

( [C 23](#) ) – Advances in child health and gender equality led progress on the Millennium Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean region, according to a United Nations report released today. But rapid deforestation is hurting the region's record on environmental sustainability.

According to the [MDG 2010](#), the region has nearly reached the target of halving the prevalence of underweight children by 2015, with the proportion of children under five who are underweight dropping from 11 per cent in 1990 to 6 per cent in 2008.

The region also saw one of the greatest reductions in the mortality rate of children under five years, the report finds, with a drop from 52 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 23 in 2008. Particularly noteworthy, Bolivia reduced its under-five mortality rate annually by at least 4.5 per cent. If the region keeps the same rate of progress, it will be able to reach the target of a two-thirds reduction by 2015.

Latin America and the Caribbean also made strides on gender equality and the empowerment of women, the report finds. The share of women in top-level positions reached 32 per cent in 2000/2008, the second-highest rate among all regions. And the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women rose from 15 per cent in 2000 to 23 per cent in 2010, the highest among all developing regions.

On education, Latin America and the Caribbean have already met the target of gender parity in school enrolment, according to the report, with a ratio ranging from 97 girls per 100 boys in primary school to over 100 girls per 100 boys in secondary and tertiary education. School enrolment, however, increased only marginally, from 94 per

