ensure that resources are disbursed timely and that they go where they need to go. Building this capacity is essential not only in health but also in other areas and the UN is regarded as having to play a much stronger role in collaborating with countries on this.

> Strong health systems are central to development and security of countries

The link between health and security was underlined by several speakers. It was argued that, again, health systems capacities were essential not only in the early detection of disease outbreaks, but also in the effective response to them. More generally and equally important, it was agreed that being healthy and having access to better health is fundamental for people's feelings of security, with health systems fulfilling a core social function and contributing to the overall stability of societies.

> More needs to be done to address the challenges of fragile states

Special attention needs to be given to the situation of fragile states, in particular those coming out of conflict, and the contribution that can be made by humanitarian actors in providing health services while building the capacity for the longer term development of health systems. A lot can be learned from past experience in such difficult environments, including for example the value of repairing existing, however insufficient, health care provision rather than starting ambitious reform programmes in the middle of what still are mostly unstable and unsafe environments.

> Governments need to set the right priorities for development

Governments need to recognize that investment in their health systems is essential for their countries' development – not only for the individual sector but as key enabler for poverty reduction and economic development. Panelists also underlined, however, the importance of investments outside of the health sector, in particular in education and water and sanitation, as

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