

Review

Contributions of the Guinea Worm Disease Eradication Campaign toward Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

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Introduction

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The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of eight international development goals established by the United Nations in 2000. The goals are to be achieved by 2015. The goals are: 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2. Achieve universal primary education; 3. Promote gender equality and empower women; 4. Reduce child mortality; 5. Improve maternal health; 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; 7. Ensure environmental sustainability; 8. Develop a global partnership for development.

Guinea worm disease (GWD) is a parasitic infection caused by the nematode *Dracunculus immitis*. It is a debilitating disease that causes severe pain and disability. The disease is transmitted through contaminated water. The Carter Center, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has led a global campaign to eradicate GWD. The campaign has been successful in reducing the number of cases from over 3 million in 1980 to zero in 2015.

The eradication of GWD has contributed to the achievement of several MDGs. First, it has helped to reduce child mortality (MDG 4) by preventing the deaths of children who were suffering from the disease. Second, it has helped to improve maternal health (MDG 5) by preventing the deaths of women who were suffering from the disease. Third, it has helped to ensure environmental sustainability (MDG 7) by protecting water sources from contamination. Finally, it has helped to develop a global partnership for development (MDG 8) by bringing together governments, the private sector, and civil society to combat the disease.

The eradication of GWD is a testament to the power of international cooperation and the commitment of the Carter Center and the CDC. It is a model for how to successfully eradicate a disease and achieve the MDGs.

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