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The region boasts one of the lowest maternal mortality ratios of all developing regions – 39 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 2013. According to the report, the maternal mortality ratio in the Caucasus and Central Asia decreased 44 per cent between 1990 and 2013, which is major progress, but means the region will likely miss the MDGs target on maternal mortality by 2015. Maternal death is mostly preventable with increased access to regular check-ups. The level of skilled attendance at birth was nearly universal or 98 per cent in the Caucasus and Central Asia in 2012.

Little progress on access to water and protecting resources

The report warns that renewable water resources in the Caucasus and Central Asia are diminishing. The region has water withdrawal rates around 50 per cent. This is close to the threshold of 60 per cent at which physical water scarcity becomes a concern, both in the lives of people and for the environment. The region is likely to fall short on meeting its target to provide greater access to improved drinking water sources for people. In addition, the region has shown little progress on safeguarding natural resources through protecting land and marine areas, which makes it the least protected region in the world.

The Millennium Development Goals Report, an annual assessment of global and regional progress towards the Goals, reflects the most comprehensive, up-to-date data compiled by over 28 UN and international agencies and is produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at mdgs.un.org

For more information, press materials and an inter-agency media contact list, see www.un.org/millenniumgoals

