

# ECLAC: Caribbean achieved key goals

**SANTIAGO**

TWO weeks before the 193 member-states of the United Nations approve the sustainable development agenda for 2030 in New York, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the

Caribbean (ECLAC) says Latin America and the Caribbean have achieved several key objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

"Although these goals were formulated in a limited way, their results are the starting point to

address new Sustainable Development Goals that will be more ambitious, comprehensive and universal," said ECLAC in a new report, titled: "Latin America and the Caribbean: Looking ahead after the Millennium Development Goals".



ECLAC'S  
EXECUTIVE  
SECRETARY:  
Alicia Bárcena

From 1990 to 2015, ECLAC said countries in the region have made "important progress" on reducing extreme poverty, hunger and infant mortality, incorporating girls into education, and ensuring access to safe drinking water.

But ECLAC urged them to "make greater efforts" to reduce maternal deaths and greenhouse gas emissions, among other indicators.

"The new 2030 agenda represents an advancement versus the MDGs, moving to a more holistic, collaborative, interdisciplinary and universal view whereby development must be oriented towards closing structural gaps with environmental sustainability, to achieve greater equality," said ECLAC's executive secretary Alicia Bárcena about the report.

ECLAC noted that the MDGs were approved in September 2000 by 189 United Nations member-states, constituting the roadmap for development during the last 15 years.

## Fewer people hungry

According to the report, the region achieved the first MDG, oriented towards eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, "since, between 1990 and 2015, it managed to more than halve the proportion of people whose income is below one dollar".

The report says 4.6 per cent of people lived with less than US\$1.25 per day in 2011, compared with 12.6 per cent in 1990.

The proportion of people suffering from hunger fell from 14.7 per cent in the two-year period of 1990-1992 to a projected 5.5 per cent in 2014-2016, the report says.

Additionally, today's figures for labour participation and unemployment are at their best levels in 20 years.

Regarding the second MDG, devoted to achieving universal primary education, the report says the net enrolment rate at that level in Latin America and the Caribbean is estimated at 93 per cent as of 2015.

The level of illiteracy among people from 15 to 24 years of age in the entire region decreased to 1.7 per cent in 2015 from 6.9 per cent in 1990, "although functional illiteracy continues to be a matter of concern," the report says.

## Measles eradicated

On the third MDG—promoting gender equality and women's empowerment—the report says the region achieved the goal of guaranteeing girls' access to primary, secondary and superior education, "although this has not translated into an equivalent improvement of their situation in the labour market, where they participate less and receive lower salaries than their male colleagues".

In the political sphere, the proportion of women in national parliaments grew to 27.4 per cent in 2015, close to the threshold established for achieving that target (50 per cent), the report says.

Latin America and the Caribbean also achieved the fourth MDG, since it reduced by two-thirds the deaths of children under five, the report says.

Those deaths fell from 54 to 18 per 1,000 live births between 1990 and 2013, "although in that latter year there were still 196,000 deaths among children of this age group," the report says.

Meanwhile, the region managed to almost completely eradicate measles at the beginning of the 2000s. In 2013, most countries had achieved immunisation against that disease of more than 90 per cent of infants under one year old, the report says.