

## **UN facilitates Roundtable discussions to reflect on MDGs Mid-point in Tanzania**

**4 December 2007:** As the world stands at the midpoint between the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the 2015 target date, the United Nations deemed it useful to stimulate debate on the achievement of the Goals. The United Nations Information Centre in collaboration with UNDP organized a Roundtable discussion on the MDGs aimed at engaging target audiences in Tanzania on where the country stood at the midpoint and what needed to be done to ensure that the MDGS are achieved.

Discussions among media, Government, Development partners and Civil Society centered on media role in light of monitoring and discussing the progress of attaining the MDGs by 2015 by mobilizing public opinion and transparent political leadership and governance.

In her opening remarks, the Head of UNIC, Ms. Eshila Maravanyika noted that the eradication of extreme poverty and the achievement of the MDGs were a priority and one of the most pressing objectives of the United Nations. She cited the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon who emphasizes that no effort should be spared to reach the MDGs, particularly in Africa and that he would mobilise political will and hold leaders to their commitment to allocate resources and to address disparities in the global trade regime which handcuff so many developing nations.

A Representative from the Ministry of Planning, Economics and Empowerment gave a presentation on: "Is Tanzania on course to attain the MDGs by 2015?" A Representative from Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO) presented a paper entitled " The Role of Civil Society in the attainment of the MDGs in the country: How is Tanzania Progressing to ensure it achieves the goals by 2015?" The third and final presentation was from a Representative from the media entitled " The Role of the Tanzanian Media in highlighting Progress in the Attainment of the MDGs".

After all the presentations discussions followed focusing on the issues raised in the three presentations. The UNDP Country Director, Mr. Alain Noudehou closed the roundtable

discussions by emphasizing the importance of each stakeholder to play a their part in the implementation of the MDGs. He said it was sad that whereas the situation in urban areas seemed to be showing signs of improvement with all infrastructure and key life amenities, the situation in the rural areas was not the same.

“Tanzania, it is apparent that good progress has been made in some areas while challenges exist in others. Progress has been recorded in primary education enrolment, infant mortality, gender equality and women empowerment, the environment, and international partnerships,” he said in his closing remarks.

With regard to the challenges, Mr. Noudehou, emphasized that HIV/AIDS presented a major test to the country in particular due to the increasing burden for care and treatment of victims as well as the orphans.

“Maternal mortality is the other challenge”, explained Mr. Noudehou that continues to remain stubbornly high reaching 578 deaths per 100,000 in 2005. Apart from these, another cross cutting challenge is that of inadequate national capacity for rigorous diagnosis of the challenges, coordination, implementation, and monitoring, - both at the central and local levels”.