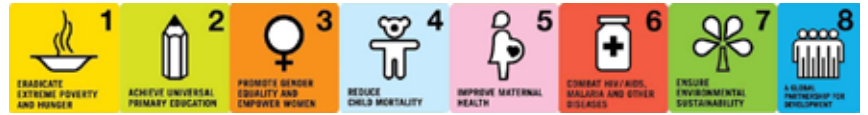


The Millennium Development Goals and Asthma

Asthma is controllable. Let's overcome the barriers to the management of asthma - and help reach the Millennium Development Goals



GOALS AND TARGETS from the Millennium Declaration

ASTHMA AND THE MDGs

1 ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Target 1: Halve the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day and who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015

Control asthma: help eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Asthma is a worldwide public health problem affecting about 300 million people. The majority of persons with asthma are in developing countries where access to essential asthma medicines is limited. The financial burden for persons living with asthma and their families is very high. Inadequate treatment of asthma and the high cost of asthma medications lead to disability, absenteeism and poverty. Inadequate control of asthma makes the poor even poorer because they are unable to work.

2 ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

Target 2: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Control asthma: reduce children's absenteeism from school. Childhood asthma is associated with absenteeism from school. A systematic review including 32 trials reports that educational programmes for the self-management of asthma in children and adolescents reduce absenteeism from school and the number of days with restricted activity. Proper treatment of asthma is essential to ensure that children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

3 PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

Target 3: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

Control asthma: eliminate an obstacle for girls seeking education. Poverty is a major barrier preventing girls from receiving an education. It has been reported that girls from the poorest 60% of household are three times more likely to be out of school than boys. Asthma would aggravate this difficult situation for girls.

7 ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Target 7: Integrate principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. By 2020, achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Control asthma: air pollution contributes to the development of asthma. Indoor and outdoor air pollution contributes to the development of asthma or asthma-like symptoms. Reduction of global emissions of carbon dioxide is essential for ensuring environmental sustainability and is beneficial for asthma control as well.

Ensuring the affordability of essential asthma medicines will improve the lives of slum dwellers who are living with asthma.

8 A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Target 8: Address the special needs of the least developed countries; in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Control asthma: good case management and access to essential medicines saves lives. About 250,000 people died of asthma worldwide in 2009. The countries with the highest fatality rates are those in which essential asthma medicines are not available. Better asthma management can reduce asthma deaths especially in the least developed countries.

The Asthma Drug Facility (ADF) was established by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) to make affordable quality-assured essential asthma medicines available in low- and middle-income countries, and to facilitate the implementation of standardised case management of asthma with evaluation of the quality of care. This is the first initiative put in place to improve the access to essential asthma medicines for the population in low- and middle-countries.

The products supplied by ADF are in line with the recommendations in The Union's Asthma Guide, which was updated in 2008 by the Asthma Division. This guide proposes adapted solutions for managing the diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of asthma patients in low- and middle-income countries.