

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age has increased by 1.2 billion, from 1.1 billion in 1980 to 2.3 billion in 1999 (United Nations 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of children in the world, and the United Nations has developed a series of goals for the year 2015, known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs are a set of eight goals that are intended to be achieved by the year 2015. The goals are: to eradicate poverty, to achieve universal primary education, to promote gender equality, to reduce child mortality, to improve maternal health, to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, to ensure environmental sustainability, and to develop a global partnership for development.

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