

# Asia-Pacific Aspirations:

## Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda

Asia-Pacific Regional MDGs Report 2012/13



The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) promotes regional cooperation for inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, a dynamic region characterized by growing wealth, diversity and change, but also challenged with persistent poverty, environmental degradation, inequality and insecurity. ESCAP supports member States with sound strategic analysis, policy options and capacity development to address key development challenges and to implement innovative solutions for region-wide economic prosperity, social progress, environmental sustainability and resilience to external shocks. ESCAP, through its conference structure, assists member States in forging a stronger, coordinated regional voice on global issues by building capacities to dialogue, negotiate and shape the development agenda in an age of globalization, decentralization and problems that transcend borders. A key modality for this strategy is the promotion of intraregional connectivity and regional integration.

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# Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda

Asia-Pacific Regional MDGs Report 2012/13



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# Foreword

This ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Regional MDGs Report, eighth in the series under the partnership, comes at a critical juncture when we need one big final push to achieve the MDGs in less than 1,000 days. As we gear up our efforts, citizens and leaders of the world are also discussing the possible framework of a transformative development agenda beyond 2015. Thus, this 2012/13 report, while identifying the areas needing accelerated actions and emerging challenges is intended to inform this global process.

The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda submitted its report to the Secretary-General, marking a watershed in our quest for a sustainable and inclusive development agenda for all. The report reaffirmed that the MDGs have been a powerful development framework that has rallied political support, prioritization within national plans and budgetary reallocations to address the most abject forms of poverty in the developing countries of the world.

This report presents some perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda as part of the system-wide discussion initiated by the Secretary-General. Being much less locked into traditional development pathways, Asia and the Pacific region has a clear window of opportunity to foster change. The perspectives and aspirations of this region for a new United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015 should be of much interest to the global community.

The report has been informed by a series of sub-regional consultations and briefings with a wide range of stakeholders. It has also been informed by a series of background papers commissioned among eminent regional experts. Most importantly, this report builds on the work of the strengthened regional partnership between ESCAP, ADB and UNDP.

The Asia-Pacific region as a whole has achieved considerable success with the MDGs, particularly in reducing income poverty. Nevertheless, the region is off track in several areas: hunger, health and sanitation – and even in areas such as income poverty where achievements have been spectacular, large gaps remain. Nearly two-thirds of the world's poor still live in this region. Even after 2015, there will therefore be a significant 'unfinished agenda'. The region also faces many persistent and emerging threats including rising inequality, gender discrimination and violence, demographic shifts and unplanned urbanization, along with climate change and environmental pressures such as pollution and water scarcity.

The MDGs have served a valuable purpose of rallying global support around common objectives. This experience can now be harvested to serve as the basis for an even more ambitious and vigorous effort in the decades ahead. Moving forward, countries of the Asia-Pacific region will need to bring together the three broad pillars of sustainable development – economic prosperity, social equity and environmental sensitivity – and replace short-term horizons with longer-term sustained benefits. Likewise, they will need to address issues of social justice, human rights and fairness. In some cases, this may entail trade-offs and difficult policy choices depending on national priorities. A post-2015 global agenda that is applicable to all will still need to account for huge variations in country circumstances, considering the high diversity of Asia and the Pacific. This may require not only ensuring adequate living standards; it will also require customization of targets and indicators, along with flexibility for additional national goals. Lastly, it should be clear who is responsible for achieving the goals and ensuring the means of implementation of the new development agenda, at global, regional and national levels, recognizing the Rio principles.

The Asia-Pacific region has been in the vanguard of global economic and social development. Now it has the opportunity to ensure that future progress is firmly anchored around the principles and goals of sustainable and inclusive development. The time has come to reach out and seize the future.



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The report has been prepared under the direct supervision of Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP; Dr. Bindu N. Lohani, Vice-President, Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development, ADB; Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director for Asia-Pacific; and Nicholas Rosellini, Officer-in-Charge, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Development Programme.

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# Abbreviations

AARR	average annual rate of reduction
ABI	Alternative Budget Initiative
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADB I	Asian Development Bank Institute
ADP	Annual Development Plan
AFT	Aid for Trade
AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAFOD	Catholic Agency For Overseas Development
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
CSO	civil society organization
DPR Korea	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GDP	gross domestic product
GHN	Gross National Happiness
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	international non-governmental organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ITC	International Trade Centre
KILM	ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market
LABORSTA	International Labour Office database on labour statistics operated by the ILO Department of Statistics
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LDC	least developed country
LLDC	landlocked developing country
MAF	MDG Acceleration Framework
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFN	most-favoured-nation
NCD	non-communicable disease
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODA	official development assistance
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
PFM	People's Forum on the MDGs
PPP	purchasing power parity
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SARS	severe acute respiratory syndrome
SDGs	SAARC Development Goals
SIDS	small island developing states
TB	tuberculosis
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TPMS	Thereek e Pasmada Muslim Samaj
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNU-EHS	United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security
UXOs	unexploded ordnances
VDGs	Viet Nam Development Goals
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

# OVERVIEW

## Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda

**Asia and the Pacific has made good progress towards the MDGs, though the region will still need to make greater efforts if it is to meet some important targets. Now it has the opportunity to set its sights higher when considering priorities for a post-2015 framework.**

The Asia-Pacific region as a whole has had considerable success with the MDGs, particularly in reducing levels of poverty. Nevertheless, the region is off track when it comes to hunger, health and sanitation – and even in areas such as poverty a number of countries are lagging some way behind. After the target date of 2015, there will therefore be a significant ‘unfinished agenda’. The region also faces many emerging threats including rising inequality and unplanned urbanization, along with climate change and environmental pressures such as pollution and water scarcity. Among the issues that will be of greatest importance in the years after 2015 are:

### *Poverty and inequality*

Although levels of poverty have fallen, about 743 million people in the region still live on less than \$1.25 a day. If the poverty benchmark is \$2 a day, the number rises to 1.64 billion, revealing a high degree of vulnerability; some 900 million people could easily fall into abject poverty (below the \$1.25 a day poverty line) due to personal misfortune or economic shocks or natural disasters. Another concern is increasing inequality. During the 2000s, while most Asia-Pacific countries enjoyed rapid economic growth, the benefits were being distributed unevenly. Between the 1990s and the latest available year, the population-weighted mean Gini coefficient for the entire region rose from 33.5 to 37.5. Income inequalities are evident between urban and rural areas, between women and men, and among different caste, ethnicity and language groups.

Inequality also emerges in many other components of development – in education, food consumption, and housing and in access to safe drinking water – where multiple forms of deprivation tend to overlap and reinforce each other.

### *Lack of decent and productive jobs*

One reason why the region continues to experience significant levels of poverty and rising inequality is that economic growth is not generating sufficient decent and productive employment. This is due to the nature of growth and the pattern of structural change in many countries in which workers move from agriculture into low-productivity services. A consequence has been that many people are in vulnerable employment – working on their own or contributing to family work. Without adequate systems of social protection, they have to take whatever work they can find or generate, no matter how unproductive or poorly compensated or unsafe. About 60 per cent of the Asia-Pacific region’s workers are in vulnerable employment.

### *Continuing hunger and food insecurity*

Another major problem for the region is food insecurity. Asia and the Pacific accounts for more than 60 per cent of the world’s hungry people. The situation is worst in South Asia where the proportion of people undernourished is 18 per cent. A particular concern is the level of undernutrition among women.

As well as damaging women's health, this reduces their productivity and affects the nutrition and health of their children. Many countries also have high levels of vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

### *An abiding bias against women*

The region is still a long way from achieving gender equality despite the successes in achieving gender parity at the three educational levels. Across Asia and the Pacific, women face severe deficits in health and education and in their access to power, voice and rights. The starkest evidence comes from skewed male-female sex ratios: in many countries households have strong preferences for male children, and take measures to exercise these. There have been some improvements in women's health, notably in East Asia, but in South Asia women on average have shorter life expectancies. A continuing problem in many countries is gender-based violence.

Women in Asia and the Pacific are also less likely than men to own assets or participate in non-agricultural wage employment. They also tend to be informal workers – a consequence of their limited skills, restricted mobility and existing gender norms. In addition, women have the load of unpaid domestic work to which they devote large amounts of time and energy. Women also have limited political participation: the Asia-Pacific region has the world's second-lowest percentage of women parliamentarians.

### *Limited achievements in health*

The Asia-Pacific region has not performed well on health targets compared to other MDG targets. In 2011, there were around 3 million deaths of children under five, and nearly 20 million births were not attended by skilled health personnel. While having been reduced by more than half, maternal mortality is still high, and limited access to emergency obstetric care as well as high unmet needs for modern contraceptives remain serious concerns. South Asia still accounts for the second-highest number of maternal deaths worldwide (26.8 per cent) followed by South-East Asia. The region has performed better on communicable diseases: the spread of tuberculosis has been reversed, and in the majority of countries efforts to control HIV are also bearing fruit. This, however, needs to be sustained. But, with rising living standards, countries across the region are also facing rising levels of non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, and chronic respiratory disease and diabetes.

### *Low-quality education*

The Asia-Pacific region has expanded children's access to basic education. Nevertheless, as many as 18 million children of primary school age are still out of school. Even for children who are attending school, there are major concerns about the quality of their education and many drop out after primary school. Low educational attainment is partly a consequence of low public expenditure: government spending on education, relative to other sectors, is lower in Asia and the Pacific countries than in the world's low-income and lower-middle income countries.

### *Heightened vulnerability and economic insecurity*

A common thread through many of these issues is vulnerability and economic insecurity. Many households are now facing higher levels of risk. These are often related to family or household events – such as death, disability or loss of employment of the breadwinner, or catastrophic expenditures resulting from illness of a family member. Moreover, with ageing populations, there are now more elderly people whose lifetime savings are no longer adequate to cope with the rising costs of living and health care.

Households are also increasingly exposed to external risks – particularly economic crises. The Asia-Pacific region has been subjected, for example, to the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98, and to the global financial crisis since 2008. Families across the region have also faced rising food prices. In addition, there are external risks to health: in 2003 the region experienced the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and it is continuously exposed to emerging and re-emerging public health threats.

Economic insecurity is heightened in the absence of decent and comprehensive social protection systems. Public social security expenditure remains low at less than 2 per cent of GDP in the one-half of countries where data are available. More than 60 per cent of the population of the Asia-Pacific region remain without any social protection coverage.

### *Rapid demographic change*

Across the region people are living longer, and fertility rates are falling. These are signs of success but also present new problems – as some countries have to deal with higher dependency ratios of the elderly, other countries face the challenge of a large youth bulge. While the increase in the proportion of working-age

population in many countries in the region can yield demographic dividends, it also poses the challenge of creating enough decent and productive jobs.

### *Unplanned urbanization*

Every day an estimated 120,000 people are migrating to cities in the Asia-Pacific region and between 2010 and 2050, the proportion of people living in urban areas is likely to grow from 42 to 63 per cent. This is partly caused by demographic change. But more importantly this is the result of urban-biased development driven by globalization and the consequent lack of adequate opportunities in rural areas.

### *Pressure on natural resources*

Economic growth, driven by industry and manufacturing, has largely relied on the exploitation of natural resources. At the same time, the patterns of consumption and production have become increasingly unsustainable and are taking a severe toll on the environment, posing a real threat to the planet – with heightened levels of air and water pollution. Water supply issues are also becoming more complex and difficult.

### *Exposure to disasters*

The region is the world's most disaster-prone area and faces increasing risks of disaster. Between 1970 and 2010, the average number of people in the region exposed to yearly flooding, for example, increased from 30 million to 64 million, and the population living in cyclone-prone areas grew from 72 million to 121 million. Moreover, the impacts of disasters are being transmitted across national boundaries: as Asia-Pacific countries become interlinked through regional value chains, a catastrophe in one country can have significant knock-on effects elsewhere.

### *The rising threat of climate change*

The Asia-Pacific region will be hard hit by a changing climate. This is likely to undermine both food security and livelihoods, and bring huge economic and social costs. Small island developing states in particular will be confronted with rising sea levels. While most of the accumulated CO<sub>2</sub> has come from the developed countries, an increasing contribution is coming from Asia and the Pacific. For tracking CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the region, however, the perceived outcome depends on

the measure: the region as a whole is an 'early achiever' when emissions are considered in relation to GDP, but regressing or making no progress in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita.

## The MDG experience

The MDGs have had a major impact. They have caught the popular imagination – through their engaging simplicity, quantitative targets, comprehensible objectives, and laudable intentions. They have helped rally political support for global efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable human development.

Inevitably, they have had their limitations. The MDGs tended to focus more on the symptoms of poverty rather than on the root causes, and could not respond to all development issues. Moreover, their genesis was not fully inclusive – having little input from civil society organizations, NGOs or other stakeholders – yet they derived from a series of intergovernmental processes and UN Summits held in the 1990s on various development issues. There has also been some debate on how the goals should be applied. They were originally intended as collective targets for the world as a whole rather than for individual countries. Subsequently, it was argued that every country should adopt every goal and target, which in some cases would set very ambitious objectives. In practice many Asia-Pacific countries localized the MDGs, adapting the targets to their own circumstances and adding new goals.

The MDGs did not specify strategies. To a large extent this was deliberate. The MDGs aimed to build the broadest possible consensus around a common and uncontroversial agenda of poverty reduction. Nor were the goals presented as rights. The MDGs instead referred to people as 'stakeholders' and did not explicitly articulate the 'rights-based' approach to development.

Such critiques offer important insights, and some would argue that given these weaknesses, and the likelihood that some goals will be missed, the MDGs should be allowed to expire. A more constructive approach, however, is to reconsider the strengths and weaknesses of the framework so as to fine-tune the goals and deploy their full potential.

### *The impact of the MDGs*

In the absence of a counterfactual, development success cannot be unequivocally attributed to MDGs. In any case, it may be too soon to judge. Barely 10 years have

passed since the adoption of the goals. It took some time for the MDGs to be accepted, adopted, and finally adapted. One criterion for success would be the extent to which the MDGs have shaped national policies. By this measure, they have clearly had an impact in some countries. A UNDP study found, for example, that the MDGs have influenced national processes and institutional frameworks in 11 Asia-Pacific countries. In addition, 14 countries across the region are applying the 'MDG Acceleration Framework', which helps countries identify bottlenecks and sharpen strategies for stepping up progress.

The MDGs have also opened up a huge space for civil society. Grassroots organizations, think tanks and NGOs have used them to push their respective agendas – on gender equality, for example, health, education, and human rights – and to highlight wide inequalities, showing how the MDG achievement within countries has been uneven – much lower in poor regions and for disadvantaged or excluded groups.

Another legacy of the MDGs is the improved monitoring and dissemination of social data. The MDGs provided a relatively simple monitoring framework. Almost all countries in the region prepare national MDG reports. Nevertheless, there are still many data gaps.

### *Learning from the MDG experience*

The MDGs have contributed to a wide body of knowledge – for governments, civil society and international organizations. This will be invaluable in designing a new framework. This experience suggests that the new framework should enable:

*Greater integration* – The existing MDGs were articulated goal by goal. A post-2015 framework should better reflect the reality that goals are multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral and interdependent – allowing for coordinated action on several fronts.

*More ambitious gender goals* – By and large, the MDGs have not delivered on gender. The MDGs gender focus was limited and weak in such areas as universal access to sexual and reproductive health or violence against women and girls. Moreover, progress on gender equality cannot be based exclusively on gender-related goals. Rather, gender priorities need to be incorporated into each goal.

*A greater focus on emerging environmental problems* – The environmental targets within Goal 7 were to some extent considered in isolation, and did not, for example, address the environment-poverty nexus, or

reflect people's vulnerability and exposure to disasters, or put major emphasis on climate change.

*Renewed partnerships for development cooperation* – Goal 8 of the MDGs was weakly formulated, hard to track and was only partially monitored. As globalization deepens, a new framework will need to reassess regional and global cooperation and governance, recognizing changes in global economic realities as well as the Rio principles.

## **Designing a new framework**

To gather views on a potential new development framework, the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Regional Partnership on the MDGs undertook a series of subregional consultations, and one dedicated to the least developed countries – bringing together stakeholders from government, civil society and United Nations agencies. The consultations concluded that the post-2015 development agenda should drive transformative change – serving as an advocacy tool, a guide for national and global policies, and an instrument for policy coherence. The consultations also reflected the desire to build on the region's experience of adapting goals to national circumstances. Those attending the workshops gave their personal views on what should be the main priorities: their most popular choices were 'quality education for all', closely followed by 'eradicating income poverty'.

There was also broad consensus on the need to pursue inclusive economic prosperity, social equity and environmental responsibility. Participants believed that the new framework should enable people-centred development and incorporate the principle of universality of social protection, combined with specialized social assistance for the poor.

### *Guiding principles for a successor framework*

This report argues that a successor framework should not only complete the unfinished agenda and aspirations of the MDGs but also tackle emerging issues not conceived of in the original framework. Drawing from Asia-Pacific perspectives, it presents some core principles. The new framework should be:

*1. Based on the three pillars of sustainable development* – The pillars cover economic, social and environmental dimensions of development transformation. This would entail a people-centred approach that puts a strong emphasis on equity, social justice and human rights for the current and coming generations.



2. *Underpinned by inclusive growth* – Sustained economic growth provides increased incomes that enable households to lift themselves out of poverty and gain greater access to education and health opportunities. But sustained growth will only maximize social outcomes if it is inclusive.

3. *Customized to national development needs* – The new framework could specify overall shared global goals, while individual regions or countries could identify the most appropriate targets to meet those goals and adopt indicators to measure their progress.

4. *Embedded in equity* – Development gains should not systematically bypass sections of the population. This principle can be operationalized by ensuring that indicators under the eventually selected goals track not just aggregate or average progress, but also progress at the lower end such as the bottom quartile. Hence development policies must address social and economic gaps in outcomes, access and opportunities.

5. *Backed by identified sources of finance* – Notwithstanding the continuous relevance of ODA, governments in Asia and the Pacific will need to mobilize more domestic resources and seek out and leverage innovative financing mechanisms. At the same time, governments will need to use public expenditure more effectively.

6. *Founded on partnerships* – The primary responsibility will rest with countries, but in a globalized world each country also has to deal with many cross-border spillovers whose solutions will rely on regional and global partnerships. While the agenda will be relevant to all countries, institutions and people, the responsibilities of implementing it should be shared in accordance with capabilities.

7. *Monitored with robust national statistical systems* – A new framework is likely to put statistical systems under greater pressure. It should therefore incorporate key measures of statistics delivery – setting targets for the development of new and improved existing datasets, including the strengthening of national statistical systems for policy analysis, advocacy and monitoring.

## Goal areas for the next framework

The post-2015 goals should set a transformative agenda for Asia and the Pacific. Based on the above core principles, this report proposes the following goal areas:

1. *Zero income poverty* – The region should build on its recent achievements in poverty reduction and set an ambitious goal of ‘zero poverty’.

2. *Zero hunger and malnutrition* – The aim should be universal food security, through among other things, much more attention to agriculture.

3. *Gender equality* – Gender will need to be assessed comprehensively, with more indicators on empowerment and on violence against women.

4. *Decent jobs for everyone of working age* – This would require full and productive employment and government commitment as an ‘employer of last resort’ translated into an explicit recognition of employment goals and targets in all policies and programmes.

5. *Health for all* – Priority should go to maternal, newborn and child health, universal access to sexual and reproductive health, including family planning, and to reducing the prevalence of communicable diseases and controlling the spread of non-communicable diseases.

6. *Improved living conditions for all* – Everyone should have access to safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation, as well as basic energy services.

7. *Quality education for all* – This should start with early childhood care and education, followed by higher quality education at all levels, including adult literacy and lifelong learning, and providing learning and life skills for young people and adults.

8. *Liveable cities* – The poorest city dwellers should have effective shelter and secure tenure along with essential social infrastructure. They should also have access to affordable, safe and energy-efficient mass transport.

9. *Environmental responsibility and management of natural resources* – This will mean protecting critical ecosystems while reducing resource intensity and avoiding overexploitation of natural capital. At the same time countries will need to address climate change.

10. *Disaster risk reduction* – The region has witnessed natural disasters that have wiped out long-term development efforts. Any new development agenda should help mainstream disaster risk reduction in national budgets and development programmes.

11. *Accountable and responsive governments* – There is a call for more accountable, transparent and effective government at both national and local levels for more

capable and efficient management of public resources and service delivery.

*12. Strong development partnerships and reformed global governance* – Countries in Asia and the Pacific will benefit from global and regional partnerships to manage global public goods, particularly in finance, health, trade, technology transfer, environment, and climate change. The reform of global governance should reflect the Asia-Pacific ascendance in the global economy. The prospect and scope of financial and economic crises and commodity price volatility must be minimized in order to protect development gains.

#### *Framework scenarios*

The goal areas can be drawn into a framework with its architecture based on the level of ambition that eventually gains consensus. The scenarios range from the least ambitious one of continuing with the current MDG framework with some adjustments, especially on the goals relating to environment and international cooperation, to a far more aspirational model that is applicable to all countries and transformative

enough to end poverty, aim for shared prosperity, and safeguard the planetary resources for current and future generations. The applicability to all countries would underline shared agendas while the customization of targets and indicators would reflect not only local circumstances, but also distinct responsibilities in accordance with the countries' own capabilities. Global discussions are likely to gain traction as the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals intensifies.

#### *Seizing the future*

The MDGs have demonstrated the value of rallying global support around common objectives. This experience can now serve as the basis for an even more vigorous effort in the decades ahead. Asia and the Pacific has been in the vanguard of global economic and social development. Now it has the opportunity to ensure that future development is not just rapid but more sustainable and fully inclusive. Now is the time to reach out and seize the future – and ensure rapid and equitable progress for the region's most vulnerable people.

# CHAPTER I

## MDGs in Asia and the Pacific: Where we stand

**Asia and the Pacific has made impressive progress towards the MDGs. But as the world's most populous region it still has the largest absolute number of people living in deprivation – and will need to make greater efforts if it is to meet the targets by 2015.**

The Asia-Pacific region as a whole has had considerable success with the MDGs, particularly in reducing levels of poverty. Nevertheless, the region is off track when it comes to hunger, health and sanitation – and even in areas such as poverty, where the region has been more successful, a number of Asia-Pacific subregions and countries are lagging some way behind.

There are, however, still significant opportunities. Even countries that appear off track on certain indicators could yet meet their targets. This is evident, for example, in the case of child malnutrition. Of the 14 countries currently off track in halving their prevalence of underweight children, 12 could attain their targets by accelerating their rate of progress by less than 2 percentage points per year.

### Overall progress

To assess progress, 22 indicators at the national level and 21 at the regional and subregional levels have been used from the United Nations internationally comparable MDGs dataset, World Bank and UIS, which may, in some cases, show data that differ from those published by national statistical offices. This is explained later in this chapter in the section: 'Demand for data'.

For selected indicators, based on trends since 1990, the report categorizes progress into one of four categories:

- *Early achiever – Already achieved the 2015 target*
- ▶ *On track – Expected to meet the target by 2015*
- *Off track: slow – Expected to meet the target, but after 2015*
- ◀ *Off track: no progress/regressing – Stagnating or slipping backwards*

Table I-1 shows individual results while table I-3 presents grouped aggregates. These tables indicate that the Asia-Pacific region as a whole has had two great successes. The first relates to poverty: between 1990 and 2011, the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 per day fell by more than half – from 52 to 18 per cent (Box I-1). The second concerns drinking water: the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water fell from 28 to 9 per cent. In both cases, the region is classified as an 'early achiever'.

The region has also been successful on a number of other targets. It has, for example, achieved gender parity at all levels of education, and is on track to reach full primary enrolment and primary completion by 2015. It has stopped the spread of tuberculosis. It has also increased the proportion of land area that is covered by forests or that has protected status.

On some other targets, however, the region is behind schedule for achievement by 2015. On present trends it will be unable, for example, to ensure that all children starting grade one reach the last grade of primary school. Nor will it have halved since 1990 the proportion of people without basic sanitation. Most

Table I-1 – MDG progress in Asia-Pacific

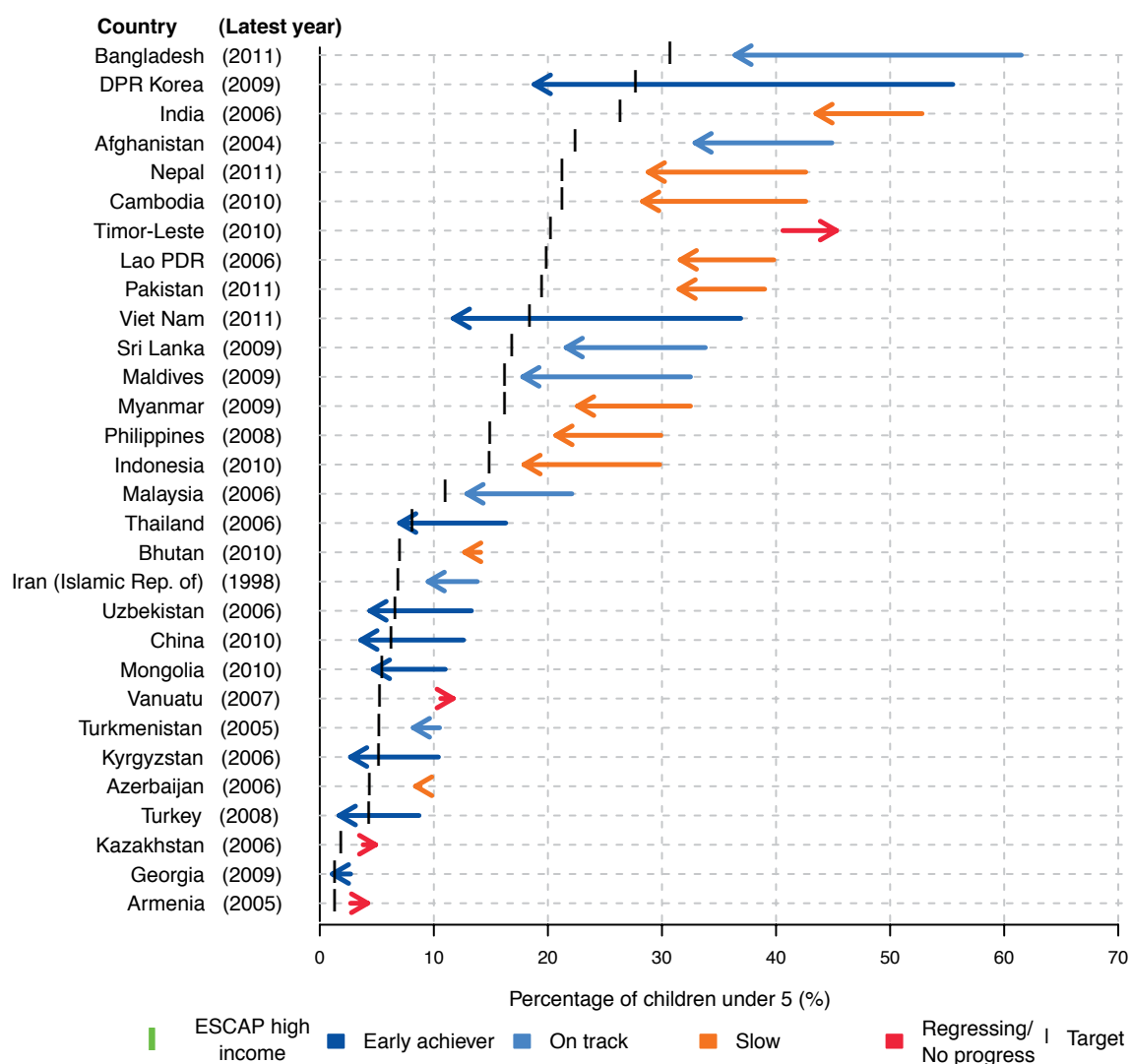
Goal		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		\$1.25 per day poverty Country line poverty Underweight children	Primary enrolment Reaching last grade Primary completion	Gender primary Gender secondary Gender tertiary	Under-5 mortality Infant mortality	Maternal mortality Skilled birth attendance Antenatal care (≥ 1 visit)	HIV prevalence TB incidence TB prevalence	Forest cover Protected area CO <sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP Safe drinking water Basic sanitation
East and North-East Asia	China	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Hong Kong, China	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Macao, China	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	DPR Korea	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Republic of Korea	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Mongolia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South-East Asia	Brunei Darussalam	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Cambodia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Indonesia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Lao PDR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Malaysia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Myanmar	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Philippines	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Singapore	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Thailand	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Timor-Leste	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Viet Nam	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	South and South-West Asia	Afghanistan	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bangladesh		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bhutan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
India		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Maldives		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nepal		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pakistan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sri Lanka		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Turkey		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
North and Central Asia		Armenia	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Azerbaijan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Georgia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Kazakhstan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Kyrgyzstan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Russian Federation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Tajikistan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Turkmenistan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Uzbekistan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Pacific	American Samoa	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cook Islands		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fiji		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
French Polynesia		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Guam		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kiribati		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Marshall Islands		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Micronesia (F.S.)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nauru		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New Caledonia		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Niue		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Northern Mariana I.		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Palau		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Papua New Guinea		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Samoa		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Solomon Islands		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tonga		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tuvalu	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Vanuatu	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	

● Early achiever    ► On track    ■ Slow    ◄ Regressing/No progress

Note: The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is responsible for reporting progress toward the MDGs to the Pacific Island Forum. Those results might differ from those presented in this report, due to the use of different data sources and assessment methods.<sup>1</sup> For more information on the targets and classification method, please see Technical Note 1.

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, for the education-related indicators under Goals 2 and 3 provided data on 15 May 2013; poverty and inequality database from the World Bank for the poverty-related indicators under Goal 1 accessed on 30 July 2013.

Figure I-1 – Progress in reducing the proportion of underweight children under-5



Note: The year in parenthesis is the latest year for which data are available.

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013.

disturbing of all, the region has been too slow in its efforts to prevent people going hungry, to stop children dying before their fifth birthday, or to extend maternal health care services and prevent mothers dying from causes related to childbirth. Across the region during 2011, around 3 million children under five died and nearly 20 million births were not attended by skilled health personnel.

For tracking CO<sub>2</sub> emissions under Goal 7 there are a number of options. One is to use emissions per \$1 GDP (PPP); another is to use emissions per capita. Each presents a different picture. On the basis of emissions per \$1 GDP (PPP), as presented in these tables, 25 countries out of 43 with sufficient data for analysis are early achievers. However, on the basis of emissions per capita, 39 countries out of the 51 with sufficient data are regressing or not making any progress in reducing

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita. Thus the region as a whole is an early achiever when considering emissions in relation to GDP because of the influence of countries such as India, but regressing or making no progress when it comes to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita.

Countries that are classified as off track on certain indicators could meet their targets if they manage to accelerate their progress, which in some cases is feasible. This is true for the target of halving the prevalence of underweight children under five, for example (Figure I-1). For 30 countries for which data are sufficient for assessing the progress on this indicator, 14 are classified as off track. Twelve of these off-track countries could reach their targets by accelerating their rate of progress by less than 2 percentage points per year, the pace at which many of the on-track countries have progressed (Table I-2).

**Table I-2 – Rate of progress needed for off-track countries to meet the child nutrition target**

Country	Underweight children in 2015 on current trends (thousands)	Average annual reduction in underweight prevalence required (percentage points)	Underweight children in 2015 if the target was reached (thousands)	Number of children who would benefit if the target was reached (thousands)
Armenia	8.36	0.29	2.69	5.67
Kazakhstan	79.90	0.33	30.98	48.92
Azerbaijan	58.63	0.44	35.41	23.23
Indonesia	3,547.21	0.60	3,397.78	149.43
Vanuatu	3.83	0.80	1.73	2.09
Philippines	1,994.36	0.82	1,743.88	250.49
Myanmar	914.01	1.06	706.29	207.72
Bhutan	8.21	1.13	5.02	3.18
Lao PDR	242.72	1.30	171.83	70.89
Cambodia	393.17	1.40	378.83	14.34
Nepal	796.18	1.88	597.98	198.20
India	43,806.75	1.90	32,264.71	11,542.04
Pakistan	6,231.92	3.00	4,165.88	2,066.05
Timor-Leste	86.06	5.00	38.56	47.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,171.31</b>		<b>43,541.56</b>	<b>14,629.75</b>

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013, and World Population Prospects 2012.

### Box I-1 Assessing progress in reducing poverty

In this report, as established in the official list of MDG indicators, in assessing progress on halving extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015 and estimating the number of people living in extreme poverty at national and regional levels, the indicator used is the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1.25 per day measured at 2005 international prices, adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP).

The ‘one dollar a day’ international poverty line was anchored to the national lines found in the poorest countries in 1990. Using updated data, the international poverty line currently is \$1.25 a day at 2005 purchasing-power parity. The international line is simple and provides a common standard to measure absolute poverty. The use of the international poverty line to estimate the number of people living in extreme poverty at national and regional levels facilitates comparisons across countries, as compared to the limited comparisons which can be done with data based on national poverty lines.

On the other hand, the international poverty line does not adequately reflect current standards of defining poverty which tend to be higher in less poor countries. National poverty lines also tend to change over time to reflect changes in living standards, particularly for rapidly developing countries. Therefore, countries tend to prefer using data based on their own national poverty lines in assessing the reduction of poverty. Due to this and other reasons related to adjusting for purchasing power parity, one can reach different conclusions regarding a country’s progress in meeting the target of poverty reduction depending upon whether the international or national poverty lines are used. Bangladesh exhibits faster progress in reaching this target if judged by its national poverty line. The contrary would be true for some other countries, including Indonesia, the Philippines and Fiji. On the other hand, the progress assessment would remain the same for some other countries.

Differences in progress classification between this publication and those in other publications could be due to the different methods used in assessing progress. This series of Asia-Pacific MDG regional reports uses a logit transformation for the analysis of progress on halving extreme poverty. The selection of this transformation is based on its ability to reflect the increasing difficulty in reducing the level of the indicator as the achievement improves. Another source for different classifications is the selection of the base year. In this report, the base year is 1990 or the earliest year after 1990 for which data are available for the different indicators. Other publications might use as the base year the year 2000 when the Millennium Declaration was signed. For more details on the classification method, please refer to Technical Note 1.

Sources: Chen, Shaohua and Martin Ravallion (2013), More relatively-poor people in a less absolutely-poor world, Review of Income and Wealth, Series 59, Number 1, March 2013, Malden, MA, USA.

Pritchett, Lant (2013), Monitoring progress on poverty: the case for a high global poverty line, <http://www.developmentprogress.org/blog/2013/05/16/monitoring-progress-poverty-case-high-global-poverty-line>

Table I-3 – Country groups on and off track for the MDGs

Goal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	\$1.25 per day poverty Underweight children	Primary enrolment Reaching last grade Primary completion	Gender primary Gender secondary Gender tertiary	Under-5 mortality Infant mortality	Maternal mortality Skilled birth attendance Antenatal care (≥ 1 visit)	HIV prevalence TB incidence TB prevalence	Forest cover Protected area CO2 emissions per GDP Safe drinking water Basic sanitation
Asia-Pacific	●	▶	●	●	●	●	●
Excluding China and India	●	▶	●	●	●	●	●
South-East Asia	●	▶	●	●	●	●	▶
South Asia	▶	▶	●	●	●	●	●
Excluding India	●	▶	▶	●	●	▶	▶
Pacific Islands		●	▶	●	▶	▶	●
Excluding Papua New Guinea		●	▶	●	▶	▶	▶
North and Central Asia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Excluding Russian Federation	●	▶	●	●	●	▶	●
Asia-Pacific LDCs	▶	▶	●	●	●	▶	▶
Asia-Pacific Low Income	▶	▶	●	●	●	▶	▶
Asia-Pacific Middle Income	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● Early achiever    ▶ On track    ● Slow    ◀ Regressing/No progress

Note: For more information on the targets, aggregation and classification method, see Technical Note 1.

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013, poverty and inequality database from the World Bank for the poverty indicator under Goal 1 accessed on 30 July 2013, and World Population Prospects 2012; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, for the education-related indicators under Goals 2 and 3, provided data on 15 May 2013.

## Achievements of country groups

The Asia-Pacific region includes the world's two most populous countries, China and India, so its overall achievement on any indicator is likely to be swayed by their performance. To allow for this, it is also useful therefore to consider progress in the rest of the region without these two giants. For a number of indicators this does not alter the outcome. This is illustrated in Table I-3. The reduced region, excluding China and India, is still classified as an early achiever in the case of the \$1.25 a day poverty rate, for example, and has equivalent outcomes in most other indicators.

The differences appear in only five indicators. In some cases, the two largest economies have beneficial effects for the region as a whole. The most dramatic difference is in forest cover: without China and India this region is not an early achiever but regressing. This is due to the shrinkage of forest cover in East and North-East Asia, South-East Asia (excluding the Philippines, Singapore and Viet Nam) and in some countries of South Asia and the Pacific. Similarly, in primary enrolment and primary completion the region without these two countries is not on track but slow. On the other hand, due to poor performance by India, the reduced region

performs better on underweight children – moving from slow to on track.

*South Asia* – This subregion is on track for three, and an early achiever for seven, of the 20 analysed indicators for which it is possible to assess progress – and slow for the rest of the indicators. Significant advances are visible in Goals 6 and 7, except for basic sanitation, where the subregion has been making slow progress. Another area where the subregion has performed very well is in achieving gender parity in primary education. The subregion is behind on reducing malnutrition and improving child and maternal health. In this case, India has the largest influence. For poverty, the outcomes for the subregion excluding India are more positive than those for the subregion as a whole. However, in many other cases, the reduced subregion does worse – as with primary enrolment, forest cover and tuberculosis incidence. The reduced subregion is on track for two, and an early achiever for only five indicators, while it is slow for 12 and regressing for two.

*South-East Asia* – This subregion has made the greatest progress, being on track for two, and an early achiever for 12, of the 21 indicators. It is slow on just six, mainly those related to child and maternal health, and for only

one, forest cover, is it classified as regressing or without progress.

*North and Central Asia* – This subregion is an early achiever on 12 indicators but slow in another six – child, infant and maternal mortality, skilled birth attendance and access to water and sanitation. The Russian Federation is the largest influence in this subregion; nevertheless the outcomes for the subregion without the Russian Federation are similar to those for the subregion as a whole. North and Central Asia excluding the Russian Federation is an early achiever in 13 indicators, slow in another five and regressing or making no progress in two – primary enrolment and HIV prevalence. The reduced subregion is an early achiever in access to basic sanitation, whereas the whole subregion is slow.

*Pacific* – Here the monitoring of progress is seriously hampered by data limitations and small populations, making tracking of progress for standard indicators difficult. The partial picture presented in Table I-3 reveals that the Pacific Islands are an early achiever on four, and only on track for one, out of the 17 indicators for which sufficient data are available: gender balance in tertiary education; HIV prevalence; TB incidence; protected areas; and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per \$1 GDP (PPP). The subregion has been progressing slowly on another nine indicators and has been regressing or making no progress on the remaining three. The poor performance with respect to environmental sustainability is particularly worrying, given the region's high vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. In the Pacific the dominant overall influence is Papua New Guinea which is home to almost 70 per cent of the subregion's population. A reduced subregion, without Papua New Guinea, has made better progress on gender equality in education, TB prevalence and forest cover, but it is regressing or making no progress in primary completion and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per \$1 GDP (PPP).

*Least developed countries* – The group includes 13 least developed countries (LDCs), including some which are emerging from conflicts and others that are highly fragile. The group as a whole has been making no or slow progress on 11 indicators. On the other hand, the group is an early achiever in seven indicators and on track in another three. For example, many LDCs for which data are available have done well in poverty reduction and several other MDGs. Nepal and Cambodia are early achievers and Lao PDR is on track. Similarly, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Timor-Leste are all on track in reducing maternal mortality. The case of Nepal is interesting: despite a period of internal conflict, the country has managed to reduce

the incidence of poverty from 53 per cent in 2003 to 25 per cent in 2010. This impressive achievement seems to be a combination of several factors including a decrease in household size, increased access to services, an increase in remittances, improvements in real wages and rapid urbanization.

## Disparities within countries

The preceding sections have highlighted the disparities between subregions. But it is also important to emphasize that there are large differences between individual countries and even within countries. National-level data mask continuing disparities. One of the most consistent is between urban and rural areas. This is illustrated for water and sanitation in Figure I-2 which, for a selection of countries, compares the levels in 1990 with those achieved by 2011.

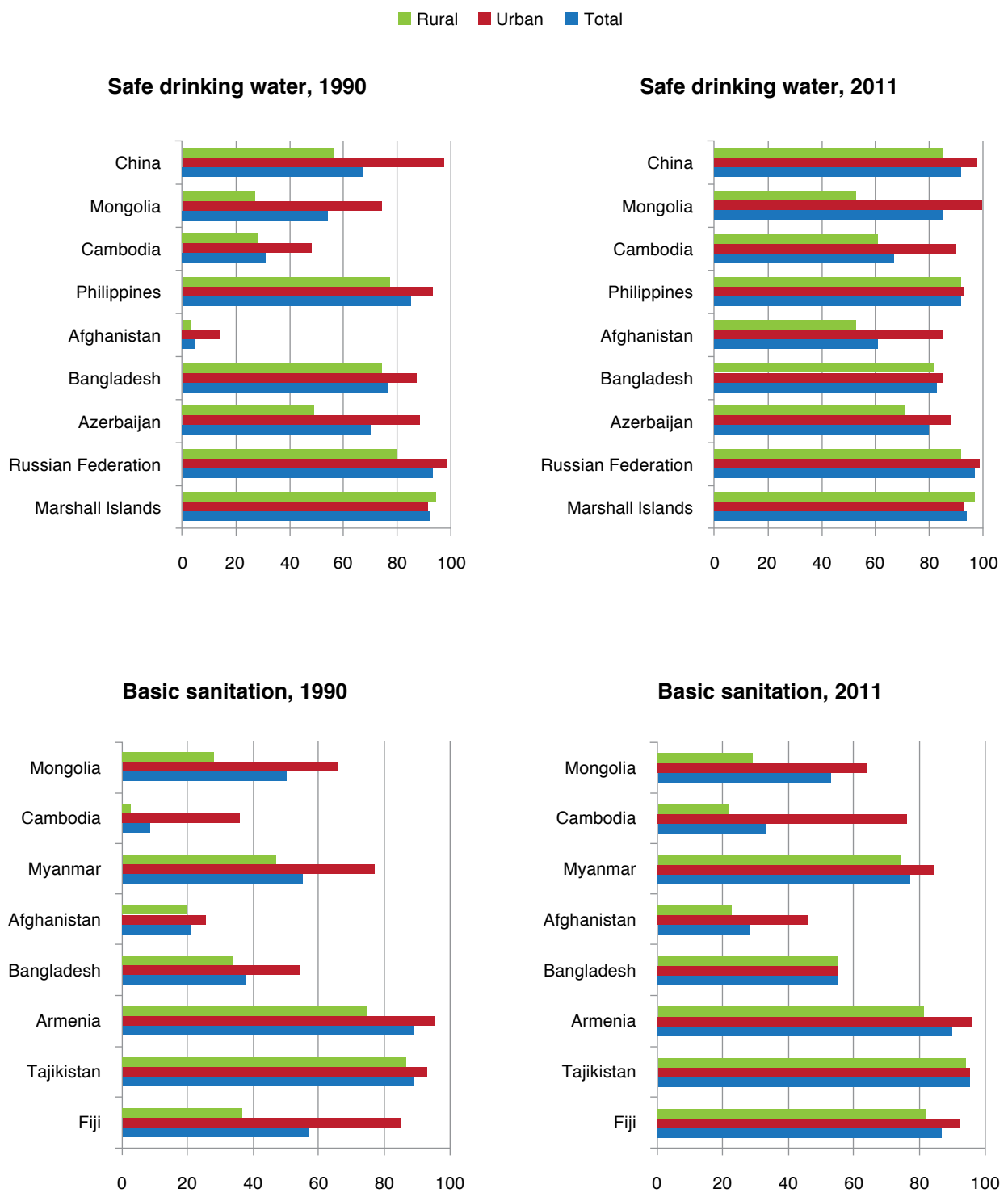
Figure I-2 demonstrates how, as countries move to higher overall levels of attainment, the disparities tend to narrow. As countries make overall progress in these indicators, they can expect to see disparities fall. One of the most dramatic cases is Afghanistan. The country has made huge progress in providing access to safe drinking water and the relative gaps between rural and urban areas have fallen. Despite overall progress, large disparities remain. By 2011 while urban access was 85 per cent, rural access was only 53 per cent. The widest rural-urban disparity among these countries is evident in Mongolia. Despite its significant progress in urban and rural areas, by 2011 the disparity was still almost 50 percentage points – comparable to that between Asia-Pacific's best- and worst-performing countries.

The trend towards narrowing disparities in sanitation is clear in Myanmar. Overall access to basic sanitation increased, thanks to the improvement in rural areas, while the level in urban areas did not improve at the same pace. As a result, between 1990 and 2011, urban-rural disparities decreased by 20 percentage points. In Fiji, for example, although there are still urban-rural disparities, access in rural areas has improved. However, urban-rural disparities are higher for access to sanitation than for drinking water. Despite the narrowing of rural-urban gaps, access to basic sanitation was lacking for 20 per cent or more of the entire population in many countries, implying that much work needs to be done to achieve universal access.

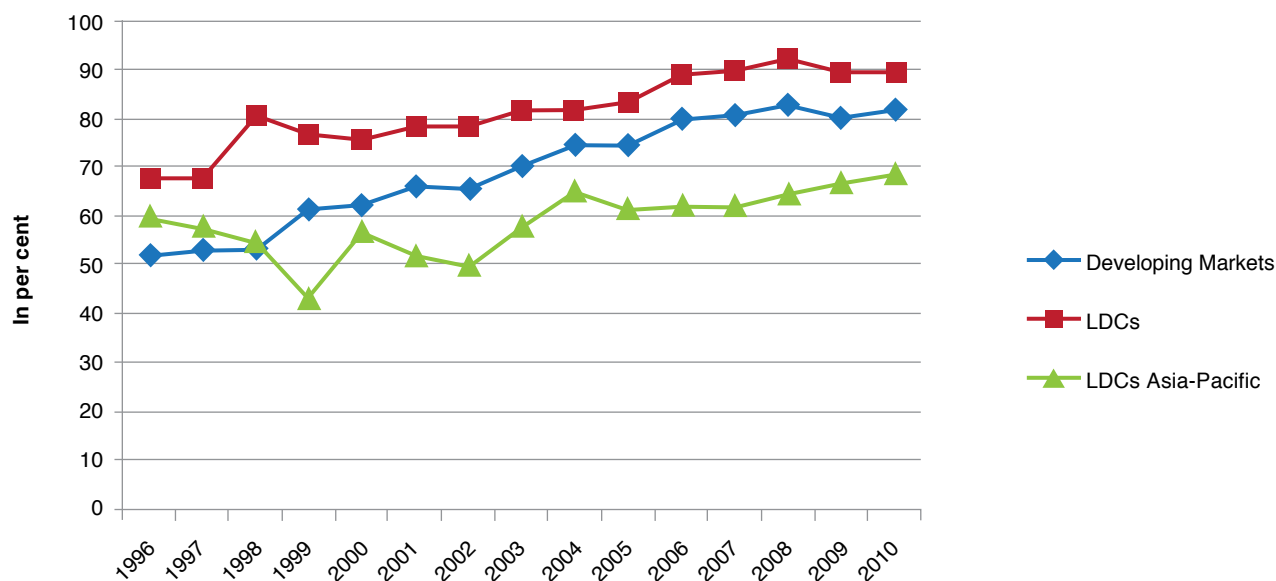
Disparities are evident not just between urban and rural areas, but also between different subnational levels, between sexes, and between various ethnic, caste and vulnerable groups. For example, while in most countries national HIV prevalence is less than 1 per



**Figure I-2 – Disparities in safe drinking water and basic sanitation, selected countries, 1990 and 2011**



Source: United Nations MDG Database accessed on 27 July 2013.

**Figure I-3 – Developed market imports admitted free of duty, selected country groups**

Note: 1. Refers to all product categories measured in value terms and not including armaments. 2. Petroleum tends to be subject to very low import duties, or is exempt. If this is excluded, these proportions are somewhat lower. In 2010, 79 per cent for developing countries, 80 per cent for the LDCs and 66 per cent for Asia-Pacific LDCs.

Source: Compiled from data provided by UNCTAD, ITC and WTO. <http://www.mdg-trade.org/38.Table.aspx>

cent, the corresponding figure for certain marginalized populations is much higher: in Viet Nam, 15 per cent among men who have sex with men; in Papua New Guinea, 20 per cent among sex workers; and in Indonesia, 35 per cent among people who inject drugs.<sup>2</sup> More details can be found in the Asia-Pacific Regional MDG Report 2011/12.<sup>3</sup>

## Progress on Goal 8

The eighth Goal is to ‘Develop a Global Partnership for Development’. This was crafted as an enabling driver for the achievement of the other MDGs. It aimed to establish more conducive conditions of international cooperation, generate adequate resources, create new opportunities, and help build the capacities and skills needed to deliver on the first seven MDGs. It included measures concerned with official development assistance (ODA), trade, external debt, and access to essential medicines and technology. However, the goal was hard to track and its potential for strengthening regional and global cooperation was underutilized. The first three targets of Goal 8 are:

- Target 8a – Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.
- Target 8b – Address the special needs of the least developed countries.

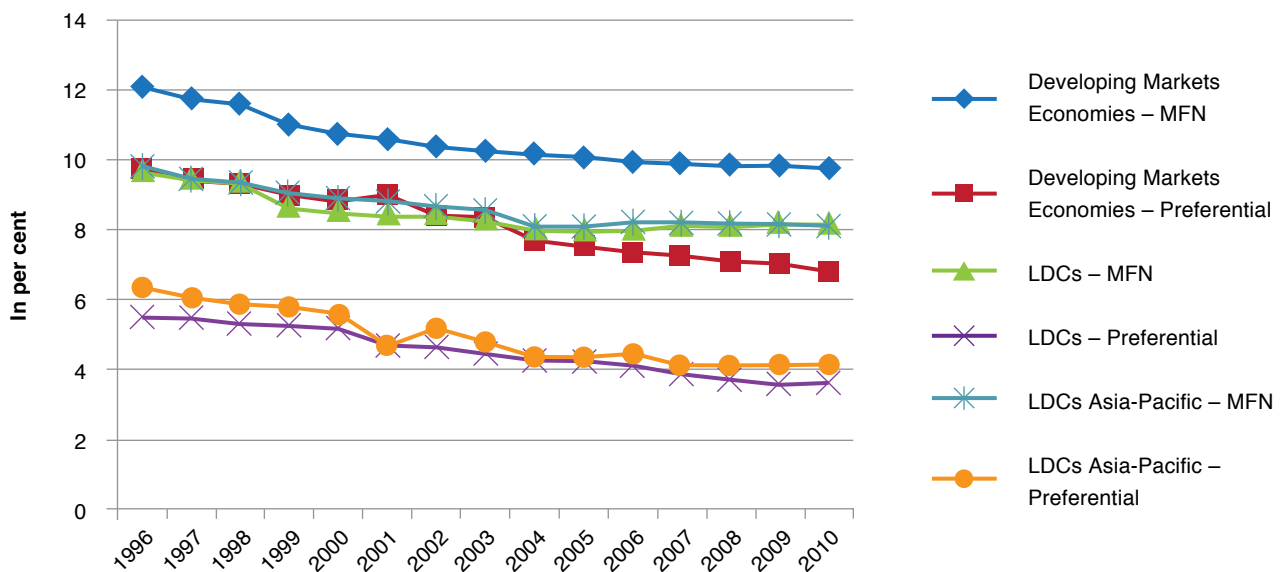
- Target 8c – Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states.

Although a full assessment of the contribution of Goal 8 is beyond the scope of this report, it has tried to highlight some key aspects of this important goal. The discussion in this section is therefore confined to selected targets – particularly for LDCs in the areas of trade and development assistance. In general, LDCs in the region have weak productive capacities, limited space for domestic resource mobilization and are economically vulnerable to external shocks. Since the 1970s, only two LDCs, namely Maldives and Samoa, have graduated from LDC status, and several others like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar have intentions of graduating by 2020.

### Trade

One of the key commitments in MDG 8 is to ensure tariff- and quota-free access for the LDCs. Even before the establishment of the MDGs, the LDCs had typically enjoyed duty-free and quota-free access to developed country markets – notably through the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). However, as tariffs have come down generally, the LDC margin of preference has effectively been eroded.

**Figure I-4 – Average tariffs imposed by developed markets on agricultural, clothing and textiles products, selected country groups**



Source: Compiled from data provided by UNCTAD, ITC and WTO.

As indicated in Figure I-3, by 2010 the proportion of goods admitted to developed country markets duty free had reached 82 per cent for the LDCs as a whole. For Asia-Pacific LDCs, however, the proportion was only 69 per cent. This may be because the various unilateral trade preference schemes do not cover some of the goods produced by this region. Moreover, for the region's basket of exports to the developed markets the demand elasticity may be low.

It should also be noted that the developed countries maintain protection for goods that are of particular importance for the Asia-Pacific region. This is true of agricultural products, textiles and clothing. The period 2005-2009 saw the expiry of the WTO Agreement on textiles and clothing along with the quota system that had regulated trade in those products. Between 2000 and 2010, there were modest reductions in the average most-favoured-nation (MFN) tariffs applied by the developed countries to textiles and clothing, while for agricultural products MFN tariffs largely remained unchanged.

Nevertheless, as indicated in Figure I-4, the Asia-Pacific developing countries and LDCs generally enjoyed lower preference tariffs for all agricultural products, textiles and clothing. But the situation varies from one group to another. For agricultural products, the average preference tariff enjoyed by Asia-Pacific countries

(3 per cent) is lower than that for the developing countries as a whole (7 per cent) and much higher than the rate applied to the LDCs (1 per cent). For textiles and clothing, on the other hand, the preferential tariff enjoyed by Asia-Pacific countries (5 per cent) is similar to that applied to the LDCs (5 per cent) and the developing countries (7 per cent).<sup>4</sup>

An issue of cross-cutting concern to developing countries in general, and LDCs in particular, is the selective application of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) especially in agricultural products and in textiles and apparel. NTBs restrict market access even more than tariffs, and in recent times have increased considerably: their impact is equivalent to a 27 per cent tariff.<sup>5</sup> Another barrier to market access is the application of often-complex rules of origin; this raises the costs of exports of some countries by 20 to 30 per cent.

Asia-Pacific emerging economies, however, have made some bold moves to grant preferential access to LDC products – now covering 32 to 95 per cent of their tariff lines (Table I-4).

A key outcome of the 2005 WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, China was Aid for Trade (AFT). This aimed to help developing countries, particularly the LDCs, build up their productive capacities and trade-related infrastructure. The Asia-

**Table I-4 – LDC market access policies of selected Asia-Pacific developing countries**

Economy	Description	Entry into force	Percentage of duty-free tariff lines
China	Duty-free treatment for LDCs	Jul-10	60 per cent (2010), gradually expanding to 97 per cent
India	Duty-Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme for LDCs	Aug-08	85 per cent to be covered by 2012
Republic of Korea	Presidential Decree on Preferential Tariff for LDCs	Jan-00	95 per cent (2011)
Taiwan Province of China*	Duty-free treatment for LDCs	Dec-03	Nearly 32 per cent (2009)

\* ADB recognizes this member by the name Taipei,China.

Source: MDG Gap Task Force Report, 2012.

**Table I-5 – Aid for Trade receipts, based on commitments (2010 constant, \$ millions)**

Country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Afghanistan	147.9	510.8	1,058.9	1,321.0	1,219.8	1,492.9	1,709.3	1,480.1	1,980.7
Bangladesh	584.6	1,263.0	747.1	506.8	596.4	752.4	1,061.7	905.3	1191.2
Bhutan	34.1	59.3	25.3	57.9	16.0	89.8	27.0	74.9	55.4
Cambodia	59.8	233.8	214.6	273.4	210.9	171.2	272.6	255.9	461.6
Kiribati	0.9	2.2	10.3	20.1	1.4	17.4	5.7	9.1	4.6
Lao PDR	83.8	220.6	115.5	209.4	128.1	146.1	107.7	103.8	262.8
Maldives	26.2	4.9	1.0	3.0	2.6	30.8	13.3	26.5	26.8
Myanmar	11.7	13.1	11.6	12.6	17.7	11.5	22.8	21.8	33.8
Nepal	122.8	190.1	178.0	187.9	215.0	212.5	194.2	294.0	429.7
Samoa	26.3	19.0	7.3	10.5	2.8	71.1	18.9	4.6	23.4
Solomon Islands	1.3	6.4	10.3	34.1	51.1	4.9	20.2	7.6	43.1
Timor-Leste	24.7	43.7	48.5	18.0	25.7	35.2	44.3	31.6	92.3
Tuvalu	0.8	1.6	2.4	13.0	1.0	11.0	5.9	1.5	1.3
Vanuatu	1.1	19.7	1.8	4.3	68.1	30.6	29.3	26.8	17.9
World Total	20,899	19,954	25,329	24,455	22,902	26,017	35,530	33,313	38,461

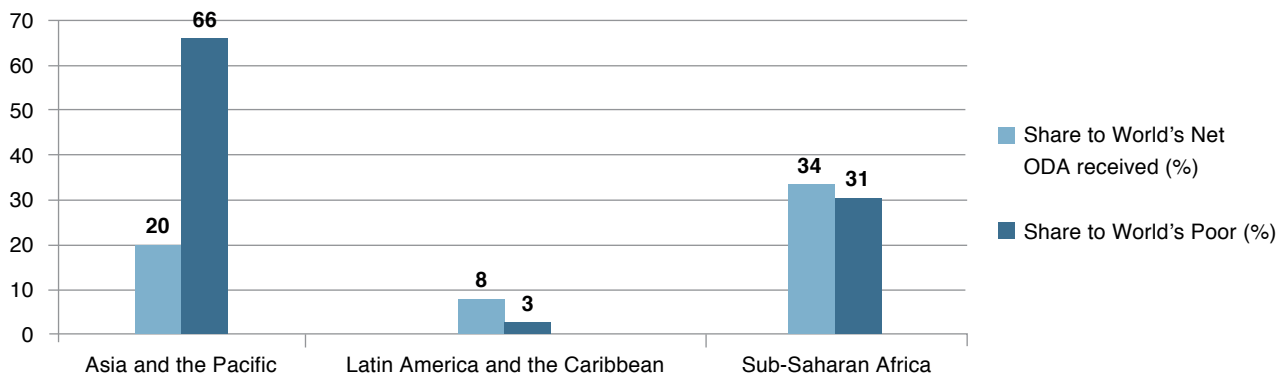
Source: Based on Integrated Implementation Framework raw database (UN).

**Table I-6 – Asia-Pacific LDCs, percentage share of world exports**

Country	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011
Afghanistan	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.003	0.003
Bangladesh	NA	0.086	0.090	0.095	0.136	0.145
Bhutan	NA	NA	0.002	0.005	0.004	NA
Cambodia	0.025	0.028	0.029	0.025	0.040	0.038
Kiribati	NA	NA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lao PDR	0.005	0.005	0.006	0.008	0.011	0.014
Maldives	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.000
Myanmar*	0.045	0.037	0.036	0.035	0.048	0.045
Nepal	NA	0.009	NA	NA	0.007	0.005
Samoa	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000
Solomon Islands	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.003
Timor-Leste	NA	NA	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001
Tuvalu	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Vanuatu	NA	NA	NA	0.000	0.002	0.002

\* Compiled from ITC and ADB database. NA = not available.

Source: Calculations based on ITC database, 2012.

**Figure I-5 – Share of developing regions in aid and total world population in poverty**

Source: Staff estimates using data from the World Bank PovcalNet online database and World Development Indicators accessed 3 May 2013.

Pacific share of AFT flows increased from an average of 7.1 per cent in 2002 to 12 per cent in 2010. But this is still well below the shares of other developing regions. Moreover, around two-thirds of this has gone to just two countries – Afghanistan and Bangladesh (Table I-5).

Overall, however, since the implementation of the MDGs, the Asia-Pacific LDCs, with the exception of Bangladesh, have not made much progress in increasing their overall export shares (Table I-6). Some of this may be due to tariff and non-tariff barriers in their export markets, but the LDCs also have supply-side limitations. AFT should have addressed supply limitations and productive capacity problems, but the record has been poor.

### *Official development assistance*

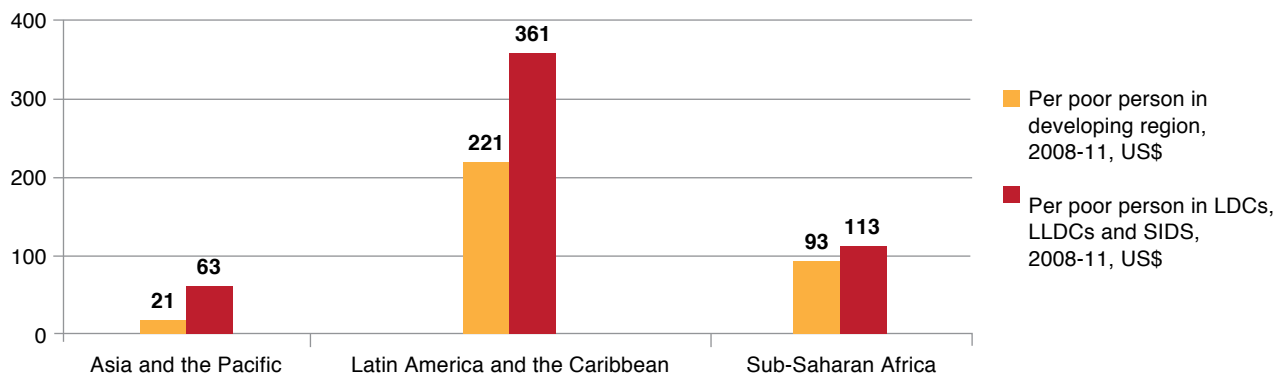
A second major area within Goal 8 concerned official development assistance (ODA). The 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico determined that 0.7 per cent of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income should be dedicated to ODA. Levels of ODA, however, remain well below that target.

In 2011, the LDCs received a total of \$44.6 billion as ODA, slightly up from \$43.8 billion received in 2010. Except in Afghanistan and Bangladesh, the overall growth of ODA has been less than expected. In 2010, the principal LDC recipients in the Asia-Pacific region were Afghanistan (\$6.3 billion) and Bangladesh (\$1.4 billion), followed by Cambodia (\$818 million) and Nepal (\$734 million). The region's other LDCs received very little ODA.

Global aid allocations in terms of overall amounts have not been proportional to the number of the poor and deprived in Asia and the Pacific. Figure I-5 shows that although the region has 66 per cent of the world's poor, it received only about 20 per cent of the total aid allocation in 2008-2010. Figure I-6 shows that the aid received on a per poor-person basis amounted to \$21 (i.e. if all the aid went to just the poor); while this figure was \$221 for Latin America and the Caribbean; and \$93 for Sub-Saharan Africa. The comparison for countries with special needs (LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS) for these three regions is also shown. This reveals that although aid received per poor person by the region's LDCs and other special category states was more than double that received by poor people in the region as a whole, such aid received is much lower per poor person than in both Latin America and the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of these countries are low-income countries which cannot bridge the gap in resources needed for meeting their social objectives such as the MDGs, solely on the basis of their own domestic resources. Stepping up international assistance to them will be necessary.

Given the current financial and economic crises in some donor countries, overall aid is likely to fall. World Bank research on the impact of previous banking crises suggests that aid rises for a couple of years soon after the crisis, and then falls steeply, not returning to its former levels for at least 15 years.<sup>6</sup> The latest global aid figures suggest that a repeat of this pattern could be underway.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, the international aid architecture continues to change; emerging economies like China, India, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa and others are becoming 'the new North', and are involved in the international cooperation

**Figure I-6 – ODA per poor person in the region and countries with special needs**

Source: Staff estimates using data from the World Bank PovcalNet online database and World Development Indicators accessed 3 May 2013.

arena according to their own rules. At the same time, there is an increasing role for private sector investments and philanthropy as sources of development finance. The new landscape became clearer at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, at the end of 2011. In Busan, donors who had endorsed the Paris and Accra agreements renewed their pledges to implement their commitments in full, while the Southern partners agreed to adhere to new commitments only on a voluntary basis. Busan thus created a two-tier approach to development cooperation: one for traditional donors with their ‘unfinished aid agenda’ and another for emerging donors to be implemented on a discretionary basis.

### Levels of deprivation in Asia and the Pacific compared with other developing regions

For MDG attainment as a whole, compared with other developing regions, Asia and the Pacific lies somewhere in the middle. While the region is lagging behind Latin America and the Caribbean, it is generally making better progress towards the MDG targets than Sub-Saharan Africa. However, in interpreting relative performance, one needs to take into account the initial conditions. Sub-Saharan Africa started from a much lower base. So although it might appear to have made slower progress, its performance is more impressive in historical and absolute terms.<sup>8</sup>

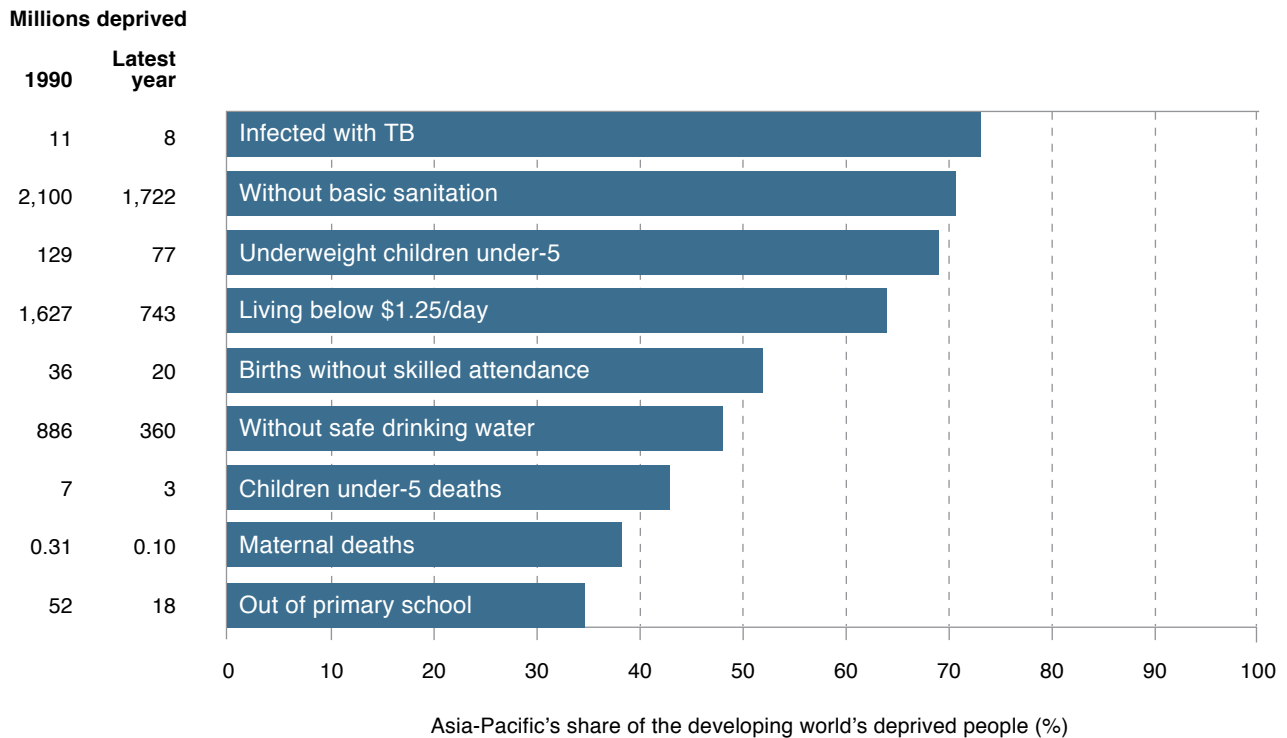
From another perspective, the problems are greatest in Asia and the Pacific because the region has a larger population, meaning it has the greatest number of deprived people on most of the indicators. Thus,

although Asia and the Pacific is classified as an early achiever in halving the poverty rate, it is still home to 743 million people living on less than \$1.25 per day.<sup>9</sup> And while it has provided better water supplies, it still has 360 million people without access to safe drinking water. In both these areas, the region has more than 45 per cent of the developing world’s deprived people. Another major concern is that the region is home to 1,722 million people without access to basic sanitation, which represents more than 70 per cent of the developing world’s people who are deprived of this service (Figure I-7).

The comparison with other global regions is encapsulated in Figure I-8 which compares the 1990 level and current levels for six indicators. These charts carry three key pieces of information. The first, represented by the colour of the bubbles, is the on-track or off-track status: for these indicators the dominant colour is orange, representing slow progress.

The second piece of information is shown by the position of each bubble in relation to the diagonal line. If the bubble is above the line, the values on that indicator have increased since 1990; if it is below the line, they have decreased. Whether being above or below the line represents progress will, however, depend on the indicator.

The third piece of information is carried by the bubble’s size, which is proportional to the number of people still deprived on that indicator. This figure illustrates, for example, that the region has performed well on poverty, but it still has the largest number of people affected, and although it has made progress it still has serious problems on underweight children and other major issues.

**Figure I-7– Asia and the Pacific share of the developing world’s deprived people**

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013, poverty and inequality database from the World Bank for the poverty indicator under Goal 1 accessed on 30 July 2013, UNESCO Institute for Statistics for the education indicator under Goals 2 and 3, provided data on 15 May 2013; and World Population Prospects 2012.

## The scale of opportunity in Asia and the Pacific

On current trends, the region as a whole is likely to miss several targets. But this is by no means inevitable; even countries that appear off track on certain indicators could yet succeed. This is clear in the case of halving the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 per day. Three out of the four off-track countries could reach the target by 2015 by accelerating progress by less than 2 percentage points per year; and there are similar opportunities on other indicators. If they were to succeed, the payoffs would be considerable. If Asia and the Pacific could halve the proportion of people without improved sanitation then 340 million people would gain access. The possible gains for selected indicators are summarized in Table I-7.

## Did the MDGs make a difference?

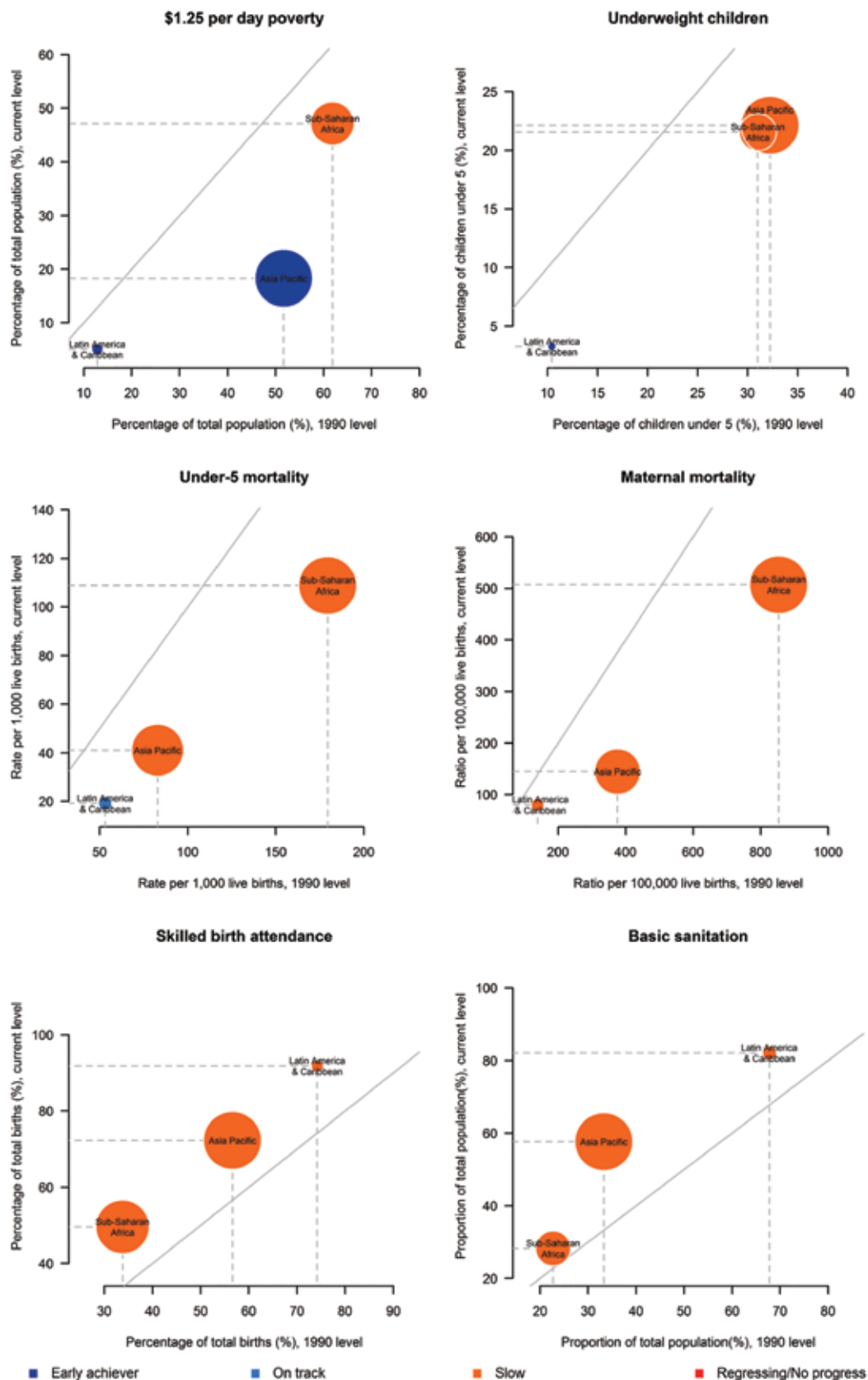
Over the past few years, various methodologies have been applied for monitoring MDGs and development outcomes.<sup>10</sup> One approach is to consider the extent of acceleration. Earlier sections of this report have compared absolute levels of attainment, but this does not fully take into account the initial conditions of countries or their development needs. Moreover, a

country may appear to have made slow progress against the target but may actually have accelerated.

This possibility can be examined by adapting a technique used by Fukuda-Parr and Greenstein based on how UNICEF evaluates the global trend in child mortality and underweight prevalence among children under five – the ‘annual average rate of reduction’ (AARR).<sup>11</sup> The AARR quantifies the rate of change of an indicator between two given years. When estimates are available for multiple years, this method allows the calculation of the AARR using a regression analysis.<sup>12</sup> Unlike the comparison of absolute changes, the AARR reflects the fact that the closer a country approaches the targets it gets progressively more difficult to move forward. For example, when a country has already achieved quite low levels of under-five mortality, any further absolute reduction obviously represents a greater percentage reduction.

The results of an analysis comparing the periods before and after the introduction of the MDGs (around 2000) is summarized in Table I-8. It is clear that most countries have accelerated their rates of progress in reducing the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 per day; a result consistent with the outcomes presented earlier in this chapter.

Figure I-8 – Asia and the Pacific compared to the world’s other developing regions



Note: The size of the bubbles is in proportion to the number of people currently affected and the colours correspond to those of the on- or off-track progress symbols. The sloping line represents an identity line.

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013, poverty and inequality database from the World Bank for the poverty indicator under Goal 1 accessed on 30 July 2013; and World Population Prospects 2012.



**Table I-7– Gains in human well-being if targets were reached**

	Number of people affected on current trend (thousands)	Number of people affected if target reached (thousands)	Number of people saved from deprivation (thousands)
\$1.25 per day poverty	457,434	388,789	68,645
Children under-5 underweight	58,171	43,542	14,630
Under-5 mortality*	8,724	7,000	1,724
Maternal mortality**	382	339	43
Access to safe drinking water	56,244	41,609	14,636
Access to improved sanitation	1,152,556	812,330	340,226

Notes: \* Cumulative number of deaths from 2012 to 2015; \*\* cumulative number of deaths from 2011 to 2015.

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013, poverty and inequality database from the World Bank for the poverty indicator under Goal 1 accessed on 30 July 2013; and World Population Prospects 2012.

On the other hand, some surprising results are observed in the cases of infant, child and maternal mortality. Overall progress has been slow, and the 2015 targets are going to be missed. Nevertheless, for infant mortality, out of 48 countries with data available, 25 have accelerated their rates of progress and a further 16 countries have maintained them. The picture is similar for under-five mortality: 20 out of 48 countries have accelerated their rates of progress and 22 have managed to maintain them. In the case of maternal mortality, 24 countries out of 41 have accelerated and four have maintained their rates of progress. In many cases, more than half of the countries have been able to maintain or accelerate their rates of progress.

For access to safe drinking water, the story is different. Although the region as a whole has been classified as an early achiever, 25 out of 51 countries have slowed down. Only 21 countries have been able to accelerate, and five to maintain, their rates of progress.

The MDGs were meant to stimulate progress across a wide range of goals. Whether they actually did is impossible to prove since there is no counterfactual. Nevertheless, it is worth looking more closely at the issue, even if this does not produce definitive results.

## The demand for data

The need to monitor MDG progress has increased the demand for timely, comparable and reliable data. The MDG framework has a total of 60 indicators, out of which 20 have been used for assessing the availability of data in two different datasets, 2010 and 2013. The analyses of progress towards various targets, as presented in this report require at least two data points

three years apart. This requirement is minimal as it does not specify the starting or the ending year of the data points, or the timeliness of the data. Table I-9 summarizes the number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region with sufficient data in the global MDGs dataset and thereby meeting this minimum requirement by indicator. As can be seen, between 2010 and 2013, the number of countries meeting this data requirement increased on most indicators. One major improvement was in maternal health, where after 2011 comparable data became available to assess trends on maternal mortality for 41 countries.

Nevertheless, there are still many data gaps. For example, 27 countries still have insufficient data on HIV prevalence. The situation is similar, though slightly better, for other indicators: underweight children and antenatal care.

In addition to data availability another major issue is timeliness. The progress assessment presented in this report was based on the most recent version of the United Nations MDG Indicators database, which as of 2013 had major updates on all of the indicators examined in this report. For instance, the median year for the latest data point on indicators on safe drinking water and basic sanitation was 2011, while it was 2008 in the 2010 dataset. There were also updates in the estimates for extreme income poverty. On the other hand, for the indicators on underweight children and skilled birth attendance, the median year of the latest data point is 2009. Improving the timeliness of data so as to reflect the most recent progress on the various targets remains a challenge.

In addition, the quality of the progress assessment will depend on the number of observations; the more the

Table I-8 – Acceleration of MDG progress in Asia and the Pacific

Goal		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		\$1.25 per day poverty Country line poverty Underweight children	Primary enrolment Reaching last grade Primary completion	Gender primary Gender secondary Gender tertiary	Under-5 mortality Infant mortality	Maternal mortality Skilled birth attendance Antenatal care (≥ 1 visit)	HIV prevalence TB incidence TB prevalence	Forest cover Protected area CO <sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP Safe drinking water Basic sanitation
East and North-East Asia	China	a	a		a	a	s	a
	Hong Kong, China							
	Macao, China							
	DPR Korea		s					
	Republic of Korea							
Mongolia	a	s	s	a	a	s	a	
South-East Asia	Brunei Darussalam	a	a	s	a	a	a	a
	Cambodia	a	a	s	a	a	a	a
	Indonesia	a	a	s	a	a	a	a
	Lao PDR	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Malaysia	a	a	s	a	a	a	a
	Myanmar		a	s	s	s	a	a
	Philippines	s	s	s	s	s	a	a
	Singapore							
	Thailand	a	a		a	s	a	a
	Timor-Leste							
	Viet Nam	a	a	a	s	s	s	a
South and South-West Asia	Afghanistan	a	a	s				
	Bangladesh	a	a	s				
	Bhutan							
	India							
	Iran (Islamic Rep. of)							
	Maldives	a	a	s				
	Nepal	a	s	a	a	a	a	a
	Pakistan	a	a	s				
	Sri Lanka	a	a	s				
	Turkey	a	a	s	s	s	a	m
North and Central Asia	Armenia	a	s					
	Azerbaijan	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Georgia	a	a	s	a	a	a	a
	Kazakhstan	a						
	Kyrgyzstan	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Russian Federation	a	s	a	a	a	a	a
	Tajikistan	a	m	a	a	a	a	a
	Turkmenistan							
	Uzbekistan	a	a	s	s	a	s	a
Pacific	American Samoa							
	Cook Islands		s	s	a	a	a	s
	Fiji		s	s	a	a	a	s
	French Polynesia							
	Guam							
	Kiribati		a	a	a	s	m	a
	Marshall Islands			s	a	a	m	a
	Micronesia (F.S.)							
	Nauru							
	New Caledonia							
	Niue			s	s	a	a	a
	Northern Mariana I.							
	Palau				s	a	a	a
	Papua New Guinea							
	Samoa		a	s	s	s	a	a
	Solomon Islands							
Tonga		s	a	a	m	s	a	
Tuvalu								
Vanuatu		s	s	a	s	m	a	

a: accelerated m: maintained s: slowed down

Source: Staff calculations based on the United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013, poverty and inequality database from the World Bank for the poverty-related indicators under Goal 1 accessed on 30 July 2013, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, for the education-related indicators under Goals 2 and 3, provided data on 15 May 2013.

**Table I-9 – Number of countries, out of 55, meeting minimum data requirements, by indicator**

	No. of countries (out of a total of 55) meeting minimum data requirements, by indicator				Median			
	2010 dataset		2013 dataset		2010 dataset		2013 dataset	
	Number	%	Number	%	Year	Observations	Year	Observations
\$1.25 per day poverty	25	46	25	45	2005	4	2009	6
Underweight children	28	51	30	55	2005	4	2009	5
Primary enrolment	32	58	38	69	2008	7	2011	10
Reaching last grade	26	47	38	69	2007	6	2010	8
Primary completion	40	73	44	80	2008	8	2011	12
Gender primary	45	82	47	85	2008	10	2011	16
Gender secondary	41	75	45	82	2008	9	2011	13
Gender tertiary	29	53	42	76	2008	10	2011	13
Under-5 mortality	47	86	48	87	2008	5	2011	22
Infant mortality	47	86	48	87	2008	5	2011	22
Maternal mortality	0	0	41	75	2000	0	2010	5
Skilled birth attendance	43	78	46	84	2006	3	2009	5
Antenatal care (≥ 1 visit)	28	51	36	65	2006	3	2009	4
HIV prevalence	30	55	28	51	2007	2	2011	22
TB incidence	55	100	55	100	2008	19	2011	22
TB prevalence	55	100	55	100	2008	19	2011	22
Forest cover	51	93	53	96	2005	3	2010	4
Protected area	52	95	52	95	2009	20	2012	4
Safe drinking water	48	87	52	95	2008	5	2011	22
Basic sanitation	48	87	52	95	2008	5	2011	22

Sources: Staff calculations based on data from the global MDG dataset; 2010 dataset: downloaded on 30 September 2010; 2013 dataset: downloaded on 27 July 2013.

better. For the period 1990-2012, for indicators such as underweight children, skilled birth attendance and antenatal care, the median number of data points is only four or five, meaning that half of the countries have a maximum of four or five data points or fewer, which may not fully reflect the trajectory of the progress.

The United Nations MDG Indicator dataset relies on household or other *ad hoc* surveys for many of the indicators. A shortcoming of household surveys is that they tend to be infrequent and are limited in producing disaggregated data for small population subgroups. One alternative is to strengthen administrative data sources so that data can be delivered on a continuous basis and for all population subgroups. One such data source is a civil registration system (Box I-2), which in principle should be able to provide inputs for 42 MDG indicators.<sup>13</sup>

Data discrepancies have been a persistent concern. There are often discrepancies between national and international data. This report uses the United Nations MDG Indicators database which is coordinated and maintained by the United Nations Statistics Division. This database, which is the product of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators, draws

from official national statistics. Ministries and national statistical offices provide these data to the respective international agencies which may then adjust them to ensure comparability across countries – and thus create discrepancies between national and international datasets. A further issue is that countries sometimes have recent data that have not yet been added to the global database. In addition, if the national statistical system does not generate the relevant data, the responsible international agency may fill the gap by using data collected through surveys sponsored or carried out by international agencies.

These adjustments, time lags and the use of other data sources create discrepancies between national and international datasets. This could affect the assessment of a country's progress – for a given MDG indicator, it could be on track based on the national dataset, for example, but off track based on the global dataset.

As international agencies continuously extend their sources of data and refine their methods, data can also be different in the United Nations MDG Indicators database. In some cases they also revise the data for earlier years as better information becomes available. This results in better-quality data, but it has the

disadvantage that the results in this 2012/13 Asia-Pacific MDGs Report are not comparable to those in previous editions.

Strengthened national statistical capacity is the ultimate solution to all of the above challenges. Therefore the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP partnership places great importance on boosting national statistical capacity to produce, analyse and disseminate statistics. Particularly important are issues such as: civil registration and vital statistics; disaggregated data; and the effective use of statistics for policy analysis and advocacy.

## Approaching the finish

The data in this chapter have highlighted Asia-Pacific efforts to meet the MDGs. Now, just two years away from the finishing line the likely outcome is becoming clearer: a mixed picture of achievement and shortfalls. The next chapter examines some of the underlying reasons for these results and highlights the key areas that will need to be addressed by any MDG successor framework.

### Box I-2 – Civil registration systems

#### Civil registration as a development imperative

Civil registration, according to the United Nations, “is defined as the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population as provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirements of a country”.

Every individual benefits from the legal documentation, identity and civil status that registration accords. Civil registration is the enabler for every individual to have a legal status in society, participate in public life, formal employment and gain access to services, such as health, education, social welfare and social protection. It underpins efforts to reduce child marriage, child labour, family separation, human trafficking and violence against women and children. Civil registration is a fundamental function and responsibility of the State.

Society benefits from the availability of high-quality statistics on life events; the civil registry is a precious and potent public good. It is the best source of vital statistics including births, deaths and causes of death and reflects the development status of a country and its capacity to ensure universal protection of all citizens. The information derived from a well-functioning civil registration system can be used to identify vulnerable groups, inform the development of policies and monitor their implementation and progress.

As pointed out by WHO, “Civil registration is something that all developed countries have and that developing countries need”. Therefore, civil registration needs to be placed at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda as an imperative for overcoming critical development challenges.

Sources: 1. See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/civilreg/>. 2. See [www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs324/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs324/en/).

### Chapter I Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> UNAIDS, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> ESCAP/ADB/UNDP, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> All the additional figures in parentheses are taken from [www.mdg-trade.org](http://www.mdg-trade.org).

<sup>5</sup> UN, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Green, Hale and Lockwood, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Easterly, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> These figures may vary depending on the coverage of the countries within the Asia-Pacific region. For example, some organizations do not include countries of the Middle East in their definition of Asia-Pacific region.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Monsod, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> See [www.unicef.org/sowc96/measure.htm](http://www.unicef.org/sowc96/measure.htm). This method was also used by Fukuda-Parr and Greenstein, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> See, for the technical note, UNICEF, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> See <http://portal.pmnch.org/downloads/low/KS17-low.pdf>.

# CHAPTER II

## Unfinished agenda and emerging issues

**The Asia-Pacific region has made considerable progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. But much remains to be done. A number of MDG targets could be missed by 2015. And the region has other significant concerns that were not included within the original goals or were covered inadequately. This chapter outlines the issues that will be of greatest importance in the years after 2015.**

Asia and the Pacific has made good progress towards the MDGs. As the previous chapter has highlighted, in many areas there have been reassuring advances – in poverty reduction, for example.

At the same time, it is likely that even after the target date of 2015, there will be a significant ‘unfinished agenda’. Progress has been disappointingly slow in a number of areas – as evident in the prevalence of hunger and food insecurity, high levels of maternal mortality and child malnutrition, along with gender inequality. In addition, the international community has fallen short on many of the components of Goal 8 – building an international partnership for development.

There are also many emerging threats – some of which were not fully addressed in the MDG framework – including rising inequality, the increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases and unplanned urbanization, along with climate change and many environmental pressures such as pollution and freshwater scarcity.

Policy makers also have to take into account that since the MDGs came into effect the development context in Asia and the Pacific has changed substantially. Countries across the region now have higher aspirations than they did 20 years ago. A number are already prominent players on the world stage, and they will be joined by other emerging powers whose economic and political weight is growing steadily. These countries will want to build on their platforms of MDG achievement and attain more ambitious levels of human development. The urgency of meeting the current MDGs therefore

remains, as the development community advances discussions toward shaping the post-2015 agenda.

### Persistent poverty

The Asia-Pacific achievement in poverty reduction is a matter of pride. As shown in Table II-11 between 1990 and 2011, the incidence of extreme poverty (below \$1.25 a day) dropped from 52 to 18 per cent. Nevertheless, that still leaves unacceptable levels of poverty, particularly in some middle income countries. Almost two-thirds of the world’s poor (\$1.25 PPP) live in this region.

Even China, which between 1990 and 2009 reduced the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 per day from 60.2 to 11.8 per cent of the population, still has over 156 million people living in poverty.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, reflecting the large populations of countries such as India, China, Pakistan and Indonesia, there are more poor people in middle-income countries than in low-income countries.

There are also large numbers of people living just above the extreme poverty line – in ‘near poverty’, who cannot manage a decent existence. If \$2 a day is used as a benchmark, the number of poor people doubles from 743 million to 1.64 billion. Therefore, about 900 million people living between \$1.25 and \$2 a day remain vulnerable, a number that has increased since 1990. At present, about 40.4 per cent of the population in the region subsists on less than \$2 a day. In the coming years, inclusive economic growth, which enables productive and decent job creation and

**Table II-1 – Extreme and near poverty in Asia and the Pacific, levels and incidence**

Year	\$1.25 a day poverty		\$2.0 a day poverty		Vulnerable (millions)
	Incidence (%)	Number of poor (millions)	Incidence (%)	Number of poor (millions)	
1990	51.7	1,627	76.8	2,417	790
2011	18.3	743	40.4	1,643	900

Note: Vulnerable population refers to those living above \$1.25 a day but below \$2 a day.

Source: Staff calculations based on poverty and inequality database from the World Bank accessed on 30 July 2013; and World Population Prospects 2012.

social inclusion to ensure equal access to economic opportunity, will continue to play an important role in reducing income poverty. Growth also helps governments with additional revenues to finance other equally important social objectives.

## Rising income inequality

Economic growth in Asia and the Pacific has helped increase the incomes of the poor, but it has boosted those of the rich even more. During the 2000s, while most Asia-Pacific economies enjoyed rapid economic growth, the benefits were being distributed unevenly.

The consequence has been a widening gap between rich and poor. One study suggests that, between the 1990s and the latest available year, the population-weighted mean Gini coefficient for the entire region rose from 33.5 to 37.5.<sup>2</sup> The same study shows that only 16 out of 30 countries that over the long run enjoyed positive mean annual growth also achieved lower income inequality. From the early 1990s to the mid- to late 2000s, income gaps widened in 14 of the 30 economies with comparable data: the Gini coefficient worsened in China, for example, from 32.4 to 42.5; in India, from 30.8 to 33.4; and in Indonesia, from 29.2 to 34.0.<sup>3</sup> As a result, the rates of reduction in poverty in these countries have not been commensurate with their fast growth rates.

In many countries this rise in inequality can be linked at least in part to the slow growth in agriculture, which continues to employ some of the region's poorest people and pays lower wages than industry or services. Agriculture still accounts for 51 per cent of total employment in South Asia and 40 per cent in East Asia.<sup>4</sup> Since 1990, GDP growth in East Asia has averaged over 8 per cent per year, but agriculture has grown more slowly. As a result, a significant proportion of

the population has neither contributed to, nor has benefited from, increased growth. Moreover, the share of agriculture in GDP declined much more rapidly than might be expected as part of a normal development trajectory. In East Asia, between 1970 and 2011 agriculture's share of GDP fell from 34.6 to 11 per cent. In South Asia, over the same period, it fell from 41.5 to 18 per cent.<sup>5</sup> Agriculture's much higher employment share than its share in GDP indicates its low productivity. Agriculture, being the refuge or the employer of last resort, on average, has been less productive, leading to greater levels of underemployment in agriculture which used to be referred to in classical literature as 'disguised unemployment'.

Income inequalities across the region are evident between urban and rural areas, between women and men, and between different social, ethnic and minority groups, as well as among vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities. However, because of unavailable data it is not possible to fully assess such inequalities or compare them between countries.

## Non-income inequality

Inequality is also evident in many other components of development – in education, health, food consumption, and housing and in access to safe drinking water – where multiple forms of deprivation tend to overlap and reinforce each other. Thus, poorer people are more likely to live in places that have limited or low-quality health services.<sup>6</sup> And workers with low incomes are less able to protect their health or develop their skills, which in turn reduces their productivity and their earning potential. These systematic, two-way social and economic interactions can reinforce cumulative disadvantage over generations.<sup>7</sup>

One way of illustrating this is to discount levels of development achievement by a factor proportional to

the extent of inequality – in a manner similar to that used for the inequality-adjusted human development index.<sup>8</sup> This report modifies this technique using a ‘social development index’ which combines just the education and life expectancy components of the HDI. Using data for 26 Asia-Pacific countries, each dimension’s average value can be discounted according to the country’s level of inequality in education and life expectancy. This indicates that the discount is particularly high in emerging economies, such as China, India, and Indonesia, where this inequality-adjusted social development index shows a potential loss of over 20 per cent (Figure II-1).

## Not enough decent and productive jobs

One reason why the region continues to experience significant levels of poverty and rising inequality is that economic growth is not generating sufficient decent and productive employment. Over the period 2000–2011, growth in GDP was not accompanied by a commensurate expansion in formal employment. Over the period 2000–2007, average annual GDP growth in the Asia-Pacific region was 8.5 per cent while formal employment growth was only 1.6 per cent. Similarly, in the period 2009–2011, while average annual GDP growth was 7.6 per cent, formal employment grew only by 1.0 per cent (Figure II-2).

Growth across countries in the region has not generated productive employment. This is due partly to technological change and labour substitution but also to the nature and pattern of growth. The problems tend to be greatest in countries that rely on extracting natural resources or the export of primary commodities – where growth is less likely to produce commensurate increases in employment. More can be done to channel resources, especially those from extractive industries, towards employment generation. Countries can also tailor macroeconomic policies to generate domestic demand, catalyse investment and increase employment. Thus far, however, most countries have been neglecting the rural farm and non-farm sectors, which account for a major share of the incomes of the poor and the ‘near poor’.

All this is happening at a time when, as populations increase, the labour force in many parts of the region is expanding. As a result, since 2002 the formal employment-population ratio in South and East Asia, for example, has dropped significantly. This does not, however, mean that people are likely to be unemployed. Without adequate systems of social protection to fall back on, people have to take whatever work they can find or generate, no matter how unproductive or

poorly compensated. Generally, a significant number of people work in the informal sector as self-employed workers, as own-account workers or as contributing family workers, and more than half are women.

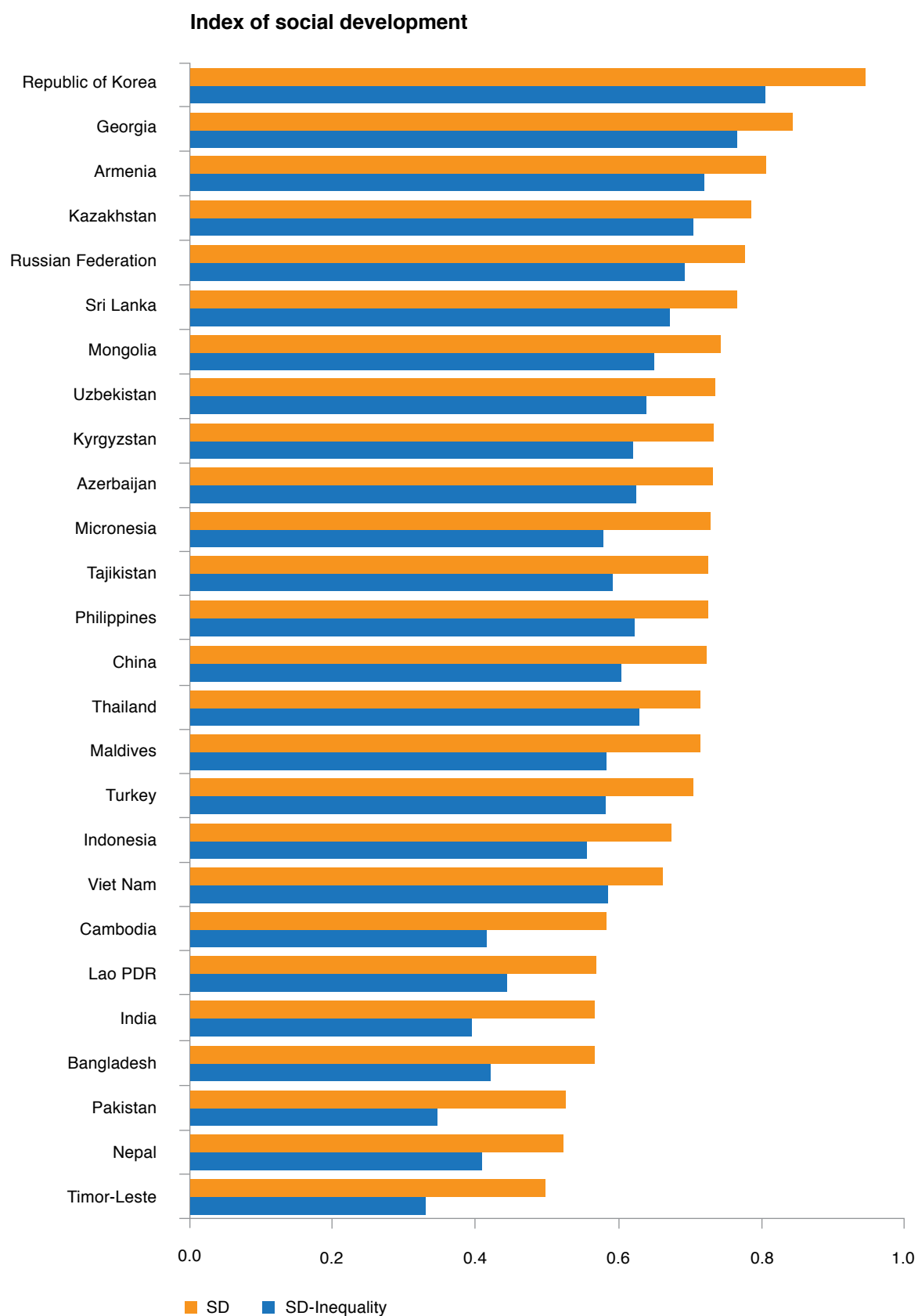
These people can be considered to be in vulnerable employment. Globally, on average around two-thirds of the workforce is considered vulnerable. But the proportion is significantly higher, close to 80 per cent, in South Asia where 486 million workers are in vulnerable employment.<sup>9</sup> Even in East Asia, which has had rapid economic growth, the proportion is around 50 per cent. Nor has there been much improvement in recent years. The proportion in vulnerable employment has been falling only slowly. Indeed, as a consequence of population increase, in some parts of the region the absolute numbers in vulnerable employment have risen – as in South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific over the period 2000 to 2011.<sup>10</sup>

Those in vulnerable employment make up most of what are considered as the ‘working poor’, and their numbers are increasing. About 1.1 billion workers, or 60 per cent of the Asia-Pacific region’s workers, are in vulnerable employment. The region accounts for almost 73 per cent of the world’s working poor – 422 million workers living with their families on less than \$1.25 per day.<sup>11</sup> Bangladesh, for example, has an unemployment rate of only 5 per cent, but more than half of those working are below the \$1.25 poverty line, and the proportion increases to 80 per cent when using the \$2 a day poverty line (Table II-2). Armenia on the other hand, which has stronger systems of social protection, has a 29 per cent unemployment rate, but among those who are employed less than 1 per cent are below the \$1.25 poverty line, though the proportion increases to 9 per cent on the basis of a \$2 poverty line.

Vulnerable employment is more likely to affect women. This is partly because many women work in agriculture. In Asia and the Pacific as a whole, 44 per cent of women work in agriculture compared to 36 per cent of men.<sup>12</sup> A high proportion of women in agriculture are unpaid family workers, and women are more likely than men to be employed at a low-productivity, subsistence level. But women also tend to be in vulnerable employment even outside agriculture. In Bangladesh, India and Nepal, for example, around 90 per cent of female workers in non-agricultural employment are in informal work.

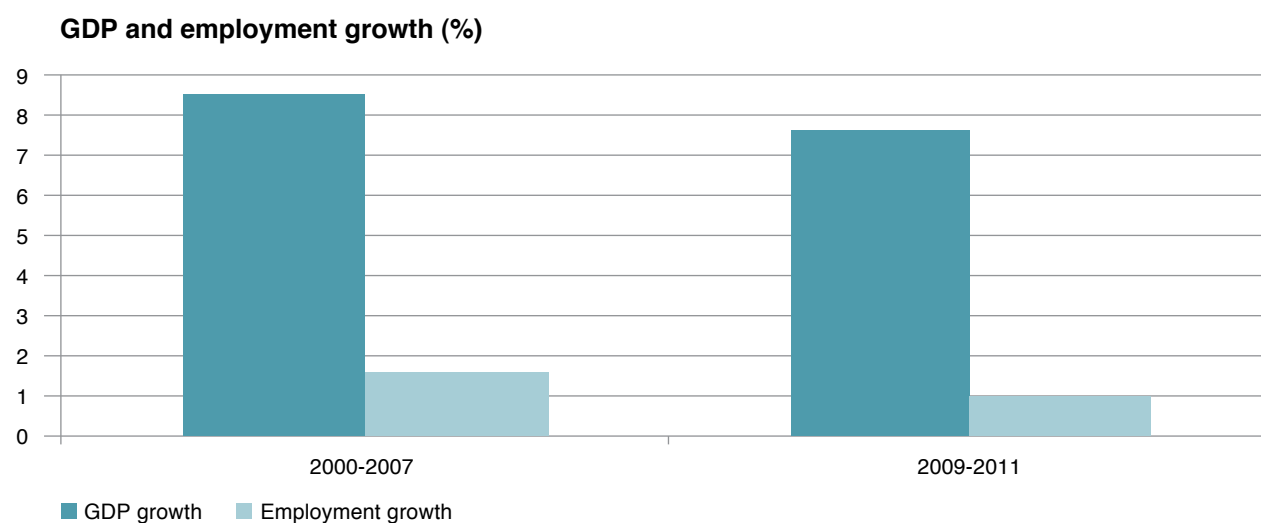
Unemployment or underemployment is also a concern for youth. Currently, the average rate of youth unemployment in Asia and the Pacific is around 11 per cent, more than double the rate for the total working-age population. Across the region, more than

**Figure II-1 – Inequality-adjusted social development index of selected countries in Asia and the Pacific, 2011**



Note: SD = social development index which is composed of the education and life expectancy components of the HDI.  
 Source: ESCAP (2013), based on data from UNDP (2011, HDR), World Bank (2012).



**Figure II-2 – Annual growth in GDP and in formal employment in selected Asia-Pacific developing economies, 2000 to 2011**

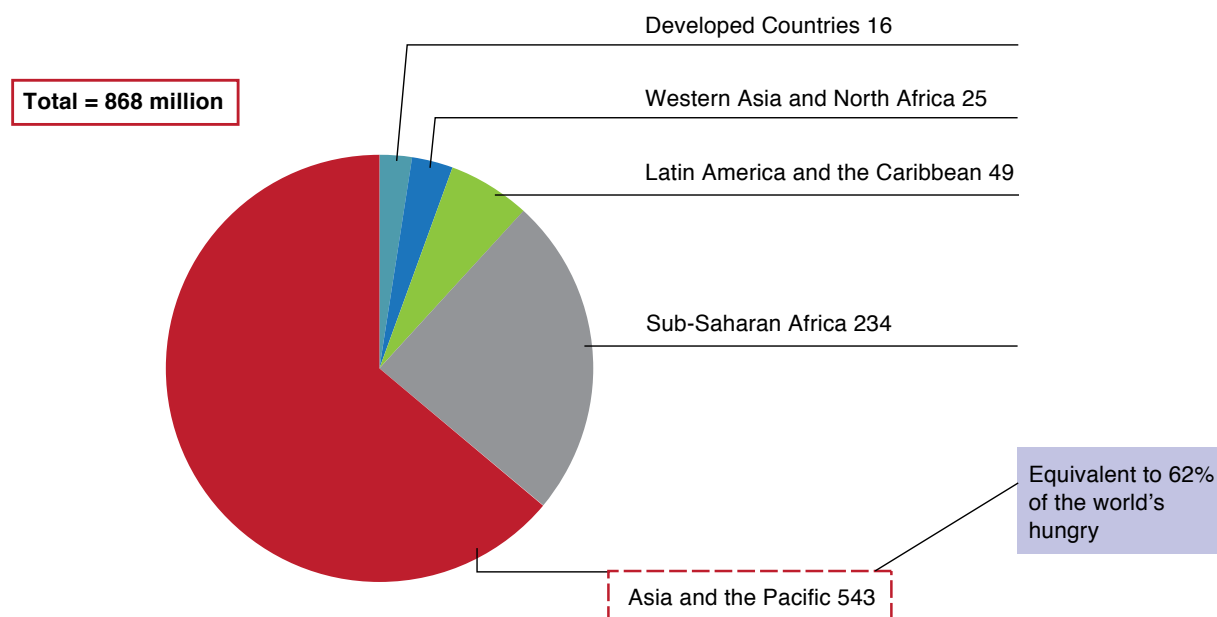
Note: Calculations for annual GDP growth rates (%) and employment growth rates (%) are based on 17 developing countries in the region, namely China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. The regional weighted average of the GDP growth rates is based on GDP figures at market prices in United States dollars in 2011 (at 2000 prices) used as weights. The data for India and Pakistan refer to the fiscal years spanning 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 and 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 respectively, while that of Sri Lanka refers to calendar year. In the case of employment growth, 2011 is used as the weight.

Sources: ESCAP calculations based on ILO, LABORSTA Internet; and ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market (Geneva, 2011), and ESCAP online statistical database. Available at [http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/WCMS\\_114240/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/WCMS_114240/lang--en/index.htm) and <http://www.unescap.org/stat/data/statdb/dataExplorer.aspx>.

**Table II-2 – Working poor in selected countries of Asia and the Pacific**

Country	Proportion of labour force who are 'working poor', at \$1.25 a day poverty line (%)	Proportion of labour force who are 'working poor', at \$2 a day poverty line (%)	Year	Unemployment rate (%)	Year
Afghanistan	38.0	73.6	2005	8.5	2005
Armenia	0.7	9.0	2008	28.6	2008
Azerbaijan	0.7	6.1	2008	5.4	2011
Bangladesh	50.1	80.1	2005	5.0	2009
Bhutan	26.9	50.8	2003	3.1	2011
Cambodia	25.1	53.1	2007	0.2	2011
Fiji	18.5	49.7	2005	8.6	2007
Georgia	10.7	26.8	2008	15.1	2011
India	39.2	74.5	2005	3.5	2010
Indonesia	19.8	52.0	2005	6.6	2011
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	0.9	6.2	2005	10.5	2008
Kazakhstan	0.0	1.1	2007	5.4	2011
Kyrgyzstan	1.5	25.5	2007	8.2	2008
Lao PDR	31.5	64.0	2008	1.4	2005
Maldives	1.3	11.2	2004	14.4	2006
Mongolia	11.3	32.0	2002	3.3	2005
Myanmar	31.1	60.8	2005	6.0	1990
Nepal	50.4	74.1	2003	2.7	2008
Pakistan	19.2	57.0	2006	5.0	2008
Papua New Guinea	34.0	56.3	1996	7.7	1990
Philippines	19.0	40.9	2006	7.0	2011
Russian Federation	0.0	0.0	2008	6.6	2011
Solomon Islands	21.5	44.2	2005	31.9	1999
Sri Lanka	5.8	26.0	2007	4.9	2010
Thailand	0.0	10.1	2004	0.7	2011
Viet Nam	12.0	37.3	2008	2.0	2011

Source: ILO Key Indicators of Labour Market (KILM) 2011.

**Figure II-3 – Global undernourishment across regions, 2010-2012 (millions)**

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2012.

80 million young people are looking for jobs. Lacking economic and social opportunities, many are forced into high-risk and vulnerable forms of employment.

### Continuing hunger and food insecurity

Another major problem for the region is food insecurity. The minimum per capita dietary energy requirement used by the FAO to assess undernourishment is 1,800 calories per day. On this basis, there has been some progress. Between 1990-92 and 2012, the proportion of the Asia-Pacific population estimated to be undernourished fell from 24 to 14 per cent. Nevertheless, this still leaves 542 million people undernourished. Asia and the Pacific accounts for more than 60 per cent of the world's hungry people (Figure II-3).<sup>13</sup>

The situation is worst in South Asia where the proportion of people undernourished is 18 per cent, followed by the Pacific (12 per cent), East Asia (12 per cent), South-East Asia (11 per cent) and Central Asia (7 per cent) (Figure II-4).

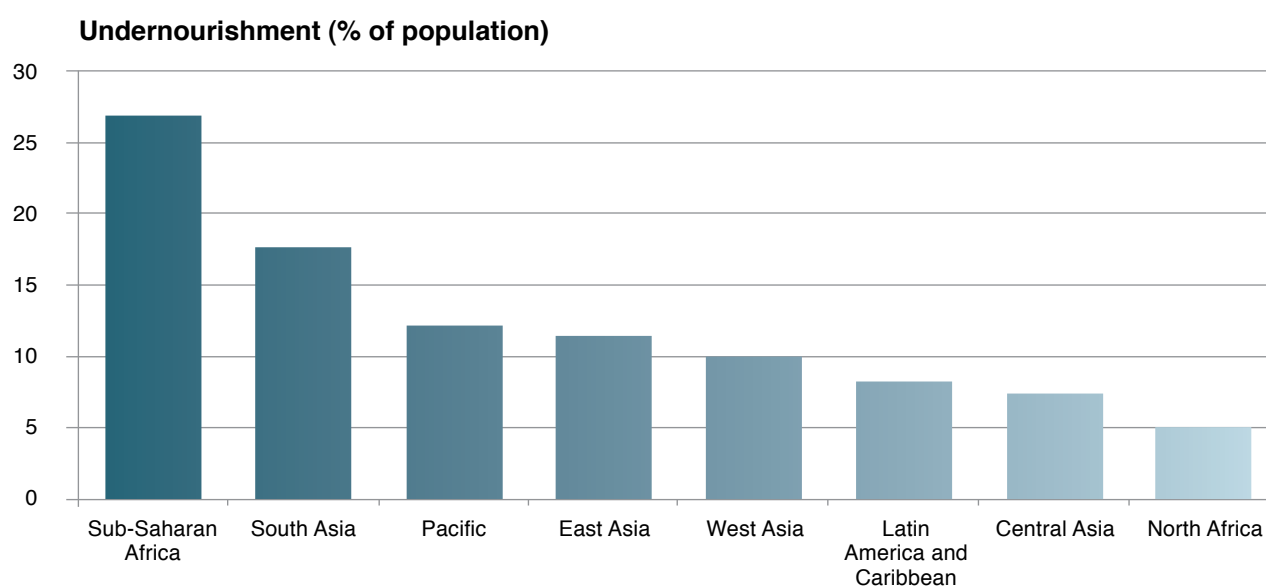
A particular concern is the level of undernutrition among women. This is a significant public health problem. As well as damaging women's health, this

reduces their labour productivity and affects the nutrition and health of their children.

Undernourishment is high in a number of other countries, including Timor-Leste, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, Lao PDR, Georgia, and Mongolia (Figure II-5).

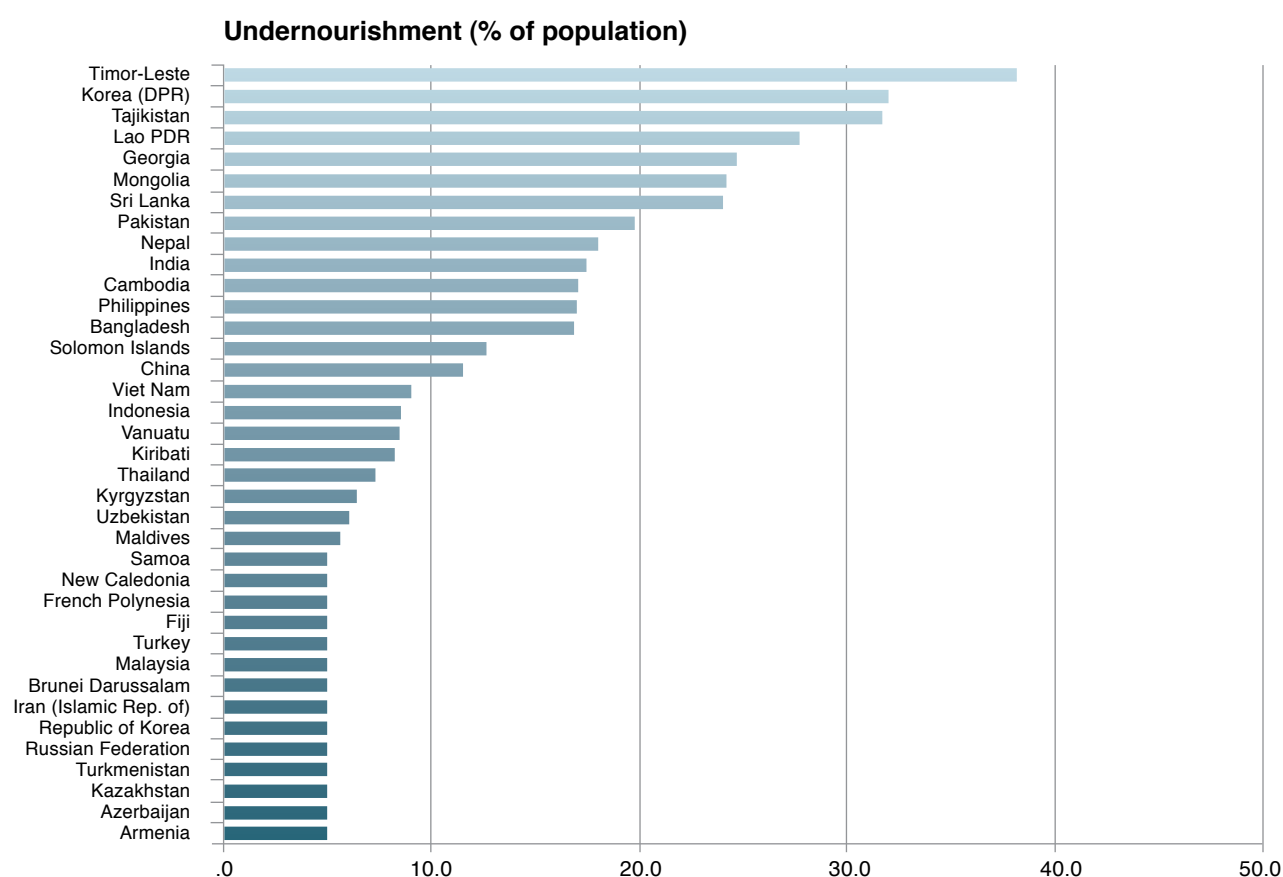
Another important measure of undernutrition is the proportion of children who are underweight for their age. On this indicator too, the problems are most severe in South and South-West Asia where on average 34 per cent of children are underweight – with the highest figures in India, at 44 per cent in 2006, and Bangladesh, at 36.4 per cent in 2011. Even in South-East Asia, which has made the greatest progress, as many as five out of 11 countries have more than one-fifth of their children undernourished. This puts children's lives at risk. In Asia and the Pacific, around 3 million children die each year before reaching the age of five, and around half these deaths are from causes related to malnutrition, poor hygiene and lack of access to safe water and adequate sanitation.

For nutrition, there are also various composite indicators. The 'global hunger index' from the International Food Policy Research Institute, for example, is based on a simple average of three indicators: the percentage of the population undernourished; the

**Figure II-4 – Levels of undernourishment in subregions of Asia and the Pacific, % of population, 2012**

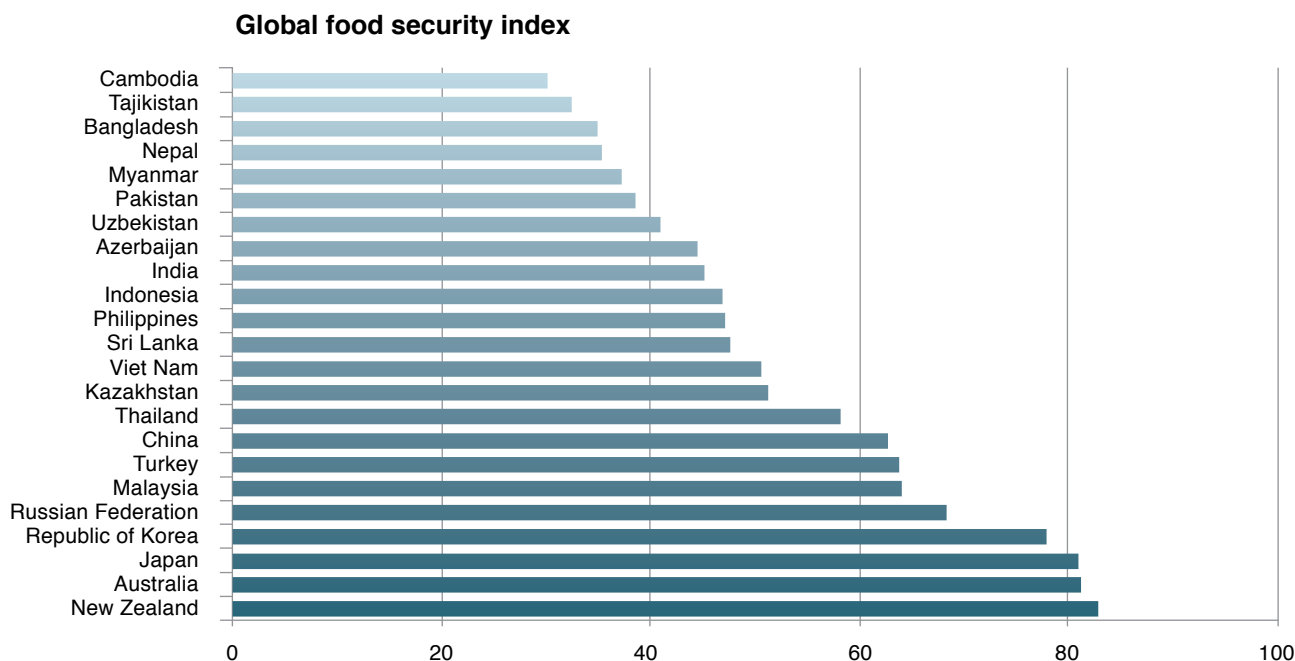
Notes: Proportion of the population estimated to be at risk of caloric inadequacy. The regional classification in the FAO data differs from the UNESCAP regional classifications.

Source: FAO, State of food insecurity in the world 2012. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/i3027e00.htm>

**Figure II-5 – Prevalence of undernourishment in Asia-Pacific economies, 2012**

Notes: Proportion of the population estimated to be at risk of caloric inadequacy. This is the traditional FAO hunger indicator, adopted as the official MDG indicator for Goal 1, target 1.9. The countries in the list from Samoa to Armenia have undernourishment rates below 5 per cent of the total population.

Source: FAO, State of food insecurity in the world 2012. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/i3027e00.htm>

**Figure II-6 – Food security index in Asia-Pacific developing economies, 2012**

Notes: All scores 0-100 where 100 represents the greatest security. The index combines indicators from three categories (affordability, availability and quality and safety) for the year 2012.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit. Available at <http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/>

percentage of under-five children underweight; and the under-five mortality rate. On this basis, Afghanistan again has the worst score, over 40 per cent, as a consequence of high levels on all three indicators, with Tajikistan second at 26 per cent, with a high score primarily on undernourishment.

Another composite index is the Economist Intelligence Unit's 'global food security index'. Across a set of 105 countries, this combines measures of food affordability, availability, quality and safety. Any country which scores below 50 is potentially food insecure (Figure II-6). On this basis, in 2012 the least food-secure country in Asia and the Pacific was Cambodia with an index of 30.0, followed by Tajikistan (32.3), Bangladesh (34.6) and Nepal (35.2). New Zealand was the most food secure, with an index of 82.7, followed by Australia (81.1) and Japan (80.7). Figures for Afghanistan were not available.

Good nutrition depends not just on the quantity of food consumed but also its quality, and in particular the extent to which it provides essential micronutrients, notably vitamin A, iron, and iodine. Deficiencies in these micronutrients can impair the mental and physical development of children, while also reducing the productivity of adults. Many countries have medium to extreme levels of vitamin and mineral deficiency,<sup>14</sup> with serious social and economic consequences,

causing India, for example, to lose an estimated 2.5 per cent of its GDP.

For the poor, food constitutes a large proportion of their budgets so their capacity to consume sufficient nutritious food will be sensitive to prices. Over recent years, food prices have been volatile and at times have risen steeply, so people often have to eat less or lower-quality food. In fact, following the food crisis that hit Asia and the Pacific in the mid-2000s, prices have remained quite high. Food security is also affected by climate change. This is likely to hit the Asia-Pacific region hard and have a significant impact on food production.

The region will need to work towards maintaining steady food supplies and stable prices. Among other things, this will involve accelerating investments in agricultural R&D and rural infrastructure especially roads and irrigation. Asia and the Pacific can also help safeguard domestic food availability by setting up regional food reserves and establishing regional agreements on freer trade in foodgrains and other food.

### **An abiding bias against women**

Despite the impressive progress in many areas, and the successes in achieving gender parity at the three

educational levels, the region is still a long way from gender equality. Across Asia and the Pacific, women face severe deficits in health and education and in their access to power, voice and rights.

The starkest evidence for this is skewed male-female sex ratios, especially at birth and among children. In many countries households have strong preferences for male children, and take measures to exercise these. The world average for the male-female sex ratio is 101.7, but in East Asia it is 106.2 and in South Asia 105.7.<sup>15</sup> This reflects not only the rise in the number of boys due to prenatal sex selection, but also the cumulative toll of excess female mortality. Sex ratios also differ within countries according to geography, ethnicity and religion.<sup>16</sup> This alarming phenomenon is what Amartya Sen has referred to as ‘missing women’: in 2007, it was estimated that in seven Asian countries 100 million women were missing.<sup>17</sup>

There have been some improvements in women’s health, notably in East Asia, where women live longer than the world average. In South Asia, on the other hand, women continue to live for fewer years than the world average.<sup>18</sup> A major reason for low life expectancy of women in South Asia is maternal mortality, where around 217 mothers died for every 100,000 live births in 2010 due to inequities in the provision of health services with regard to antenatal care, and deliveries attended by skilled health personnel, as well as high levels of unintended pregnancies. Maternal mortality is the leading cause of death among adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 19 in the region.<sup>19</sup>

There has been steady progress in narrowing the gender gap in education. The region overall has achieved gender parity on primary and secondary levels, but there are significant differences between subregions. East Asia and the Pacific are ahead of South Asia at all levels, and noticeably at the tertiary level. In East Asia, girls outnumber boys at this level, with a ratio of female to male enrolment of 108.8; in South Asia, on the other hand, the ratio is only 72.2.

A continuing problem in many countries is gender-based violence. This includes physical and sexual violence from intimate partners and others, and can be a reflection of social norms and the relative powerlessness of women in the home. Although there is a lack of international comparable statistics, several surveys point to the pervasiveness of this problem. In surveys conducted between 1995 and 2006, the proportion of women who reported experiencing physical violence at least once in their lifetime was more than 10 per cent in China and the Philippines, above 20 per cent in India and Cambodia, and nearly 50 per cent in Australia.<sup>20</sup>

### *Women’s economic status*

Women in Asia and the Pacific are less likely than men to own assets. This is evident in the ownership of land. Around two-thirds of women’s employment in South Asia is in agriculture and in East Asia the proportion is around 40 per cent – yet women head only 7 per cent of farms, compared with 20 per cent in most other global regions.<sup>21</sup>

A more general lack of progress in gender empowerment is evident from indicators on women’s participation in non-agricultural wage employment: between 1990 and 2009, across the region this increased only marginally, from 28 to 31 per cent. In most Asia-Pacific countries, women are more likely than men to be informal workers – a consequence of their limited skills, restricted mobility and gender norms. In addition, women have the load of unpaid domestic work to which they devote large amounts of time and energy.

### *Women’s voice*

Gender equality will also require more equal political participation. The MDGs did not specify a goal or a target in this respect. However, one indicator captures the percentage of parliamentarians who are women. On this basis progress remains slow. Compared to other regions Asia and the Pacific has the world’s second-lowest percentage of women parliamentarians. Even Asian countries with high levels of development have low proportions of women in their national legislatures, as in Japan (11 per cent in the lower house) and the Republic of Korea (16 per cent). The Pacific subregion, despite achieving gender parity in education, has four of the world’s six countries with no women legislators.

## **Limited achievements in health**

Health is the MDG sector where the Asia-Pacific region has performed least well. Not only is it off track on maternal mortality and universal access to reproductive health, it is also likely to miss the child health goals. The region has, however, performed better on communicable diseases: the spread of tuberculosis has been checked and efforts to control HIV are also bearing fruit.

Why have some countries achieved better health outcomes than others? The 2011-12 Asia-Pacific MDG report concluded that economic growth played a part, but that other factors were more important. One is overall health expenditure: countries with higher per

**Table II-3 – Projected losses from NCDs, selected Asian countries, cumulatively from 2006 to 2015, \$ billions**

Country	Foregone GDP in 2006	Foregone GDP in 2015	Cumulative loss by 2015
India	1.35	1.96	16.68
China	1.01	1.84	13.81
Indonesia	0.33	0.53	4.18
Pakistan	0.15	0.21	1.72
Thailand	0.12	0.18	1.49
Bangladesh	0.08	0.14	1.14

Note: Countries are those in which cumulative losses by 2015 will exceed \$1 billion.

Source: Abegunde and others. 2007.

capita health expenditures have generally done better in reducing maternal, infant and child mortality. And those with higher public health expenditure, and greater numbers of health personnel, tend to be more successful at reducing the proportion of underweight children. Other important factors include the control of corruption in government, and adequate infrastructure, particularly roads.

Also vital for children's health is the status of their mothers. Women, and parents in general, who are literate, well-informed and empowered are in a much stronger position to decide on their number of children and care for them. There is a strong correlation between gender empowerment, fertility and the reduction of child mortality.

## The rise of non-communicable diseases

As well as having to address the burden of communicable diseases, countries across the region are facing rising levels of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – an area neglected in the MDG Framework. NCDs include cardiovascular disease, cancer, and chronic respiratory disease and diabetes, all of which are becoming increasingly prevalent – a consequence of, among other things, ageing populations, unhealthy diets, exposure to harmful factors such as tobacco and air pollution, and sedentary lifestyles, which are often associated with urbanization. WHO projects that by 2020 the Asia-Pacific region will record the world's greatest number of NCD deaths.<sup>22</sup> The International Diabetes Federation has estimated that over 200 million people in Asia already have diabetes – a number projected to exceed 300 million by 2030.<sup>23</sup>

NCDs have become a particularly serious threat in the Pacific. The Cook Islands, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa and Tonga, for example, have

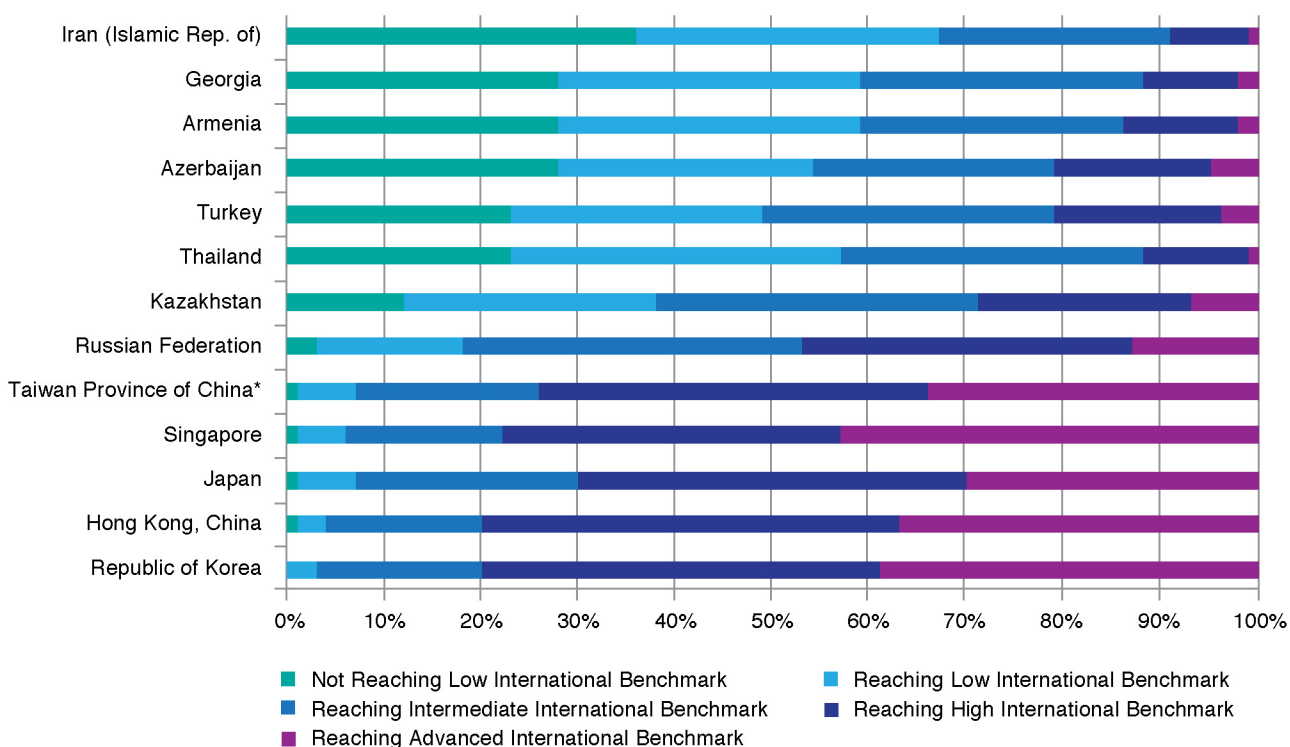
obesity rates over 40 per cent; and Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Samoa have diabetes prevalence rates of above 20 per cent.<sup>24</sup> The increasing burden of NCDs not only causes greater human suffering but also has serious economic consequences – with large projected losses in GDP (Table II-3).<sup>25</sup>

Since NCDs are often chronic and lead to disability they can have serious financial implications. In India, for example, the risk of catastrophic spending for a household is 160 per cent higher for hospitalization due to cancer, as compared with hospitalization due to a communicable disease.<sup>26</sup> The poor in several countries in Asia are particularly vulnerable to some risk factors: men in the poorest quintile are, for example, more likely to smoke.

## Low-quality education

The Asia-Pacific region has performed well in providing access to basic education. By 2011, net primary enrolment had reached 95 per cent and by 2015 the region should meet the target of universal primary enrolment. Nevertheless, as many as 18 million children of primary school age are out of school. The region has three of the world's top five largest out-of-school populations. These are Pakistan (5.4 million in 2011), India (1.7 million in 2010) and the Philippines (1.5 million in 2009).<sup>27</sup> The children with less access to education often live in war-torn zones or remote communities, belong to ethnic minorities or have disabilities.

Even for children who are attending school there are still major concerns about the quality of their education. Across the region, standards vary considerably. This was demonstrated, for example, in the 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study which surveyed 52 school systems across the world. The top

**Figure II-7 – Performance at international benchmarks of mathematics achievement, 4<sup>th</sup> grade**

\* ADB recognizes this member by the name Taipei, China.

Note: Those achieving the 'high benchmark' were able to apply their knowledge and understanding to solve problems in various domains of mathematics and use data in tables and graphs to solve problems. The minimum for the low benchmark is defined as the mastery of some basic mathematical knowledge, including adding and subtracting with whole numbers and the ability to recognize familiar geometric shapes, and read and complete simple bar graphs and tables.

Source: Ina V.S. Mullis, Michael O. Martin, Pierre Foy, and Alka Arora, (2012), TIMSS 2011 International Results in Mathematics, TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, Boston.

five performers in fourth-grade mathematics all came from the Asia-Pacific region: Singapore, the Republic of Korea, and Hong Kong, China, followed by Taiwan Province of China<sup>28</sup>, and Japan. The majority of fourth-grade students in these school systems reached the study's 'high benchmark'. On the other hand, in a number of other countries as many as one in five fourth-graders failed to reach the low benchmark – including those in systems in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Thailand. The results of fourth-grade science and eighth-grade mathematics and science tests show a similar picture (Figure II-7).

Relatively few countries measure education competence. India is one country which does and has found that a large proportion of primary school children do not meet the expected standards for reading, writing and arithmetic; these students are at least two grades behind their expected learning levels.<sup>29</sup>

Moreover, the Asia-Pacific region's development needs will demand improvements at different levels

of education – in secondary, as well as technical and vocational education. At present, only around 70 per cent of children of secondary school education age are attending secondary school; the situation is worst in South and South-East Asia where the proportion is only around 60 per cent (Table II-4). Inadequate education and skills development not only reduces human potential, it also hampers the region's efforts to achieve a more inclusive form of growth. Asia and the Pacific needs to place greater focus on vocational education – to develop skills for its growing industry and service sectors. Currently, vocational education accounts for only about 5 per cent of total secondary education.

Low attainment is partly a consequence of low public expenditure. The world average for public expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP is 4.8 per cent. But the proportion is significantly lower in parts of the Asia-Pacific region: 3.5 per cent in Central Asia, 3.3 per cent in East Asia and 4.4 per cent in South and West Asia.<sup>30</sup> Government spending on education, relative to other sectors, was also somewhat lower in Asia and the Pacific countries than in the world's low-income and lower-middle-income countries.

**Table II-4 – Secondary education enrolment ratios**

Region/Subregion	All secondary 2010	Lower secondary 2010	Upper secondary 2010	Vocational/All secondary (%) Latest (2007-2011)
Asia and the Pacific	71	85	60	5
East Asia	85	96	81	16
Central Asia	93	96	82	9
South-East Asia	62	77	52	8
South Asia	60	76	47	2
Pacific (a)	76	90	63	NA

Note: (a) Enrolment data are for 2007; NA = not available.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics online database. (<http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>. (Accessed 27 November 2012).

## Heightened vulnerability and economic insecurity

The post-2015 framework for Asia and the Pacific will thus need to address many long-standing and persistent problems, but overlaid on these are a number of other trends. These too have deep historical roots. These include rapid demographic transformation, and threats to the natural environment, to which are now added the increasing impacts of disasters and climate change.

One common thread through many of these issues is heightened vulnerability. Across the region, households are facing higher levels of risk. Many of these are related to events in the household itself such as death, disability or loss of employment of the breadwinner; or catastrophic expenditures resulting from illness of a family member. Moreover, with ageing populations, there are now more elderly people whose lifetime savings are no longer adequate to cope with the rising costs of living and health care.

In addition to household-related risks, there are increasing exposures to more general risks from outside. People, goods, capital and information are moving around the world faster than ever, allowing events and crises to propagate swiftly across economies, markets and societies. Events that happen in any one country can have rapid repercussions on neighbouring countries, regions, and the world over. The Asia-Pacific region has in recent years been subjected, for example, to the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 and since 2008 to the global financial crises. Food price rises have also affected countries across the region, especially net food importing countries. The region also experienced the fast spread of SARS in 2003 and is exposed continuously to emerging and re-emerging public health threats.

Poverty in the region is also increasingly related to environmental factors and resource constraints. A further source of heightened vulnerability is climate change – with many countries facing more-frequent droughts, floods, cyclones and typhoons. While everyone is affected by these risks, the poor are the least able to cope.

Households face increasing risks may also be less able to rely on traditional forms of social protection – from the extended family or the community. This is partly the result of changing values and mores, but also of factors such as migration, which erode traditional community bonds. As costs of living rise, household members find it harder to extend mutual support beyond the immediate family.

Meanwhile, formal systems of social protection remain weak – more than 60 per cent of the population of the Asia-Pacific region remain without coverage. Only 30 per cent of persons above the retirement age in Asia and the Pacific receive a pension on average, while only 10 per cent of the unemployed receive any benefits.<sup>31</sup>

## Rapid demographic change

The global population is expected to grow to over 9 billion by 2050. The combined effect of rates of both mortality and fertility is altering age structures and creating sizable older populations in some countries, alongside a bulge in the youth population in other countries. However, in some developing countries, this shift will arrive later.<sup>32</sup> Several countries in the region face increasing youth unemployment and high dependency ratios of the elderly at the same time. By 2050, most people aged over 60 will live in Asia.



South and South-West Asia is the most youthful subregion. In East and North-East Asia and the Pacific, the proportion is about 16 per cent. This ‘bulge’ population group could provide a demographic dividend and help boost economic growth, but it could also lead to rising youth unemployment.

Youth unemployment is emerging as a key concern, not just in LDCs, but in middle- and high-income economies. In Hong Kong, China; the Philippines; New Zealand; and Taiwan Province of China<sup>33</sup>, one in around six young people is unemployed. In Indonesia, the ratio is one in five. This is also an issue in the Pacific Island States: youths make up nearly 60 per cent of the unemployed population in Samoa and 50 per cent in Vanuatu. In the Marshall Islands, economically active youths are nearly three times more likely to be unemployed than their adult counterparts.<sup>34</sup>

At the other end of the scale, with increasing ageing amongst Asia-Pacific households, coupled with higher life expectancy, elderly people are seeing their lifetime savings dwindle so that they find it difficult to cope with the rising costs of living and health care.

## Unplanned urbanization

Asia and the Pacific is experiencing rapid growth in its cities. Since 1990, the region’s urban population has increased by more than 754 million – and the proportion of people living in urban areas is likely to grow – from 42 per cent in 2010, to 53 per cent by 2030, and to 63 per cent by 2050 when the urban population could be 3.3 billion.<sup>35</sup> Prior to the 1990s, more than 60 per cent of population growth in urban areas was the result of internal migration. This proportion is likely to have increased further.

Over the period 1990-2015, the number of Asian cities with 1 million or more people is likely to increase from 118 to 272, while the number of mega-cities, with more than 10 million people is expected to increase from 12 to 16. Seven of the world’s most populous cities are in Asia: Tokyo, Delhi, Mumbai, Shanghai, Kolkata, Dhaka and Karachi.<sup>36</sup>

The unplanned and rapid urbanization is mostly due to urban-biased development driven by globalization, which is linking cities, in particular those in coastal areas, to the metropolitan centres. Increasingly, industrial activities are concentrated in areas from which it is easier to ship products for export. Urban bias is also manifested in the decline in investment in agriculture and rural activities and the consequent lack of opportunities in rural areas.

## Pressure on the environment

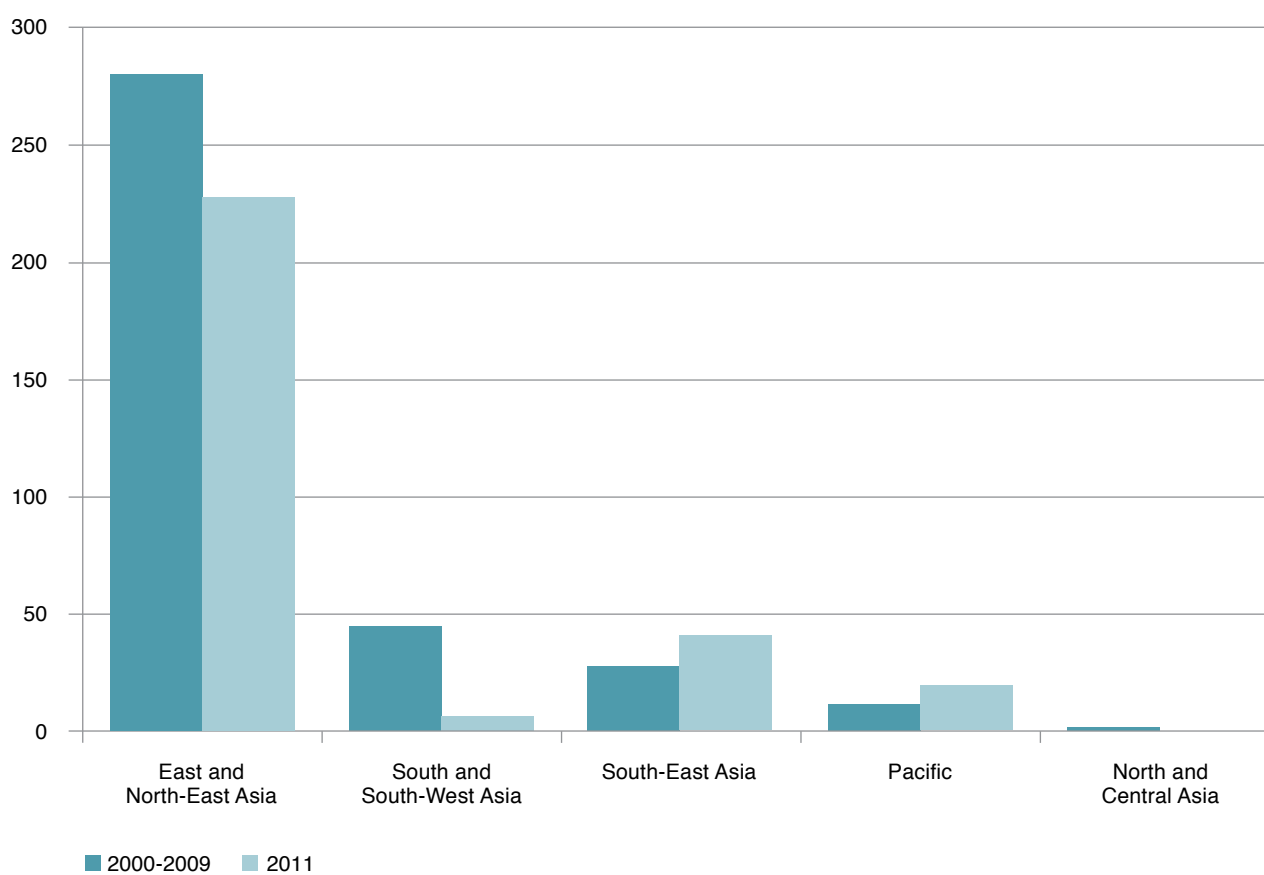
Economic growth, driven by industry and manufacturing, has largely relied on the extraction of natural resources, particularly for energy. Indeed, compared with other global regions, growth in Asia and the Pacific is becoming more resource intensive. In 2008, compared with the world as a whole, the region used almost three times as much in terms of resources to produce one unit of GDP.<sup>37</sup>

As many as 1.7 billion people in Asia and the Pacific rely on solid fuels. Moreover, the demand for energy will continue to grow. While global demand is projected to increase by 1.5 per cent annually, between 2005 and 2030, growth rates in Asia and the Pacific are likely to be much higher, at 2.4 per cent per year.<sup>38</sup> In the Pacific, more than 70 per cent of the population still lack access to on-grid electricity. Between 1990 and 2008, total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion in transportation rose by 161 per cent in Asia, compared with the world average of 44 per cent.

Current and predicted consumption and production patterns are increasingly unsustainable and are taking a severe toll on the environment, posing a real threat to the planet – with heightened levels of air and water pollution. There are also serious economic implications: it has been estimated, for example, that the health costs of air and water pollution in China amount to about 4.4 per cent of its GDP.<sup>39</sup> The brunt of these costs is borne by vulnerable populations. They are often directly exposed to this pollution: they live in precarious housing, in environmentally degraded areas, and are unable to protect themselves against the health and socio-economic consequences.

Countries in Asia and the Pacific are becoming increasingly concerned about environmental limits. Many vital ecosystem goods and services continue to decline, due to poor natural resource management decisions and increased per capita consumption alongside deprivations amongst the poor. However, this is an issue that also has to be addressed at regional and global levels, or the problems may simply be shifted from one country to another. For example, China has improved forest cover through stringent regulations, but is now importing more wood, suggesting greater pressure on forests elsewhere.

Water supply issues are also becoming more complex. These have to be addressed through water sharing at different levels – sub-nationally within countries, or intra-regionally between river systems such as the Ganga-Brahmaputra or the Mekong.

**Figure II-8 – Economic losses from Asia-Pacific disasters by subregion, 2000-2009 and 2011 (\$ billion)**

Notes: The estimates are based on the reported figure in current US dollars of the economic losses due to natural disasters.  
 Source: The Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2012: Reducing Vulnerability and Exposure to Disasters. Available at <http://www.unescap.org/idd/pubs/Asia-Pacific-Disaster-Report-2012.pdf>

## Exposure to disasters

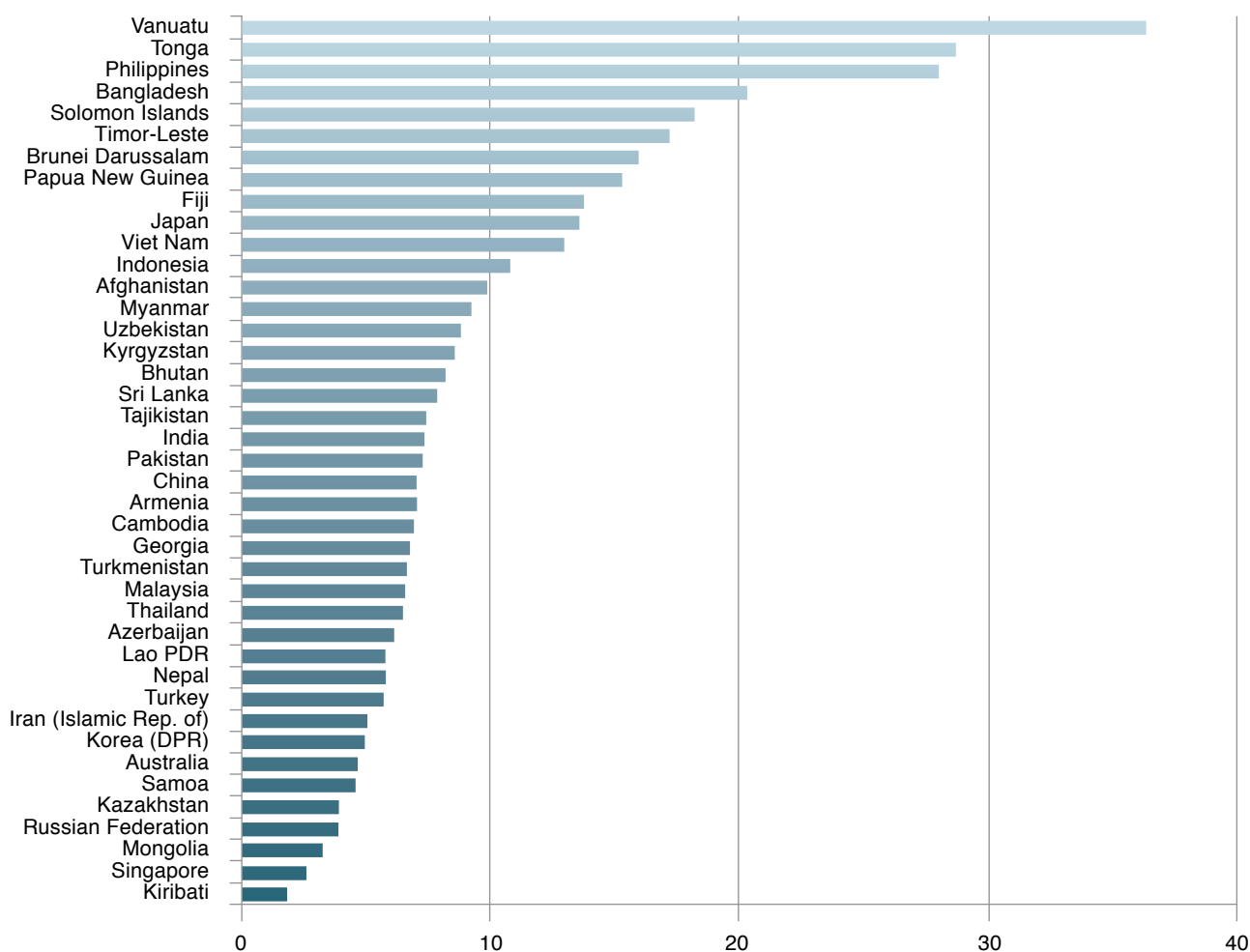
The Asia-Pacific region faces increasing disaster risks. For example, between 1970 and 2010, the average number of people exposed to yearly flooding in Asia and the Pacific increased from 30 million to 64 million, and the population living in cyclone-prone areas grew from 72 million to 121 million.<sup>40</sup> Over the same period, 75 per cent of global disaster deaths were in Asia and the Pacific. Risk exposure of vulnerable groups needs to be reduced. Moreover, disasters often lead to development reversals. Therefore, to sustain positive human development outcomes, investments in disaster risk reduction will be necessary.

There are also huge economic costs (Figure II-8). In 2011 alone, more than 80 per cent of global losses due to disasters were in the Asia-Pacific region – \$294 billion – as a result of the Japan earthquake and tsunami and the South-East Asia floods. The subregions that suffered most in 2011 were East and North-East Asia

which had 77 per cent of the overall economic losses, followed by South-East Asia (14 per cent), and the Pacific (6.7 per cent). In Thailand, the 2011 floods were estimated to have cost \$45 billion, and recovery and reconstruction cost \$25 billion,<sup>41</sup> while in the last quarter of 2011 Thailand's GDP was 9 per cent lower than in the previous year.<sup>42</sup>

The overall scale of the risk has been assessed in the World Risk Report 2012.<sup>43</sup> The report considers a wide range of factors. It looks at exposure to natural hazards, and susceptibility in relation to infrastructure, nutrition, housing and economic conditions. It also considers coping capacity and early-warning systems, and medical services – as well as adaptation capacity in relation to future natural events and climate change. On this basis, of the 15 countries at greatest risk, nine are in Asia and the Pacific. The report also includes a global risk index which represents the risk of becoming the victim of a disaster as a result of natural hazards (Figure II-9). Within the Asia-Pacific region the

Figure II-9 – Global risk index in Asia-Pacific economies, 2012 (%)



Notes: The estimates are based on the risk of becoming the victim of a natural disaster.

Source: The Global Risk Report 2012. United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU - EHS), Alliance Development Works/BündnisEntwicklungHilft and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Available at <http://www.ehs.unu.edu/file/get/10487.pdf>

countries most vulnerable are Vanuatu where the risk is 36 per cent, followed by Tonga (29 per cent) and the Philippines (28 per cent).

Moreover, the impacts of major natural disasters often go beyond national boundaries. As Asia-Pacific economies become increasingly linked through regional value chains, natural catastrophes occurring in one country have significant spillover effects elsewhere, as was witnessed during the floods in Thailand.

## The rising threat of climate change

In recent years, countries in the Asia-Pacific region have been the most vulnerable to climate-related disasters and could be among the hardest hit by a changing climate, especially small island developing states that

face rising sea levels.<sup>44</sup> The most recent Special Report of the IPCC on disaster risk and climate adaptation concludes that there is a need for much smarter development and economic policies, with a focus on disaster risk reduction and adaptation.<sup>45</sup>

Climate change will have an impact across the MDGs. It can undermine both food security and livelihoods.<sup>46</sup> It can depress agricultural productivity and increase food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in children.<sup>47</sup> It can also increase vector-borne diseases, multiplying the disease burden.

There will also be huge economic costs. The Asian Development Bank estimates that in South-East Asia, the economic cost of climate change could be equivalent to a loss of 6.7 per cent of GDP per year by 2100 – more than twice the world average.<sup>48</sup>

While much of the accumulation of CO<sub>2</sub> has come from historic emissions by developed countries, an increasing contribution is coming from Asia and the Pacific. Between 1990 and 2008, the total amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion in transportation in Asia rose by 161 per cent, compared with the world average of 44 per cent.

## Tasks for the coming decades

This chapter has highlighted the shortfalls that are likely to remain in the region even after the 2015 MDG finishing line has been passed. It has also pointed to emerging issues that are assuming ever greater prominence in Asia and the Pacific. How can these best be addressed? The next chapter considers the Asia-Pacific experience with the MDGs and what this implies for a successor framework.

### Chapter II Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> World Bank, 2010.
- <sup>2</sup> ESCAP, 2013.
- <sup>3</sup> ADB, 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> See <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>. Accessed 3 February 2013.
- <sup>5</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>6</sup> ESCAP/ADB/UNDP, 2011.
- <sup>7</sup> Stewart, 2002.
- <sup>8</sup> UNDP, 2011.
- <sup>9</sup> ILO, 2012b.
- <sup>10</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>11</sup> ILO, 2011.
- <sup>12</sup> See [www.unescap.org/stat/data/statdb/DataExplorer.aspx](http://www.unescap.org/stat/data/statdb/DataExplorer.aspx).
- <sup>13</sup> FAO, 2012.
- <sup>14</sup> Available from [http://maplecroft.com/portfolio/mapping/maplecroft/?initial\\_map\\_slug=micronutrient\\_vitamin\\_deficiency\\_2010](http://maplecroft.com/portfolio/mapping/maplecroft/?initial_map_slug=micronutrient_vitamin_deficiency_2010). Accessed January 11, 2013.
- <sup>15</sup> UNDESA, 2011.
- <sup>16</sup> UNFPA, 2012.
- <sup>17</sup> UNDP, 2010a.
- <sup>18</sup> See <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>. Accessed 3 February 2013.
- <sup>19</sup> Ramos, 2011.
- <sup>20</sup> UN, 2010.
- <sup>21</sup> FAO, n.d.
- <sup>22</sup> WHO, 2010.
- <sup>23</sup> International Diabetes Federation 2011 (quoted in Anderson, Bhushan and Moser 2012).
- <sup>24</sup> Popkin and others, 2006.
- <sup>25</sup> Abegunde and others, 2007.
- <sup>26</sup> Mahal and others, 2010.
- <sup>27</sup> UNESCO, 2013.
- <sup>28</sup> ADB recognizes this member by the name Taipei, China.
- <sup>29</sup> See [http://images2.asecentre.org/homepage/key\\_docs/challenges\\_of\\_primary\\_education\\_in\\_india\\_oct\\_2012.pdf](http://images2.asecentre.org/homepage/key_docs/challenges_of_primary_education_in_india_oct_2012.pdf).
- <sup>30</sup> Available from <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>. Access on 29 February 2013.
- <sup>31</sup> ILO, 2010; Bonnet, Saget and Weber, 2012.
- <sup>32</sup> UNDESA, 2011.
- <sup>33</sup> ADB recognizes this member by the name Taipei, China.
- <sup>34</sup> ILO, 2012a.
- <sup>35</sup> UN-HABITAT and ESCAP, 2010.
- <sup>36</sup> UNDESA, 2012.
- <sup>37</sup> UNEP, 2013.
- <sup>38</sup> UNDP, 2012a.
- <sup>39</sup> World Bank and SEPA, 2007.
- <sup>40</sup> ESCAP and UNISDR, 2012.
- <sup>41</sup> Tang, 2011.
- <sup>42</sup> BBC, 2012.
- <sup>43</sup> Alliance Development Works, 2012.
- <sup>44</sup> IPCC, 2012.
- <sup>45</sup> Climate and Development Knowledge Network, 2012.
- <sup>46</sup> Urban and Sumner, 2009; Sumner and Tiwari, 2011.
- <sup>47</sup> UNDP, 2012a.
- <sup>48</sup> ADB, 2009.

# CHAPTER III

## The MDG experience

**The MDGs have helped rally political support for global efforts to reduce poverty and achieve human development. Now the 2015 MDG finishing line is close, and the global community is asking ‘what next?’ Drawing from more than a decade of MDG experience, this chapter offers perspectives from Asia and the Pacific to guide the design of a successor development framework.**

The MDGs have become the overarching political framework for international development – firmly establishing that the core of the global development agenda is human well-being.<sup>1</sup> They had their genesis in the 1990s – a decade that saw the rise of ‘human development’ and a new consensus around the aim of eliminating poverty and building human capabilities.<sup>2</sup> This was also a decade punctuated by a series of landmark United Nations conferences on a wide range of subjects – including children, education, food security, women, sustainable development and population.<sup>3</sup>

This process culminated in September 2000 when the General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration. Building on the commitments made at earlier conferences, the Declaration identified a series of key development targets. In 2001, the MDGs were officially specified in the form of an annex in the follow-up report of the first Millennium Summit. This established eight goals and 18 time-bound targets along with 48 indicators to monitor results.

The MDGs were to prove remarkably effective at galvanizing widespread international support across the entire spectrum of stakeholders. Like the UNDP human development index, the MDGs caught the popular imagination, with their engaging simplicity, quantitative targets, comprehensible objectives, and laudable intentions with which no one could disagree.<sup>4</sup>

### Working within limitations

Inevitably, the MDGs had their limitations: in order to build the broadest consensus possible, they did not respond to all the development issues and omitted some important agreements made in international conferences. They also focused on the symptoms of poverty rather than on the root causes<sup>5</sup> and there were few prescriptions on how the goals would be achieved.

Some of these were addressed much later. For example, the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF), which was developed in 2010, offers a systematic way for countries to identify bottlenecks that constrain progress in lagging MDGs and to prioritize solutions.

The political process involved in the formulation of the MDGs has not been considered inclusive and participatory. Since their introduction, the MDGs have been perceived as the expression of a top-down, North-centred approach to development managed mainly by the UN Secretariat and the big multilateral players, rather than a genuine reflection of the aspiration of developing countries. This initially raised doubts about the extent to which governments would take national ownership of the goals. However, anchored as they are on the principles of the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs are the expression of a succession of intergovernmental processes and UN Summits held in the 1990s on various development issues. Moreover, the Millennium Declaration was adopted by 189 Member

Nations and countries in Asia and the Pacific have, by and large, internalised, customised and adapted them to suit national development requirements. The genesis of the MDGs did not see a high level of involvement from civil society organizations, NGOs or other stakeholders. The final listing of the MDGs, and in several cases their articulation, was perceived to be not informed by public debate.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding this criticism, the MDGs were ultimately the expression of inter-governmental – and therefore consultative, though not inclusive – processes.

There were also some concerns about the targets. These were taken verbatim from the Declaration, and the selection was mainly based on the availability of ‘agreed indicators’ and ‘robust data’.<sup>7</sup> Targets and outcomes were specified in many different ways, and could be difficult to monitor: some were set out in proportional terms, others in terms of completion and others as statements of intent (Box III-1).

These critiques, and the ways in which countries have responded in aligning the MDGs with national priorities, can offer important insights, and some would argue that given these weaknesses of the framework, and the likelihood that some goals and targets will be missed, the MDGs should be allowed to expire. A more constructive approach, however, is to reconsider the strengths and weaknesses of the framework so as to fine-tune the goals and deploy their full potential.

### *Global and country goals*

The original intention was that the goals should be collective targets for the world as a whole. They were,

after all, derived from global data – by extrapolating global trends in the previous quarter century and assuming that in the subsequent 25 years the same trends would continue. On this interpretation, they did not have to be reached by every country – except for the 100 per cent completion rate for primary school education, and access to reproductive health, which could only be met globally if they were achieved by every country.

The UN Millennium Project took the alternative view that every country should adopt every goal and target. It pointed out that achieving a goal at the global level could be misleading. The world as a whole might achieve the global target on a particular indicator, even if many individual countries, especially the least developed, made unsatisfactory progress. To some extent, the same is true at the regional level: the achievement in Asia and the Pacific is driven by China and India, the two most populous countries in the region.

Applying the same goals to every country sets quite ambitious objectives for the LDCs – though they should in principle be able to achieve these given sufficient international support. At the same time, uniform country-level goals can motivate politicians through international rivalry. League tables, such as UNDP’s human development index, not only stimulate public and media interest, they push politicians to act, for fear of losing out to a neighbouring nation.<sup>8</sup>

But applying the targets to every country can also have disadvantages. The LDCs may not really commit to what they see as distant objectives set externally – while the more developed countries might consider a universal target to present too limited a challenge.

### **Box III-1 – Different types of MDG targets**

**MDG targets are specified in three main ways:**

1. *Proportional terms* – For example, reducing the proportion of people who live in poverty or hunger by one-half; reducing child mortality rates by two-thirds; reducing maternal mortality rates by three-quarters; or reducing the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation facilities by one-half. Targets requiring a proportionate reduction imply that progress is linear, while it is not. As progress towards targets set out in proportional terms very much depends on the starting position of reporting countries; targets may be too high for some and too low for others.
2. *Completion* – Those set in terms of completion include: universal primary education; gender equality in school education; productive employment with decent work for all; and universal access to reproductive health. The problem with targets set out in terms of completion is that it is difficult to differentiate between countries that have achieved little from those that have made substantial progress.
3. *Statements of intent* – Examples of objectives set as general statements of intent include reducing loss in bio-diversity or improving the lives of slum-dwellers. These mean different things to different countries and are exceedingly difficult to monitor.

The alternative is that all countries could be inspired by global targets to strive for accelerated human development, but they might do this best by reshaping the goals and the targets according to their own circumstances. From this point of view, the relationship between the global and the local should be seen less in terms of adoption and more in terms of adaptation.<sup>9</sup>

### *The MDGs and human rights*

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2010 characterizes many MDGs as human needs and basic rights. But the MDG framework does not explicitly articulate the ‘rights-based’ approach to development. It stresses accountability but does not associate this with human rights.<sup>10</sup> The Millennium Declaration nevertheless evokes the human rights normative framework, and this and the human development framework can be seen as complementary and mutually reinforcing.<sup>11</sup>

There are indeed differences in emphasis between the MDGs and the human rights approach.<sup>12</sup> The human rights framework sees people as ‘rights-holders’ who can demand the realization of their rights, pointing to the duties and obligations of States defined in international law. The MDGs instead refer to people as ‘stakeholders’; and they consider states and various agencies to be the ‘owners’ of socio-economic objectives.

There are also differences in scope. The human rights approach implies identifying the structural, political and social root causes of multi-dimensional poverty.<sup>13</sup> This has advocacy value and can encourage participation and motivate social and political change, but it may not achieve commensurate operational influence. The MDGs, on the other hand can be seen as less ambitious – promoting ‘quick-win’ solutions that merely alleviate the symptoms of poverty. A strict rights-based approach would, for example, reject the target of halving poverty on the grounds that this would effectively discriminate against those who remained poor.

### *Means and ends*

Since there was no international agreement on the means required to achieve the goals, the MDGs did not specify strategies. Nor did the MDG narrative say much about how the goals were to be achieved – about the kind of development model that would drive the results. To a large extent this was deliberate. The MDGs aimed to build the broadest possible consensus around a common and uncontroversial agenda in which the ultimate end of development was poverty reduction.

In some countries, this vacuum was taken up by one-size-fits-all policy prescriptions that promoted wide-ranging deregulation and liberalization. In others, space remained to follow development models inspired by successful countries such as the ‘Asian tigers’ usually based on developmental plans. By and large, these plans had two main components: growth policies and social policies – both of which involved state intervention.<sup>14</sup> Starting from very low bases, many of the region’s economies achieved very rapid growth with deep structural changes – assembling a critical mass of internal and external resources and using these to promote human development.

## **The impact of the MDGs**

In the absence of a counterfactual, development successes over this period cannot be attributed to the MDGs. As the analysis in Chapter I of this report indicates, it is impossible to prove conclusively that the MDGs, on their own, stimulated progress.

In any case, it may be too soon to judge. Barely 10 years have passed since the adoption of the Goals. It took some time for the MDGs to be popularised, accepted, and finally adapted by countries. Only in 2005/6 was there a concerted push to integrate the MDGs into national planning frameworks; for all intents and purposes the operationalization of the MDGs is a very young enterprise. Moreover, enormous changes and challenges have unfolded in the international environment since the MDGs’ inception so it may be difficult to assess the parameters against which the MDG framework and the goals should be assessed.

### *How the MDGs have shaped policies*

One criterion for success would be the extent to which the MDGs have shaped national policies. By this measure they have clearly had an impact. In the Asia-Pacific region there are examples of how the MDGs have helped set local priorities, shape national budgets, and ring-fence social expenditure during times of austerity. A UNDP study found, for example, that the MDGs were influencing the national processes and the institutional frameworks in nine Asia-Pacific countries – which had developed supporting programmes and policies (Box III-2).

It is also impressive that many countries in the region have adapted or added to the goals to meet their specific needs. Afghanistan, for example, has identified an additional goal on security and Lao PDR has added a goal on unexploded ordnances (UXOs). Armenia, Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have modified

MDG 2 on education to include eight or nine years' schooling for all children.

Other governments have also modified the goals to cover gender issues more effectively. The MDGs do not address violence against women but some countries use indicators such as the prevalence of domestic violence and trafficking of women and girls. Viet Nam, for example, has added 'Reduce vulnerability of women to domestic violence' under MDG 3, as well as a complementary target and indicators for land ownership and housing titles by women.<sup>15</sup> Lao PDR has emphasized women's participation in the informal sector in building small businesses and in trading.

Bangladesh, Viet Nam and Thailand have set new targets and indicators for promoting women in local government bodies. The Philippines, Thailand and other countries have monitored the proportions of women judges, ministers, governors, police, and other traditionally male-dominated roles.

In the area of maternal health, Viet Nam has formulated a complementary target for MDG 5. Similarly, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Mongolia, and the Philippines have set separate goals and targets on access to reproductive health services. Bangladesh and Malaysia use coverage of emergency obstetric care as a complementary indicator.

### Box III-2 – National processes and institutional frameworks

Country	National process
Bangladesh	Government institutionalizing M&E system to report on poverty and MDG indicators; local development strategies formulated for MDG achievements; MDGs with targets have been incorporated into first PRSP (2005), Medium-Term Budgetary Framework and the ADP; discussions underway to integrate the MDGs into the next five-year plan (2012-2016).
Cambodia	Localized the MDGs and tailored them to meet specific needs through a process of national consensus in 2003; MDGs incorporated into the National Strategic Development Plan.
India	Eleventh National Plan (2008-2012) has 27 monitorable targets, of which 13 are disaggregated at the state level. Many are consistent with, and in some cases more ambitious than, the 2015 MDG targets.
Indonesia	MDGs referenced in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (2009-2014), but with no explicit prioritization; national goals for poverty eradication are more ambitious than the MDGs.
Lao PDR	MDGs are an integral part of the 6th Five Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan; the Government is considering integrating the MDGs into its 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015).
Mongolia	Parliamentary resolution in 2005 establishing Mongolia-specific MDG targets; MDG-based national development strategy approved by Parliament.
Nepal	MDGs incorporated into the 10 <sup>th</sup> PRSP (2002/03-2006/07) strategic framework; current three-year National Interim Plan prioritizes progress towards MDG achievements; local MDG reports being carried out at the district level.
Timor-Leste	Timor-Leste integrated the MDGs into its first and subsequent National Development Plans, and discussions are ongoing with the Government regarding the integration of tailored MDG targets.
Vanuatu	Ongoing discussion with the Government for the integration of MDGs into national and local development plans.

Source: UNDP 2010.



*Other examples include:*

- *Cambodia* – The country has tailored, or expanded, all the targets under the first seven MDGs – to include child labour, for example, and breastfeeding. It has also added a Goal 9, on demining, unexploded ordnance and victim assistance – and added a target on violence against women.
- *Indonesia* – Its Equitable Development Programme provides guidance for the implementation of the MDGs. Amongst other things, it also requires the allocation of funds at national and sub-national levels aimed at supporting MDG-related programmes.<sup>16</sup>
- *Mongolia* – The country has added a goal on good governance and fighting corruption, and for MDG 6 has added other infectious diseases.
- *Viet Nam* – Viet Nam has used the MDGs as the basis for its own Viet Nam Development Goals (Box III-3).

Thailand's case demonstrates the capacity of the MDGs of furthering the ambitions in an upper middle-income country, which in the early 2000s had already achieved many of the Goals. Based on this achievement Thailand developed an 'MDG-plus' model aimed at transforming the MDGs into a 'floor instead of a ceiling' for human development (Box III-4).<sup>17</sup>

Malaysia is equally committed to building on the MDGs. The institutional tool identified for the realization of its 'MDG Plus' model is the Tenth Malaysian Plan (2011-2015), which envisages an allocation of 30 per cent of the five-year development expenditures to the social sector. The MDG-Plus goal on infectious disease, for example, aims for the total eradication of malaria by 2020.<sup>18</sup>

**Box III-3 – The Viet Nam Development Goals**

What have come to be known as the Viet Nam Development Goals (VDGs), finalized in 2002, emerged from the preparation of the country's Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy. The strategy focused on combining fast growth with poverty reduction – considered in itself a driver of growth – and hunger eradication. It also emphasized social equality, with special reference to the uneven distribution of wealth by region and social group.

Some of the VDGs linked directly to the MDGs, although targets and indicators were adjusted to the national priorities – for example for Goal 1 raising the bar, or for Goal 2 focussing on the quality of education instead of access. Others did not link directly to the MDGs, but were the expression of traditionally relevant development issues. They were also equally aimed at contributing to poverty reduction and human well-being.

One assessment concluded that the MDGs acted as a motivator in four ways:

1. The goals and their accompanying targets and indicators provided a useful format for structuring goals and targets in all the sectors covered by the VDGs.
2. The substantial international literature and analysis in the MDGs allowed the analytical work on goal-setting to be more rooted in international comparisons and experience.
3. The process of identifying and setting goals and linking them to international commitments generated a considerable amount of debate, and highlighted some of the linkages between the goals and important cross-cutting themes.
4. The neutrality of the MDGs which were not the product of any one agency made them a powerful instrument for mobilising international donors and NGOs and, by extension, their partners in the government agencies and civil society groups.

Sources: 1. Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Millennium development goals 2010 national report: Vietnam. 2/3 of the way achieving the Millennium Development Goals and towards 2015, 2010. See also: Conway, Politics and the PRSP Approach: Vietnam Case Study, Overseas Development Institute, Working Paper 241, 2004. 2. Swinkles and Turk, Strategic Planning for Poverty Reduction in Vietnam: Progress and Challenges for Meeting the Localized Millennium Development Goals, World Bank Poverty Research Working Paper 2961, 2003.

**Box III-4 – Thailand’s MDG-Plus model**

An important example of adjusting MDG targets is Thailand’s MDG-Plus model which sets more ambitious objectives. The aim was to transform the MDGs into a ‘floor instead of a ceiling for human development’. Raising the country’s ambitions stimulated partnerships at the national and international levels.

Income poverty, for example, is to be reduced to 4 per cent of the population and the goal of universal education has been extended from primary to secondary education. More specific targets have been set for women – such as doubling the proportion of women in the national parliament, in administrative organizations and in civil service executive positions by 2006. There are also specific targets for the more marginalized regions – reducing by half the under-five mortality rate in highland areas, in selected northern provinces and in the three southernmost provinces.

The MDG-Plus model also improved data availability; and helped mobilize institutions, non-governmental actors, civil society, media, and international partners. Although many MDG-Plus targets have proven very demanding, they still remain high on the government agenda.

Sources: 1. Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, United Nations Country Team in Thailand, Thailand Millennium Development Goals Report, 2004. 2. UNDP, MDG-Plus: a case study of Thailand, 2004: 3, 14. 3. Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand Millennium Development Goals Report, 2009.

*MDG acceleration frameworks*

In addition, 15 countries across the region are implementing ‘MDG Acceleration Frameworks’ (MAFs). This methodology helps countries identify underlying bottlenecks and sharpen strategies for stepping up progress on off-track targets. Tajikistan, for example, identified lack of access to energy as a barrier to achievement of the goals on poverty, child and maternal health, and education, and applied the MAF to unlock bottlenecks to the achievement of lagging targets.

Indonesia not only has a ‘Roadmap for Accelerating the Achievement of the MDGs’ but also requires the elaboration of ‘Regional Action Plans for Accelerating the MDGs Achievement’. Bhutan has focused on youth employment, while Nepal has concentrated on access to sanitation. Cambodia has been accelerating progress towards gender equality and women’s economic empowerment. Lao PDR has been using the MAF to address challenges in gender inequity in education and political participation. Papua New Guinea has applied the MAF to accelerate progress on primary education.

The MDGs have also inspired regional bodies. For example, ASEAN has an MDG roadmap, while SAARC has developed its own SAARC Development Goals growing out of the MDGs (Box III-5). The Pacific too has embraced the MDGs – and widened the scope of Goal 1 to address the specific nature of poverty in that subregion. In addition, the MDGs have

served as a focus for parliamentarians (Box III-6) and youth (Box III-7).

*Engaging civil society*

While civil society organizations were not directly involved in the formulation of the MDGs, the goals have subsequently opened a huge space for them. In Bangladesh, India and the Philippines, for example, grassroots organizations, think tanks and NGOs have used the goals to further push their respective agendas, whether on gender equality, health, education, human rights, or other issues. Such organizations have often served a valuable function in showing how the MDG achievement within countries has been very uneven – much lower in poor regions and for disadvantaged or excluded groups such as ethnic minorities.

In the Philippines, Social Watch produced ‘The Other MDG Report 2010’. This assessed the country’s situation against the picture proposed by the ‘Philippines Fourth Progress Report on Millennium Development Goals’.<sup>19</sup> Another important political process in the Philippines stimulated by the MDGs is the Alternative Budget Initiative.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Galing Pook, a Philippines NGO, has been supporting a successful national competition, recognizing local governments that demonstrate positive innovative approaches towards achieving the MDGs.<sup>21</sup> In a number of other countries, as in India and Bangladesh, civil society organizations have also produced shadow MDG reports.<sup>22</sup>

### Box III-5 – SAARC Development Goals

This initiative was taken in 2006 on the occasion of the 13th SAARC Summit. With the support of UNDP, SAARC developed the SAARC Development Goals (2007-2012) to inspire regional actions that are appropriate in South Asia's own context and add momentum to the national efforts towards achieving the MDGs. These are:

#### *Livelihood SDGs*

- Goal 1 - Eradication of hunger poverty
- Goal 2 - Halve proportion of people in poverty by 2010
- Goal 3 - Ensure adequate nutrition and dietary improvement for the poor
- Goal 4 - Ensure a robust pro-poor growth process
- Goal 5 - Strengthen connectivity of poorer regions and of poor as social groups
- Goal 6 - Reduce social and institutional vulnerabilities of poor, women, and children
- Goal 7 - Ensure access to affordable justice
- Goal 8 - Ensure effective participation of poor and of women in anti-poverty policies and programmes

#### *Health SDGs*

- Goal 9 - Maternal health
- Goal 10 - Child health
- Goal 11 - Affordable health-care
- Goal 12 - Improved hygiene and public health

#### *Education SDGs*

- Goal 13 - Access to primary/communal school for all children, boys and girls
- Goal 14 - Completion of primary education cycle
- Goal 15 - Universal functional literacy
- Goal 16 - Quality education at primary, secondary and vocational levels

#### *Environment SDGs*

- Goal 17 - Acceptable level of forest cover
- Goal 18 - Acceptable level of water and soil quality
- Goal 19 - Acceptable level of air quality
- Goal 20 - Conservation of biodiversity
- Goal 21 - Wetland conservation
- Goal 22 - Ban on dumping of hazardous waste, including radioactive waste

Source: 'Mapping Development across South Asia', One World South Asia, <http://southasia.oneworld.net/resources/mapping-development-across-south-asia#.UNHJ6I7QPrQ>. ISACPA, SAARC Development Goals (SDGs) (2007-2012), Taking SDGs Forward, 2007: 8,9.

A survey of 104 representatives from civil society organizations in 27 developing countries, found that most respondents thought the MDGs were a 'good thing' and agreed that human development had become a higher priority because of the MDGs. A majority also concluded that the MDGs were useful tools for non-governmental organizations in terms of lobbying, monitoring, fundraising and project design.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Monitoring of progress and revealing data gaps*

One of the greatest legacies of the MDGs will be the improved quality, collection and dissemination of development data, especially social data.<sup>24</sup> The MDGs

provided a relatively simple monitoring framework and in the Asia-Pacific region almost all countries prepare national MDG reports. Nevertheless, as mentioned in Chapter 1, there are still many data gaps. Subregional consultations for this report have emphasized the importance of strengthening statistical systems and identified the need for support from development partners.

For monitoring purposes, any future framework would need to eliminate indicators for which the variable is not appropriate or the quality of data is poor, and add indicators that pick up elements of inequality and discrimination.<sup>25</sup> Overall, however, it should maintain the virtue of simplicity and take into consideration national statistical capacities.

**Box III-6 – The Manila Declaration**

In November 2012 on the occasion of the high-level regional parliamentary and CSO forum on MDGs acceleration and the post-2015 development agenda, held in Manila, 26 members of parliament and 32 civil society leaders from 13 countries from South-East, East, North-East Asia and the Pacific adopted the Manila Declaration by Parliamentarians and Civil Society on the MDG Acceleration and the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

The main objectives identified by the parties of the Declaration were:

- 1 To accelerate efforts to deal with the uneven achievements of the MDGs.
2. To better focus on the role played by parliaments and CSOs for accelerating progress towards the MDGs and securing the centrality of poverty and marginalization issues in the new development agenda.
3. To draw lessons from the MDGs experience and other international agendas on issues such as gender equality, seen as fundamental not only for the equality pillar but also for the pillars on human rights, democratic governance and sustainability.

**Box III-7 – A North-East Asian Youth Vision**

From 7-9 January 2013 the North-East Asian Youth Conference: ‘The World We Want’ was held at Korea University in Seoul, Republic of Korea, organized by the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre, the UN Global Compact Korea Network, UNESCAP’s Sub-Regional Office for East and North-East Asia and Korea University. The objective was to forge a consensus on the Youth vision for a better future. Youth from China, Japan, Republic of Korea and Mongolia participated in the conference.

The youth found that the MDGs were still relevant, especially as a means of keeping governments accountable and also as guiding framework for national development. However, they stressed that the goals must evolve to reflect the key challenges faced today.

According to the youth the key issues presently shaping the world are:

- Youth Unemployment: there is a dire need to provide young people with productive and decent employment that allows for social mobility.
- Lack of Quality Education: access to not only education, but to quality education is an imperative for a future development agenda.
- Social and Economic Inequalities: inequalities in all forms should be tackled through social policy. Also, exclusion in the form of discrimination, including gender-based, should be tackled in all its forms.
- Sustainable and Inclusive Development: better coordination is needed across and within countries to address the issue of climate change and pursue a more inclusive and sustainable development path.

The youth from these four countries called upon the UN, Governments, NGOs, INGOs, and the private sector to:

- Work towards building a future that is peaceful and prosperous by ensuring good governance, increased civil society participation, respecting human rights and diversity, and promoting greater cooperation between different social groups.
- Sustain human development as an imperative through forms of social protection, employment generation, protecting the environment, building resilience to natural disasters, provision of high quality education, improved forms of governance and accountability.
- Promote a more inclusive form of economic growth by investing more in developing rural areas, and ensuring smooth technology transfer and better terms of trade for developing countries.

## Learning from the MDG experience

Despite some limitations, the MDGs have been simple, clear and flexible, as shown by their adaptation to national contexts in Asia-Pacific countries. This simplicity must be balanced with the accelerating complexity of an interlinked world. Decades of MDG experience have contributed to a wide body of knowledge at the country and regional levels – whether by governments, civil society or international organizations.

### *The need for integrated policies*

The existing MDGs were articulated goal by goal. Each addressed one aspect of poverty, and had its own cluster of experts, institutions and donors. This had the advantage of clarity but it encouraged a fragmented approach to public policy and planning.

A post-2015 development framework should recognize that the goals are multidimensional, multi-sectoral and interdependent – allowing for coordinated action on several fronts to achieve sustainable human development. The reality is that progress towards any one goal is dependent on progress towards others; they are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. There are, for example, strong links between education – particularly of women – and better health outcomes. Better educated women are likely to marry later and have greater access to health and ante-natal care, and skilled attendance during delivery. Likewise, healthier and better nourished workers will be more productive and better able to escape poverty.

### *The need for more ambitious gender goals*

While many Asia-Pacific countries have made tremendous progress in fostering gender equality in education, by and large, the MDGs have not delivered on gender. The region as a whole, still allows some of the worse forms of gender discrimination, including sex-selective abortions and infanticide. Many countries offer little legal protection against gender-based violence.<sup>26</sup> Widespread discrimination restricts women's access to economic opportunities and political participation.

The MDG focus on gender is largely limited to Goal 3 – eliminating gender disparities in education – and Goal 5 on improving maternal health; it includes (a) reducing maternal mortality and (b) achieving universal access to reproductive health.

The MDGs failed to embed and articulate more explicitly some of the most important achievements of the 'Fourth United Nations Development Decade', and particularly the critical gains made in Beijing,<sup>27</sup> Cairo<sup>28</sup> and other UN conferences.<sup>29</sup> One of the most contentious omissions is the overall Cairo goal on universal access to sexual and reproductive health, which was later added as target b of Goal 5, but without any benchmarks – which has reduced government accountability. Also, the broad range of women's human rights, and key issues such as violence, labour, reproductive rights, socio-cultural factors and women's unpaid labour<sup>30</sup> were not included. Moreover, critics of the MDGs argue that they do not build on the human rights normative framework of the Millennium Declaration, which includes the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Nevertheless, the MDGs have widened the space for debate for women's and civil society movements. Indeed, the limitations of the MDGs have stimulated the women's movement to engage with the MDGs. Civil society organizations the world over have been using the MDGs to continue advancing women's broader social justice agenda.

Progress on gender equality cannot be based exclusively on gender-related goals. Rather, gender priorities need to be incorporated into each goal. To some extent, this has already been happening; gender-related targets and indicators have been included in national MDG frameworks. Viet Nam, for example, has a complementary target and indicators for land ownership and housing title by women. Bangladesh, Viet Nam and Thailand have set a new target and indicators for promoting women in local government bodies. The Philippines, Thailand and other countries have indicators for monitoring the proportion of women judges, ministers, governors, police, and other traditionally male-dominated roles.

Lao PDR has put emphasis on women's participation in the informal sector in building small businesses and trading.<sup>31</sup> In the area of maternal health, Viet Nam has formulated a complementary target for MDG 5. Similarly, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Mongolia, and the Philippines have set separate goals and targets on access to reproductive health services. Bangladesh and Malaysia use coverage of emergency obstetric care as a complementary indicator.<sup>32</sup> Some countries have also used indicators such as the prevalence of domestic violence and the trafficking of women and girls.

The MDG's successor framework will need to be grounded in international treaties and previous

inter-governmental commitments.<sup>33</sup> The United Nations Secretary-General's report on the Road Map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration recognizes that the MDGs do not supersede the Cairo and Beijing commitments which remain valid.<sup>34</sup>

The need to address emerging environmental issues were largely addressed in Goal 7 which helped countries track a number of important issues related to overall environmental health. These included CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, consumption of ozone-depleting substances, forest cover, protected areas, and access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

In this case, there has been significant adaptation. Countries in the region responded with new targets and indicators according to national priorities and needs – though in some cases this led to lower levels of ambition. The targets that have been most subject to adaptation have been those on water and sanitation (Nepal), and forest cover (Bhutan, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Myanmar, and Pakistan). Some governments have adapted the goals on protected areas by monitoring the proportion of fishing lots released to local fishers as well as the number of community-based fisheries and the number of fish sanctuaries (Cambodia), the extent of biodiversity in wetlands (Nepal), the acreage of protected wet-zone forests (Sri Lanka), and the number of endangered species (Viet Nam).

The MDG environmental targets are, to some extent, considered in isolation, and do not, for example, address the environment-poverty nexus. Nevertheless, individual countries have done so by introducing new targets and indicators (Box III-8). In their national MDG reports Cambodia and the Philippines, for example, have assessed the impact of natural hazards on poverty; while Cambodia and Viet Nam have reported on the links between access to land, food security, income generation and gender equality.

Nor do the MDG 7 targets reflect vulnerability and exposure to disasters. For Asia and the Pacific this is a major omission. People in this region are four times more likely to be affected by natural disasters than those living in Africa, and 25 times more likely than those in Europe or North America.<sup>35</sup> As a result, in their MDG reports, some countries in Asia and the Pacific are reporting on the impacts of natural hazards on other development outcomes.

While one of the MDG 7 indicators is on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in total, per capita and per \$1 GDP levels, the MDGs did not put a major emphasis on climate change. For Asia and the Pacific this is a major issue –

with so many people living in exposed coastal regions, on river banks, in uplands and remote locations.<sup>36</sup> Many of the megacities in Asia and the Pacific are in low-elevation coastal zones including Dhaka, Karachi, Manila, Mumbai, Shanghai and Jakarta. Mountain dwellers, islanders, delta communities, and urban slum dwellers are particularly vulnerable.

### *The need for renewed partnerships for development cooperation*

MDG 8 was conceived as the cornerstone of the MDGs. It envisaged a global partnership for development anchored in official development assistance (ODA), free and fair, non-discriminatory trade, a reduction of external debt, and enhanced access to essential medicines and technology. The overall objective was to build conducive conditions of international governance, generate adequate resources, and create the opportunities, capacities and skills for countries to deliver on the first seven MDGs.

However, Goal 8 had several limitations: it was weakly formulated, hard to track and was only partially monitored – and did not address structural constraints to development transformation. Unlike the other MDGs, MDG 8 was not defined or anchored in quantitative targets and accountability mechanisms. For example, it advocated for an 'open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system' but offered no clear guidance as to what this entailed in terms of targets and indicators, let alone implementation.

In the Asia-Pacific region, the goal fell short of expectations. ODA in Asia and the Pacific remained below target and was skewed towards Afghanistan and Bangladesh; other LDCs received modest flows. The promise of greater global institutional coherence on aid, trade, finance, employment and environmental issues was barely realized.

A new partnership for development will need to take into account the new environment for ODA. Core development aid has been falling while the international aid architecture is changing; emerging economies like China and India have entered the international cooperation arena. On the other hand, dependence on foreign aid is also lower; for many countries ODA as a percentage of total revenues is falling even faster than aid itself.<sup>37</sup> As globalization deepens, a new framework will therefore need to reassess institutions of regional and global cooperation and governance to manage global public goods and respond to global development challenges.

**Box III-8 – Building on Goal 7 for environmental monitoring**

Across Asia and the Pacific, many countries have adapted Goal 7 and widened the scope of environmental monitoring. Thirty-one countries in Asia and the Pacific report on the proportion of land area covered by forest. But in addition Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and Thailand have indicators related to the acreage of mangrove and planted forest, Cambodia on the number of rangers in protected forest areas, and China and Viet Nam on investment in the environment.

China has monitored the discharge of major pollutants; Timor-Leste has assessed the balance between the use of environmental resources for economic growth with conservation of resources. Pakistan has focused on the proportion of land area for conservation of wildlife, the number of vehicles that use natural gas, the level of sulphur content in diesel, as well as on improvement of energy efficiency. Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Viet Nam have monitored the use of land for environmentally friendly technologies and implementing strategies for sustainable development. Sri Lanka has been reporting on clean waste management practices, Thailand on the use of renewable energy, and Viet Nam on the level of air and water pollution.

Nine countries have reported on the use of fossil fuels while 21 have measured the proportion of the population using solid fuels. Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka are reporting on the use of less polluting sources of energy, such as natural gas and biomass. Thailand has developed renewable energy indicators. Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam are measuring the quality of water in rivers.

Thirty-three Asia-Pacific countries report on access to water. In addition, Timor-Leste, Malaysia and Nepal assess the relationship between the number of deaths from water-borne and air-borne infections to water quality. Pakistan and the Philippines are measuring the percentage of water that is contaminated. Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka measure the volume of solid waste that is generated.

Cambodia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, and Viet Nam have tailored the target on the allocation of land titles, while Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka have reported on the proportion of households with access to secure tenure. Sri Lanka monitors the levels of infant mortality and illiteracy in slum areas.

**Back to the drawing board**

The course that countries in Asia-Pacific will take in the coming decades will matter to the rest of the world. The work for designing the MDG successor framework has already commenced. The report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons released in May 2013 provides recommendations to the Secretary General for a post-2015 development framework. Concomitantly, the Open Working Group, mandated by Member States to work on a set of Sustainable

Development Goals, has commenced reviewing options for discussion at the General Assembly next year. Initial strokes on the post-2015 agenda are, therefore, already on the canvas. Building on its wealth of knowledge and unique experience on the MDGs, countries in Asia and the Pacific have engaged with the goals and targets and learned some of the most effective ways of achieving them. The next chapter will suggest how this experience can contribute to the design of a new framework.

## Chapter III Endnotes

- 1 UNDP, 2010b.
- 2 Fukuda-Parr, 2012; Fukuda-Par and Hulme, 2011.
- 3 Hulme, 2007.
- 4 Nayyar, 2012.
- 5 Poverty is rooted on socio-economic inequalities and on the structural outcomes arising from specific patterns of growth production and distribution.
- 6 A case in point was the shift from the Copenhagen commitment to eradicate income poverty by 2015 to the target of halving poverty by that date (Saith, 2006). There was also enormous dissatisfaction with the initial exclusion from the Declaration and the Goals of reproductive health issues and with the extremely narrow articulation of the Goal 3 on gender. The International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994, and the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, “were assumed by many to have changed forever the terms of discussion of sustainable development”. In those meetings, indeed, “a large majority of nations agreed that without the most basic rights for women within the family and society – most of all the rights to decide, jointly or alone if necessary, on the number of children they were prepared to bear, or that their health could sustain – meaningful and rapid strides in public health, education, the protection of environment and economic development would lag at best and be impossible at worst” (Barbara Crossette, 2005:71). Moreover, “When the MDGs emerged from the UN Secretariat, women’s groups were dismayed that gender equality as an issue in its own right was relegated to one quite limited Goal, and that the issue of reproductive health was not explicitly among the Goals” (Carol Burton, 2012:25). Lastly, it was noticed that many other relevant human development-related aspects included in the Declaration had not been articulated as goals or targets – for example decent work, peace, security, governance and human rights (UN Task Team, 2012).
- 7 Vandemoortele, 2011.
- 8 Green, Hale and Lockwood, 2012.
- 9 Fukuda-Parr, 2008.
- 10 Von Engelhardt, 2010.
- 11 See, for example, the 2000 UNDP Human Development Report: Human Rights and Human Development.
- 12 For the lack of clarity of the concept of human rights based approach to development and the necessity of adding some analytical rigor for it to become more effective within the international development cooperation system, and the UN in particular, see: Mac Darrow and Amparo Thomas, *Power Capture and Conflict. A Call for Human Rights Accountability in Development Cooperation*, Human Rights Quarterly, 27 (2005).
- 13 Nelson, 2007.
- 14 Onho, 2008; Beeson, 2004 and Jomo, 2005.
- 15 UNDP, 2005.
- 16 Indonesia, 2007.
- 17 OHCHR, 2012.
- 18 Malaysia, 2011.
- 19 Social Watch Philippines and UNDP, 2010.
- 20 ‘In 2006, Social Watch Philippines went into partnership with progressive legislators from the House of Representatives and the Senate in order to increase available allocations for selected MDGs in what is now known as the Alternative Budget Initiative (ABI). Civil society organizations worked closely with congressmen and senators in formulating alternative budget proposals in four areas: education, health, agriculture and the environment.’, Social Watch Philippines, 2010: 3.
- 21 See [http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th/practices/capacitydevelopment/documents/Pakistan\\_InvestmentsinLocalCapacityDevelopment.pdf](http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th/practices/capacitydevelopment/documents/Pakistan_InvestmentsinLocalCapacityDevelopment.pdf).
- 22 ‘Shadow reports’ or ‘alternative performance reports’ have been published in more than 30 countries. In the case of India, see for example: Wada No Todo Abhiyan: Measuring India’s progress on the MDGs: A Citizen’s Report (Dec 2007); Thereek e Pasmanda Muslim Samaj (TPMS) Millennium Development Goals and Muslims in India: A Status Report (2008). People’s Forum on the MDGs (PFM), Not yet free of Bondage: An Overview of the Independent Civil Society report of the MDGs in Bangladesh. Shadow reports focused on uneven MDGs achievements within countries have been also published in African countries such as Ghana, Malawi and Mozambique. UNDP (2010).
- 23 Pollard and others, 2012.
- 24 Green, Hale and Lockwood, 2012.
- 25 Nayyar D., 2012.
- 26 UNDP, 2010b.
- 27 See [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf).
- 28 UN POPIN, 1994.
- 29 These include: the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna), the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo), the 1995 World Summit on Social Development (Copenhagen), the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing), the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Durban), as well as the broader commitments from the 1992 Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro), the 1995 Conference on Small Island Developing States (Barbados), and the 1997 Habitat-II conference (Istanbul).
- 30 Burton, 2005b.
- 31 ESCAP, 2007.
- 32 *ibid.*
- 33 Burton, 2005a.
- 34 UN, 2001.
- 35 UNDP, 2012b.
- 36 *ibid.*
- 37 Green, Hale and Lockwood, 2012.



# CHAPTER IV

## Designing a new framework

**The post-2015 development agenda needs to drive transformative change – enabling global and national institutions to pursue people-centred development based on economic prosperity, social equity and environmental responsibility. How can the simplicity and clarity of the MDGs be retained while addressing growing expectations and complexities? This chapter suggests core principles and goal areas for designing a new development framework for Asia and the Pacific with framework scenarios based on the level of ambition that finally gains consensus.**

As the MDG target year of 2015 approaches, there has been considerable debate over what comes next. This debate is supported by the emphasis on sustainability as reflected in the Rio+20 outcome document, which is the basis for the discussion around the Sustainable Development Goals. The question is: should there be a new development framework similar to the MDGs and if so what form should it take?

To gather perspectives from Asia and the Pacific on these issues, in 2012/13 the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP regional partnership on the MDGs held a series of subregional consultations (Box IV-1) among identified development experts and practitioners from the region.<sup>1</sup> Those attending the workshops gave their expert views on what should be the main priorities for a new framework. Their most popular choices are shown in Table IV-1. At the head of their list was ‘quality education for all’, closely followed by ‘eradicating income poverty’.

The opinions from the expert group can be compared with those from a global survey of citizens conducted by the United Nations. The My World survey aimed to gather the opinions of citizens on ‘priorities for a better world’. By May 2013, the survey had mobilized nearly 530,000 participants in 194 countries. Just over one-third came through a website, and around 8 per cent through mobile phone surveys, while half were collected using paper and pen. There were 137,573 responses from Asia and 10,476 from the Pacific.<sup>2</sup> As

shown in Table IV-1 the expert group list and the My World list for Asia are similar, and both accord a high priority to ‘responsive government’ as a goal area to be monitored. The My World responses from the Pacific, however, put greater emphasis on environmental issues compared to responses from Asia which prioritize education, healthcare and better job opportunities.

It should be emphasized that these surveys present the views of individuals rather than those of governments. And the respondents cannot be considered representative since they were not selected based on random sampling. Nevertheless the opinions given in the capacity of respondents as experts and practitioners, as well as citizens participating in shaping the next global development agenda, do suggest significant priority areas for the region.

### *Country group perspectives*

The subregional consultations concluded that the post-2015 development agenda should drive transformative change – serving as an advocacy tool, a guide for national and global policies, and an instrument for policy coherence. The consultations also reflected the need to build on the region’s experience of adapting goals, targets and indicators to national circumstances.

There was broad consensus on the need to pursue economic prosperity, social equity and environmental responsibility for people-centred development. This

**Box IV-1 – Subregional consultations on the way forward for the MDGs**

In preparation for this report there was a series of expert group meetings in 2012/13. These were held in Central Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific – supplemented with one meeting specifically for the LDCs and another for the LLDCs. These consultations, which were informed by think pieces from eminent experts, brought together stakeholders from government, civil society and United Nations agencies.

During the subregional consultations, the MDG Partnership also conducted a survey – using a questionnaire to collect data from 169 respondents or participants. The survey was not based on a representative sample, but it does give some indication of the views of development practitioners across the region. Respondents were asked, for example, what should follow the MDGs. More than half favoured a new development framework, while around one-third wanted to retain the MDGs in a modified form. Far fewer wanted simply to keep the MDGs and extend the deadline. Participants were also asked how long the next process should be. Almost all preferred a time horizon of 10 to 15 years.

The vast majority of respondents also agreed that the new framework should cover such issues as security, governance and effective institutions. But there was less agreement on how this should be done. Most people thought that these issues should be articulated in the framework as basic preconditions, while others thought there should also be specific associated targets and indicators.

There has also been some debate in the region about the poverty goal. For the MDGs the target was poverty reduction – halving the proportion of the population in extreme poverty. A more ambitious goal would be poverty eradication. Around two-thirds of respondents said the aim should be to reduce poverty, but one-third believed the aim should be eradication. As for the level of income that would constitute extreme poverty, while many suggested keeping the existing rate of \$1.25 per day, a majority thought the international poverty line should be raised to \$2.00 per day.

At the subregional consultations, there was a clear majority for the principle of global goals: around two-thirds thought the new development framework should be applicable to all countries; the rest preferred more customization by setting different goals at global and regional levels. However, the majority of participants also believed that the new development framework needs to have a special focus on LDCs, with additional goals or provisions.

**Table IV-1 – Suggested priorities for a new framework**

Expert Survey	My World Survey	
	Asia	Oceania (Pacific)
Quality education for all	Better health care	Protecting forests, rivers and oceans
Eradicate income poverty	A good education	Access to clean water and sanitation
Accountable and responsive government	Better job opportunities	Affordable and nutritious food
Universal health care	An honest and responsive government	A good education
Universal access to safe water and sanitation	Affordable and nutritious food	Action taken on climate change

Note: For the expert group survey, respondents were offered 16 options, from which they could choose five. The My World survey offered 16 options from which respondents could choose six. The lists were similar except that income was reflected in the expert group survey as 'eradicate income poverty' while the My World survey referred to better job opportunities.

**Table IV-2 – Priorities that differ according to income group**

Illustrative Development Goals	<<<< Low-income group – middle- to higher-income group >>>>		
	Access to basic services	Increase efficiency	Lifestyle changes
Improved living conditions for all	Access to safe drinking water	Efficiency improvement in use of water for agriculture	Reduction of freshwater use in daily life (including reuse of grey water)
	Access to electricity	Energy efficiency improvement in production and transportation	Higher share of renewable energy use in daily life with lower energy use per head

would mean a far greater emphasis on the quality of growth and its inclusiveness. It would also mean incorporating elements of social protection, including targeted social assistance for the poor. Overall, it would be important to support people-oriented governance at the local, regional and global levels. As illustrated in Table IV-2, low-income countries still emphasize basic services. These are even more relevant for the more disadvantaged groups across countries, while greater efficiencies in resource use and lifestyle changes are being increasingly recognized for the better off.

*Middle-income group* – These countries prioritized eradicating pockets of poverty and reducing rural-urban disparities in access to services and opportunities. At the same time they wanted to address urban poverty and the growth of slums. They were also looking to create decent jobs, by improving the quality of education and linking this with labour market programmes. These countries appreciated the value of ‘green growth’ but said that this would require technology transfers from high-income countries.

*Low-income group* – These countries argued that the post-2015 development framework should be based on the MDGs, but that it should have more ‘teeth’. The aim should be to increase access to high-quality basic services, decent jobs, shelter, water and sanitation, and to make rural infrastructure more resilient to climate change. They also put a strong focus on eradicating extreme poverty and on strengthening social protection to make the poor less vulnerable and to build resilience against crises. At the same time, they agreed on the need to make growth less resource intensive, in particular by applying new technologies and knowledge.

*Countries with special needs* – Landlocked countries and small island states stressed the urgency of addressing climate change and ensuring the environmental aspect of sustainability in development. They also emphasized the importance of regional cooperation and regional

agreements – arguing for greater acceptance of the quasi-binding character of existing agreements, especially on environmental protection. These countries were also concerned about the impact of climate change on their economies and the need to create more sustainable forms of employment.

## Guiding principles for a successor framework

A successor framework should complete the unfinished agenda and aspirations of the MDGs but also tackle emerging issues not conceived of in the original framework. This report draws from the Asia-Pacific perspectives and suggests the following core principles:

### 1. Based on the three pillars of sustainable development

One consistent theme in the consultations was that the new framework should bring together the three broad pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. At the same time, sustainability of development gains needs to be rooted in the human element, which means that the three pillars be considered in relation to people’s lives, especially the poor. In particular, environmental considerations such as those expressed by the planetary boundaries, as well as economic considerations such as GDP growth, need to reflect what these mean for sustaining human development. For example, ensuring sustainable agriculture for food security, combating climate change in ways that prevent the erosion of people’s habitats, and managing urbanization in ways that are sensitive to the living conditions of the disadvantaged. These pillars are mutually supporting as Table IV-3 illustrates. Sustained economic growth generates the resources for social investment, while social development builds the necessary human capabilities that will underpin economic growth.<sup>3</sup>

**Table IV-3 – Three mutually supporting pillars of sustainable development**

	Economic pillar	Social pillar	Environmental pillar
Economic pillar provides	Sustained economic growth	Inclusive growth	Sustainable production
	Employment	Secure, productive and decent jobs	Food, energy and water security
	Aggregate demand	Fiscal space for social and rural infrastructure	Smaller ecological footprint of industries
Social pillar provides	Investments in human capacities	Social protection	Sustainable consumption
		Access to basic services for all, social capital	Changed attitudes
		Better accountability and functioning institutions	Better environmental responsibility
Environment pillar provides	Expands limits to growth	Balanced social-ecological systems	Responsibly managed natural resources and ecosystems
		Better food, water and air quality	Biodiversity
		Better consumption among the poor	Improved habitats
		Healthier societies	

At the same time, environmental sustainability respects planetary boundaries within which economic growth and social prosperity have to occur, and ensures that development gains are not threatened. Nevertheless, in some cases there may be trade-offs to be considered, and difficult decisions depending on national priorities.

A people-centred approach will also mean a greater emphasis on equity, social justice and human rights. Development is unsustainable if societies are not based on equality and justice, and if human rights are persistently violated. This was also one of the outcomes of the Rio+20 meeting, which emphasized the integration between social, environmental and economic concerns – based on social justice, fairness and equity.

## *2. Underpinned by inclusive growth*

Countries addressing the three pillars of sustainable development will need to aim for sustained inclusive growth. Sustained economic growth is essential: it provides increased incomes that enable households to lift themselves out of poverty, and gain more access to education and health opportunities. It also provides governments with the resources to expand critical basic services, invest in social and economic infrastructure, and finance social protection. But sustained growth will only maximize social outcomes if it is inclusive.

Growth is inclusive when all members of society contribute to and benefit from it – people have access to economic opportunities and the poorest and vulnerable are protected through social safety nets. It therefore needs to take place in the areas where the poor live and generate employment in the sectors in which they work – agriculture, services and manufacturing. It must also connect with the poor by using their factors of production and enable them to afford essential goods and services and minimize their vulnerability to shocks.

Governments in Asia and the Pacific already recognize the value of ‘inclusive growth’ – though they may use different terminology (Box IV-2). China, for example, has focused on creating a ‘harmonious society’. Thailand has aimed for ‘growth with equity’, and Viet Nam has focused on ‘quick and sustainable development’. Also along these lines, Japan has proposed a conceptual framework for the post-2015 development agenda called ‘Pact for Global Wellbeing’ based on human security, prioritizing growth that is green, inclusive, shared and knowledge based.

The post-2015 framework need not specify development strategies, but it could nevertheless provide some general principles, which can guide countries towards a more sustainable and inclusive growth path for human development. Key elements could include economic policies that broaden

## Box IV-2 – Looking beyond economic growth

The overarching objective need not be economic growth as – as already demonstrated in Bhutan and Thailand.

- *Bhutan* – The country has incorporated, and to a large extent successfully implemented, the concept of ‘happiness’ as part of its development planning architecture. Gross National Happiness (GNH), a concept developed in the early 1970s by Bhutan’s then King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, attempts to balance economic and material advancement with spiritual and psychological contentment, striving towards balanced and sustainable development. The four pillars of GNH are: (i) sustainable and equitable economic growth and development, (ii) preservation and sustainable use of environment, (iii) preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, and (iv) good governance. GNH, as an operational concept, has gained some traction over the years and has become an important ‘brand’ of sustainable economic and social development, and was passed as a UN resolution, 65/309, ‘Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development in 2011’.<sup>4</sup>
- *Thailand* – In the aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis, Thailand turned to the teachings of its King, His Majesty Bhumibol Adulyadej, and adopted a social and economic development approach based on ‘sufficiency’ principles that encourage and operationalize values such as cooperation, simplicity, self-reliance, and moderation. By underpinning development with such values the objective is to pursue sustainable and inclusive forms of development, thereby avoiding the pitfalls associated with globalization.

These are just a couple of examples that illustrate how sustainability can be pursued in a modern economic set-up. What is worth noting is that the primary objective is not just economic growth; instead such approaches tend to promote more inclusive and broad-based forms of economic and social growth.

opportunities for gainful employment and minimize economic fluctuations and insecurity. This will mean investing in skills through formal and informal education and providing services that meet the needs of the poor and the ‘near poor’, and pursuing consistently counter-cyclical policies.

At the same time, the model must incorporate environmental concerns and account for climate change. The Asia-Pacific region has to protect its environmental assets, especially its critical ecosystems, but its people will also have to be more resilient to disasters. The region also needs to make progress towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production – making more efficient use of natural resources and pursuing development within planetary boundaries.

### 3. Customized to national development needs

One major issue is whether a new framework should set goals globally or establish a new set of goals at regional or country levels. The consensus in the region seemed to be that the new framework could build upon the experience on MDGs adaptation and customization that has already taken place. The new framework could specify overall shared global goals

and targets while individual regions or countries could identify the most appropriate indicators to meet those goals. For example, if the goal is education for all then Afghanistan could identify literacy as one of the country goals, whereas Kazakhstan – where literacy is nearly 100 per cent – could focus on improving the quality of secondary education. The indicators could also focus on specific groups who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. The overall aim should be to retain the simplicity of clear goals while addressing specific risks and vulnerabilities. ADB’s ZEN idea is one possible approach for framing the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>5</sup> It provides a conceptual basis for eliminating the severest deprivations, supporting local customization happening on the ground in the region, and providing space for mutual accountability on global public goods such as natural resources.

A targeting option, which might leverage the ‘power of rivalry’, is to include composite indices, such as the UNDP ‘sustainable human development index’. Still at a conceptual stage, this is expected to build on the HDI and be based on the concept of intergenerational equity. The index could also incorporate planetary boundaries. This kind of index would enable the framework to combine indicators of both quantity and quality.

#### 4. *Embedded equity*

Development gains should not systematically bypass sections of the population, or widen or solidify disparities. The region must address social and economic development gaps – income and non-income – between rural and urban areas, between men and women and also between ethnic and minority groups. Policy makers will need to consider the various local, regional, and global transmission channels through which inequities are perpetuated and reinforced. This important principle should run through all goal areas. This principle can be operationalized by ensuring that indicators under the eventually-selected goals track not just aggregate or average progress but also progress at the lower end such as the bottom quartile.

#### 5. *Backed by identified sources of finance*

At a time of growing ambitions for a new development agenda, there is considerable pressure on financial resources. ODA will remain relevant and needed. However, with the likelihood of declining ODA, governments in Asia and the Pacific will need to mobilize more domestic fiscal revenue and seek additional funding from innovative sources. Some of this can come from philanthropy and private capital – from major pension funds, mutual funds, sovereign wealth funds, private corporations, development banks, and other investors from middle-income countries. At present much of this takes the form of small interventions, often of high quality but not integrated with national development efforts. Instead, they should be linked better with national programmes. More importantly, there has to be better regional and international cooperation to stop leakages of funds through transfer pricing and the use of tax havens.

At the same time, governments will need to use public expenditure more effectively – targeting in particular health and education. Most participants at the four subregional consultations held that governments should set targets for their public expenditure allocation to the social sector.

#### 6. *Founded on partnerships*

While the goals are global, achieving them will require the combined efforts of national and international institutions. The primary responsibility rests at the country level, but in a globalized world each country also has to deal with many cross-border factors and spillovers. These international issues can be tackled only partially through national action. They require

international solutions – through regional and global partnerships in which countries accept common goals but distinct responsibilities.

This would mean a comprehensive assessment of global, regional and national institutions that manage public goods and influence cross-border impacts – reviewing institutional arrangements, and coordinating regulations so as to close loopholes.

A number of these issues are currently addressed in Goal 8. Respondents at the regional consultations considered what should be included under an equivalent goal in a future framework. Around half chose a comparable list: technology transfer and property rights, debt, official development assistance, and trade.

An important element of this is development cooperation. This can come from traditional donors and the emerging southern countries that are becoming more active in regional cooperation structures. Indeed, aid itself is probably the least important instrument of south-south cooperation.<sup>6</sup> Such support is of particular importance to the LDCs. But they would not be the only beneficiaries, since accelerated development in the LDCs would increase markets for regional goods and boost the region's overall competitiveness.

In addition, regional cooperation should also embrace social concerns, including better surveillance and control of communicable diseases, as well as improved intra-regional flows of workers, and the exchange of ideas and technical knowledge. On the natural resources and environment side, major gains can be obtained through better sharing of water, marine and other scarce natural resources, controlling haze and dust storms, and preventing illegal logging and the trade in endangered species.

Differentiated responsibility in accordance with respective capabilities as recognized in the Rio principles should also include reassessing patterns of consumption. The poor, who mostly live in developing countries, need to consume more to improve their living standards while the global middle classes and rich would need to make more efficient choices and change their patterns of consumption towards lower-carbon pathways.<sup>7</sup>

It should be clear who has responsibility for achieving specific aspects of the goals – at global, regional and national levels. At the global level the basis for a new approach could be the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. This was a key output from the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, at the end of 2011. The

Partnership, co-led by UNDP and the OECD/DAC, will include the developed and developing countries, the UN system, civil society organizations and the private sector. The Forum also adopted a new set of indicators to monitor progress towards commitments made in Busan.

### 7. *Monitored with robust national statistical systems*

One of the greatest legacies of the MDGs will be the improved quality, collection and dissemination of social data.<sup>8</sup> The MDGs have provided a relatively simple measurable framework, and have encouraged countries to produce national MDG reports to monitor and evaluate their performance. They are now in a stronger position to collect data, measure progress and design evidence-based policies and programmes. Even without stringent reporting requirements or sanctions, the MDG framework has promoted greater accountability, both between states and their citizens, and across countries.

Nevertheless, there are still major data gaps. Many countries have weak statistical systems and a new framework is likely to put them under greater pressure. To address this issue, the new framework should itself incorporate measures of statistics delivery – setting targets for the development of new data sets – which requires more investment and greater capacities in statistical system. One major initiative in the region addresses strengthening civil registration and vital statistics; this is widely supported by development partners in the region.

The effort could take advantage of advances in internet and mobile technology for new and interactive forms of data collection – which could significantly reduce transaction costs and increase efficiency.

## Goal areas for the next framework

The post-2015 goals should set a transformative agenda for Asia and the Pacific. Based on the above core principles this report proposes the following goal areas:

1. ***Zero income poverty*** – Building on Asia-Pacific's remarkable achievements in poverty reduction, this goal area reflects the region's ambition to 'leave poverty behind' by, for the first time, setting a more ambitious goal of eradicating extreme poverty. This report advocates reducing to zero the number of people living in extreme poverty (on less than \$1.25 per day) and reducing the
2. ***Zero hunger and malnutrition*** – In support of universal food security this goal area involves ensuring more equal access, availability and utilization of food. It will require promoting accelerated investments in agricultural R&D, rural infrastructure, especially roads and irrigation, and improving market links for farmers. It would also mean dealing with the effects of climate change on agriculture and investing in essential mitigation and adaptation. Monitoring should include basic indicators of access to food, levels of child nutrition and hidden hunger as measured by consumption of micro-nutrients, with particular focus on the poorest.
3. ***Gender equality*** – Gender will have to be assessed more comprehensively with more indicators on empowerment and violence against women. This goal area would cover: (i) women's rights as workers and holders of economic assets; (ii) education; (iii) rights and participation of women in situations of conflict and transition to peace; (iv) sexual and reproductive health and rights; (v) advancing women's agency and participation in political life (national and local governments); and (vi) elimination of all forms of gender-based violence.
4. ***Decent jobs for everyone of working age*** – This goal area aims to ensure productive employment, including a focus on remunerative and decent work for youth. This will require policies that incentivize growth that is inclusive and employment rich, in both the formal and informal sectors. It also includes the promotion of an enabling environment for micro- and small enterprises to operate and grow.
5. ***Health for all*** – Priority should go to maternal, newborn and child health, universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reducing the prevalence of communicable diseases. Addressing challenges that persist will need to be combined with measures to address the rising levels of non-communicable diseases. This will involve strengthening health systems, health financing, investing in universal health coverage, family planning and emergency obstetric care, improving access to quality services through improved rural and urban infrastructure and addressing the social and environmental determinants of health. There is also a need to consider challenges beyond national borders to mitigate risks from emerging

**Box IV-3 – Redefining development goals for the urban poor**

Developing countries and their partners need to re-examine tools and processes for establishing development goals and targets related to urban poverty and sustainable urban development. They also need more accurate monitoring in such areas as:

- Habitat quality – Durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against heat and cold, and environmental shocks such as extreme climate conditions;
- Habitat density – Sufficient living space available per person; and
- Access to basic infrastructure:
  - Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts at an affordable price.
  - Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people.
  - Sustainable waste management systems for both organic and non-organic solid waste and wastewater.
  - Drainage and flood control systems which prioritize low-elevation coastal zones or vulnerable areas sensitive to surface run off.
  - Affordable electricity and other energy services, including the use of renewable energy sources and access to improved cooking stoves.
  - Security of tenure for both male- and female-headed households.
  - Safe, affordable and convenient transport and mobility options for women and girls to help prevent and address gender-based violence in cities.

Source: Based on <http://www.scribd.com/doc/42953170/Refining-MDG-targets-and-indicators-for-the-urban-poor-Some-provocative-thoughts-paper>

and re-emerging diseases and their effects on highly mobile populations.

6. ***Improved living conditions with a focus on the poor*** – Promoting universal access to energy services, safe water and an emphasis on improved sanitation constitute this goal area without which everyday living conditions, health, and livelihood opportunities can be seriously compromised. This should cover rural as well as urban and urbanizing areas. Therefore, a new goal should include more ambitious targets of universal access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation and new targets for universal access to modern energy sources and for a growing share of renewables.
7. ***Quality education for all*** – This goal area concerns the right of all people to have access to quality education. It covers universal access to primary and secondary education as well as to technical and vocational education and training. Equally important are adult literacy and opportunities for life-long learning. Job-ready skills should be supported so that educated individuals can find remunerative work and do not waste their skills during a long search for gainful employment. Monitoring should ensure progress among the bottom half and disadvantaged groups.

8. ***Liveable cities*** – This goal area addresses the living conditions of urban populations, especially the poor and those with insecure tenure. It also addresses challenges that face the rich and the poor together - mobility, congestion, pollution and waste. It covers access to decent shelter, security of tenure, and access to affordable, safe and energy-efficient mass transport, as well as essential social infrastructure and services, including roads, electricity, telecommunications and waste management (Box IV-3). Under the new goal, cities should also offer services for transient populations. Given the high exposure of urban populations living in low elevation coastal zones, cities should also be prepared in advance for natural disasters through plans, advocacy and budgets.

9. ***Environmental responsibility and management of natural resources*** – This goal area responds to a clear recognition among countries that the pursuit of growth should not squander natural resources, eventually undermining the environment and growth itself. This means changing how goods and energy are produced, protecting critical ecosystems of national, regional and global significance while reducing resource intensity and over-exploitation of natural capital. At the same time, development



will have to account for climate change, by promoting the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per dollar of GDP and adapting to changes in weather patterns and climate impacts. This goal area should take further the existing targets like forest cover and protected areas, and cover issues of pollution and efficiency in resource use.

10. **Disaster risk reduction** – Our efforts for ‘leaving poverty behind’ should be irreversible. The region has witnessed natural disasters that have wiped out long-term development efforts. Considering the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction, any new development agenda should help mainstream disaster risk reduction in national budgets and development programmes.
11. **Accountable and responsive governments** – The call for more accountable, transparent and effective governments has emerged strongly from consultations in Asia and the Pacific. As a goal area, this should be monitored with specific targets and indicators – as is already happening in some countries of Asia. It covers accountable, transparent and corruption-free public institutions, across all levels from the national to the local. It aims for more capable and efficient management of public resources and delivery of public services. Moreover, governments need to harness capacities to ensure peace and security. Without trust in public institutions of governance, the compact between people and states is under threat.
12. **Strong development partnerships** – This goal area covers cross-border actions to complement national efforts for sustainable development in an increasingly interlinked world. Resources of development partnerships help translate the post-2015 agenda from vision to action. Partnerships cover global and regional cooperation, including with the private sector, to drive and support development outcomes, and global and regional governance institutions to manage global public goods and public ‘bads’, particularly in the areas of international finance, health, trade, technology transfer, environment, and climate change. Access to traditional ODA should be supplemented by innovative finance.

## Framework scenarios

The goal areas can be drawn into a coherent framework with an architecture based on the level of ambition that eventually gains consensus. The numerous discussions,

not just on the principles and content of a post-2015 development agenda, but also on its architecture are gaining traction following the release of the report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons in May 2013, and as the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals intensifies its discussions. A number of options are being explored and assessed on the basis of their practicability, political viability, and level of ambition. In the Asia-Pacific region, there is enormous support for a relatively ambitious successor framework. The scenarios range from the least ambitious one of continuing with the current MDG framework with some adjustments, to the far more aspirational one that can motivate countries to end poverty, aim for shared prosperity, and safeguard planetary resources for current and future generations.

The basic option of maintaining the MDGs with an extended deadline is still a possibility at the global level, but this is not ambitious enough for Asia and the Pacific. Some of the goals have already been met and much has changed since the MDGs were introduced. Several countries have customized the MDGs to suit local conditions through additional goals, targets and indicators. The region, along with the rest of the world, has also been changing at an unprecedented pace and with this come more complex development challenges as well as expectations, that the MDGs were not designed to address. While the unfinished MDG agenda cannot be dropped, these new challenges call for new solutions and a more ambitious framework.

Keeping the guiding principles and goal areas that respond to the region’s development challenges in mind, three optional scenarios, with increasing levels of ambition, are illustrated below (Table IV-2). It will be up to member States to determine the eventual scope of a forward-looking agenda.

### 1. The Base Model: MDG+

1.1 Retain the eight goals of the current MDG framework which apply to developing countries but make Goal 7 (Ensuring environmental sustainability) and Goal 8 (Developing a global partnership for development) applicable to all countries. In addition, institutionalize and strengthen the country-level customizations that are already being done. This will establish:

- Supplementary Goals at country level (e.g., Afghanistan’s relating to security; Cambodia’s on demining unexploded ordnance and victim assistance).

- Customizing targets and indicators (e.g., Lao PDR's selected women's participation in small businesses to track gender equality; Viet Nam's added targets and indicators on violence against women, land ownership and housing titles by women under MDG 3 and Cambodia's added targets on child labour).
- Raising standards based on country circumstances (e.g., Thailand and Malaysia used the MDGs as a floor instead of a ceiling; Thailand raised the standards for some targets – income poverty to be reduced to 4 per cent and universal education extended to the secondary level).

### 1.2 Improve the selection of global targets and indicators under existing Goals 7 and 8:

- Goal 7 to achieve a better balance between current and future benefits with measurable targets and indicators.
- Goal 8 to recognize that national actions need to be complemented with international assistance to address structural barriers and to ensure that targets and indicators are monitored regionally and globally.
- Consider a dashboard of targets and indicators representing globally accepted minimum standards supplemented by country-specific ones.

### 1.3 Track inequality and exclusion by monitoring the distribution and progress at the “bottom-end” across goals and targets through disaggregated data (along the lines of gender, ethnicity, location, etc.) to ensure that no one is left behind. For example, Thailand has added specific targets for marginalized regions like highland areas, selected Northern provinces and the three southernmost provinces.

## 2. Integrated Sustainable Development Model: MDG++

### 2.1 Adopt a set of 10 to 12 goals that include food security, decent remunerative jobs, social services, including access to energy for improved conditions of daily life, liveable cities, accountable government and the effective institutions that are fundamental to sustaining development.

- Make clean, efficient and responsive government a Goal area to be monitored using targets and indicators on transparency and accountability, and anti-corruption, as well as peace and

security. This will allow explicit monitoring of progress in governance rather than limiting it to being recognized as an enabling prerequisite (e.g., Mongolia included a new goal on good governance and anti-corruption). In fragile and conflict affected situations, where it cannot be made a prerequisite, progress towards it can be monitored.

- Facilitate customization of goals, targets and indicators, like the MDG+ model; including a possible dashboard of targets and indicators representing globally accepted minimum standards supplemented by country-specific ones.

### 2.2 As in the MDG+ model, the goal on partnerships for development would recognize that national actions need to be complemented with international cooperation to address structural barriers and to ensure that targets and indicators are monitored regionally and globally. Include a specific target addressing the need to ensure security and sustainability of global financial systems to shield countries from the risk of global financial and economic crises.

### 2.3 Design the targets and indicators to include an integrated sustainable development “DNA” to reflect the economic, social and environmental dimensions of each goal with established results chains – thus monitoring targets with indicators that have a longer-term perspective. For example:

- Economic sustainability: For goals on eliminating poverty and ongoing material prosperity, this will mean monitoring not just GDP growth per se, but the quality of growth, ensuring that it is employment rich so the demand side is also robust. It will also mean monitoring education quality so that human resources are strengthened and monitoring social protection to counter risks/shocks that can reverse development gains – while ensuring fiscal sustainability in the context of demographic change.
- Social sustainability: Equity and social justice considerations imply equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities to ensure that real or perceived injustice and inequality do not foment social unrest. Historical disadvantage may need targeted policies and monitoring on indicators, for instance, of education, health, energy access, incomes and jobs.
- Environmental sustainability: Responsible use of natural capital with indicators to track sustainable use of nature's resources, like

fresh water, agriculture/food security, and management of pollution, biodiversity, land use, forest cover, waste and emissions/CC.

- 2.4 Consider making the goals universal with the principle of shared agendas and differentiated responsibility. As well as being applicable across countries by levels of development This principle could be also applicable within countries.

### 3. Transformational Model

- 3.1 Adopt a set of 10 to 12 development goals, like the MDG++ ones, that include: food security, decent remunerative jobs, social services including access to energy for daily life, liveable cities, accountable government and effective institutions. Universal goals with institutionalized customization at the national level, including a dashboard of targets for a set of indicators representing globally accepted minimum standards supplemented by country-specific ones.

- 3.2 Sustainability integrated within individual goals (economic prosperity, social equity and environmental responsibility) as applicable and – where possible/applicable – have targets to articulate interconnectedness amongst goals; for example:

- Economic sustainability – to include targets that foster change in the modes of consumption and production through, for example, the establishment of thresholds on the consumption of non-renewable energy, monitored through data disaggregated by income level/quintile; targets on employment generation, setting targets on the ratio capital-employment retribution level; targets on the reduction of industrial waste and energy efficiency (depending on availability of indicators).
- Social sustainability – to include transformative targets to promote mindset changes like genuine

acceptance of the equality of all human beings (say, through the school curriculum); more stringent targets on governance, accountability, transparency and people's participation in decision making; targets on energy-efficient public transport. The goal on gender equality to be more transformative than the MDG 3 Goal and to cover dimensions such as gender-based violence, women workers' rights, rights and participation in situations of conflict and transition to peace, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's agency and participation in public institutions, access to assets.

- Environmental sustainability – explicitly recognise the planetary boundaries with targets for each; address the trade-offs between environmental sustainability and inclusive economic growth, introduce targets on food security that promote green modes of production while promoting more sustainable agriculture practices and technologies, development of smarter, climate-resilient cities that address the need of a growing population while preserving green areas and becoming energy efficient.

- 3.3 As in the previous models, the goal on partnership for development would recognize that national actions by developing countries will need to be complemented by actions by other countries to address structural barriers, and ensure that targets and indicators are monitored by the regional/global communities. In addition, the goal on partnership for development would include targets on the establishment and reform of global governance institutions, reflecting the changing economic realities, especially of Asia-Pacific emerging economies, to manage global public goods, including international finance/financial markets, health (early-warning systems, access to medicines and vaccines, standard operating principles for managing risks of contagion, etc.), climate change, trade, technology.

Table IV-4: Scenarios for a Post-2015 Development Framework

Scenarios by Ambition Level Areas	Base Model, MDG+	Integrated Sustainable Development Model, MDG++	Transformational Model
Goals	<p>8 Core Goals like the MDGs</p> <p>Additional goals on voluntary basis. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cambodia: demining unexploded ordnance</li> <li>- Mongolia: good governance and fighting corruption</li> <li>- Viet Nam: reduce vulnerability of women to domestic violence</li> </ul>	<p>10 to 12 goals</p> <p>Combine the 3 MDGs on health into one goal area</p> <p>Add the following goal areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- food security</li> <li>- employment/jobs</li> <li>- improved living conditions, including electricity</li> <li>- liveable cities</li> <li>- disaster risk reduction</li> <li>- governance including peace and security</li> </ul> <p>Facilitate customization through supplementary goals</p>	<p>10 to 12 goals</p> <p>Combine the 3 MDGs on health into one goal area</p> <p>Add the following goal areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- food security</li> <li>- employment/jobs</li> <li>- improved living conditions, including electricity</li> <li>- liveable cities</li> <li>- disaster risk reduction</li> <li>- governance includes peace and security</li> </ul> <p>Institutionalise customization through supplementary goals</p>
Targets and Indicators	Strengthen targets for Goals 7 and 8	<p>Articulate targets to embed <b>sustainability</b>. Examples include:</p> <p><i>Economic sustainability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employment-rich growth</li> <li>- Energy access</li> <li>- Wider fiscal space</li> </ul> <p><i>Social sustainability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education quality</li> <li>- Positive discrimination</li> <li>- Social protection</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental sustainability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responsible use of natural capital</li> <li>- Pollution and waste</li> <li>- Emissions per \$ of GDP</li> </ul> <p>Global cooperation for people-centred development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ODA</li> <li>- Mobility of goods, services, ideas and people</li> <li>- Global institutions including private financial systems</li> </ul>	<p>Transformative targets to embed <b>sustainability and equity</b>. Examples include:</p> <p><i>Economic sustainability:</i> Targets that foster changes in production systems, consumption patterns and lifestyles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced share in consumption of non-renewable energy</li> <li>- Reduced and better managed waste</li> <li>- Increased energy efficiency</li> </ul> <p><i>Social sustainability:</i> Targets that foster attitudinal and behaviour change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curriculum and legal changes for equity e.g. on asset ownership by women, gender-based violence</li> <li>- Democratic governance, accountability and transparency</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental sustainability:</i> Targets to respect planetary boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maximize economic growth subject to environmental sustainability (e.g. green modes of production, ensure food security while promoting more sustainable agriculture, promote smarter/climate resilient cities that address the need of a growing population)</li> </ul> <p>Global cooperation for people-centred development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ODA</li> <li>- Mobility of goods, services, ideas and people</li> <li>- Global institutions including private financial systems</li> </ul>

Scenarios by Ambition Level Areas	Base Model, MDG+	Integrated Sustainable Development Model, MDG++	Transformational Model
	Track inequality and exclusion by monitoring aggregate progress and change at the “bottom-end”	Track inequality and exclusion by monitoring aggregate progress and change at the “bottom-end”	Build inequality tracks across targets  Track inequality and exclusion by monitoring aggregate progress and change at the “bottom-end”
	Globally shared minimum set supplemented by customized targets and indicators at country level	Globally shared minimum set supplemented by customized targets and indicators at the country level	Globally shared minimum set supplemented by customized targets and indicators at the country level
Applicability	Goals 1-6: Developing Countries Goals 7-8: All Countries	Universal goals	Universal goals
	Shared goals with differentiated responsibility	Strengthened regional and global cooperation  Shared goals with differentiated responsibility	Strengthened regional and global cooperation  Shared goals with differentiated responsibility
Operationalization	National reporting	National reporting  Peer review	National reporting  Peer review
	Strengthen data for disaggregated monitoring	Strengthen data for disaggregated monitoring  Further technical work to identify indicators to monitor environmental sustainability	Strengthen data for disaggregated monitoring  Further technical work to identify indicators to monitor transformation aspects of goals and targets

3.4 Shared agendas but differentiated responsibility established within regions/countries by levels of development.

metrics for success. While the final push to 2015 can establish a base-line, a time horizon can allow policy adjustments and actions to realize medium- to long-term results.

## Compliance and timeframe

The challenge of ensuring compliance remains, considering that most global environment agreements are not effectively implemented; global institutions may not be effective in the presence of competing interest groups and short-term horizons. Hence, apart from national/local action, global public goods could be supported by monitoring cross-country compliance on a “peer review”-type basis as well as on the basis of periodic (e.g., biennial) reporting.

A specific timeframe, say of 10-15 years, within which governments can work their policies, plans and strategies. This provides scope to assess results against

## Seizing the future

The MDGs have demonstrated the value of rallying global support around common objectives. This experience can now serve as the basis for an even more vigorous effort in the decades ahead. Asia and the Pacific has been in the vanguard of global economic and social development. Now it has the opportunity to ensure that future development is not just rapid but more sustainable and fully inclusive. The time has now arrived to reach out and seize the future – and ensure that the region achieves rapid and equitable progress and serves the interests of its most vulnerable people.

## Chapter IV Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> ADB/ESCAP/UNDP, 2013.
- <sup>2</sup> This and subsequent references to Pacific refer to survey results for Oceania (see UN and others, 2013).
- <sup>3</sup> Salim, 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> See [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/309](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/309).
- <sup>5</sup> ADB, 2013a.
- <sup>6</sup> Kharas, 2012.
- <sup>7</sup> Munasinghe, 2011.
- <sup>8</sup> Green, Hale and Lockwood, 2012.
- <sup>9</sup> ADB, 2013b.

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# APPENDIX

## Technical Note 1: MDG process classification

### Data sources

The data underlying the MDG progress classification tables are from the Global Millennium Development Goals Indicators Database (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/>), except for the poverty- and education-related indicators under Goal 1, 2 and 3. This database is updated annually, resulting in revisions of specific data points in some cases. The database was updated on 1 July 2013 and accessed on 27 July 2013. The poverty indicators under Goal 1 were obtained from the poverty and inequality database from the World Bank accessed on 30 July 2013. UNESCO Institute of Statistics provided data for the education-related indicators under Goals 2 and 3 on 15 May 2013. Thus prospects for progress presented in the Asia-Pacific MDGs report 2012/13 are not always comparable with those in previous reports in this series.

Reference populations published by the United Nations Population Division (World Population Prospects: the 2012 Revision) and the GDP from the *World Economic Outlook Database April 2013 Edition* from IMF are used for estimating the size of the affected population as well as regional totals and averages.

### Determining the progress in achieving a MDG target

A country, region or subregion is assigned one of the following four categories of MDG progress towards the targets:

- *Early achiever: Already achieved the 2015 target*
- ▶ *On track: Expected to meet the target by 2015*
- *Off track-Slow: Expected to meet the target, but after 2015*
- ◀ *Off track-No progress/regressing: Stagnating or slipping backwards*

Two different procedures are used to determine the categories, depending on whether or not an indicator has an explicit target value for 2015. For indicators without such a target value, such as HIV prevalence,

TB prevalence, TB death rate, forest cover, protected area and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP, only three of the four categories are used: indicators trending in the 'right' direction since 1990 are categorized as Early achievers; indicators showing no change at all over the period are categorized as On track; and finally indicators trending in the 'wrong' direction are categorized as Off track-No progress/regressing.

For indicators with an explicit target value, such as \$1.25 a day poverty, mortality rates, school enrolment and the gender parity indices, all four categories are used. To determine the category, the year  $t^*$  – by which a country is expected to reach its MDG target if the trend since 1990 continued – is estimated (see below). Denote  $t_{Lst}$  as the year with the latest available value. If  $t^*$  is below  $t_{Lst}$ , the country is categorized as an Early achiever. If  $t^*$  lies between  $t_{Lst} + 1$  and 2015, it is categorized as On track. If  $t^*$  is above 2015, the country is categorized as Off track-Slow. Naturally, no  $t^*$  can be estimated if a country has a zero trend or trend in the 'wrong' direction, i.e. away from the target value. In these cases, the country is categorized as Off track-No progress/regressing.

To estimate  $t^*$ , the trend since 1990 is estimated first based on at least two data points, which are at least three years apart. In case an indicator is a proportion or a probability, the original value,  $Y_t$  is converted into  $y_t$ , which is between 0 and 1, by dividing  $Y_t$  by the appropriate scale. For example, for \$1.25 poverty rate,  $Y_t$  is divided by 100; for infant mortality, the indicator is divided by 1,000. A logit transformation is then made on  $y_t$  so that the indicator is on the scale of real numbers. For indicators that are odds ratios, such as gender parity, a log transformation is used. For indicators that cannot be interpreted as either a probability or odds ratio, such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per \$1 GDP (PPP), no transformation is applied.

$$\begin{aligned} L_t &= \log\left(\frac{y_t}{1-y_t}\right) && \text{if } y_t \text{ is a probability} \\ &= \log(y_t) && \text{if } y_t \text{ is a rate of proportions} \\ &= y_t && \text{otherwise} \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

The year  $T$  is adjusted to  $t$  by subtracting the mean year from all the years:

$$t = T - \bar{T}$$

The rate of change is estimated using the following linear equation:

$$L_t = r_0 + r_1 * t + \varepsilon_t \quad (2)$$

For countries in North and Central Asia the impact of the social changes in the early 1990s on many of the MDG indicators is taken into account. The rate of change for all the available data since 1990 is calculated first and then for all the available data except the first year. If the signs of the two estimated rates differ, the trend estimate excluding the observation for the first year is used.

In addition, for indicators such as TB prevalence, TB death rate and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP, where enough data (more than five observations) are available to detect a reversal of trend, a binomial equation was estimated using the Ordinary Least Square method:

$$L_t = r_0 + r_1 * t + r_2 * t^2 + \varepsilon_t \quad (3)$$

When  $r_2$ , the coefficient of  $t^2$ , is statistically significant (at 0.02 level) and there are more than three data points to the right of the turning point, estimated at  $-r_1/(2 * r_2)$ , the binomial model is used in place of the linear model. If  $r_2 < 0$ , the indicator increased in value first and then decreased. This means that the target has already been achieved. If  $r_2 > 0$ , there is regression on the indicator. When the linear model is used, the sign of  $r_1$  is used to judge if the country has already achieved the target ( $r_1 < 0$ ), is on track ( $r_1 = 0$ ), or is regressing ( $r_1 > 0$ ).

There are instances of large changes in the value of an indicator, the magnitude of which makes it difficult for the trend to sustain in future years (or extrapolate the trend backwards to as early as 1990). Since a logit transformation for most of the indicators is applied, a restriction to the slope is considered in these cases (to be between -0.2 and 0.2). It is possible to simulate that a slope of 0.2 or larger or -0.2 or smaller can give very drastic results when moving through the 25 years (1990-2015) with the logit transformations. This restriction does not affect the on/off track decision: a country with this rapid change will be early achiever or on track if in the right sign already and regressing if in the wrong sign.

## Setting the target value

When an indicator requires a target value, a value for the indicator for the year 1990 is required to calculate it. When the 1990 value is not available, with the exception of the North and Central Asian countries, the first value is used in place of the 1990 value. For the North and Central Asian countries, if the trend estimate excludes the first available value, the second value is then used in place of the 1990 value.

## Using cut-off values

The cut-off values depend on the kind of target of the indicator. Some of the MDG targets require an indicator value to increase or decrease by a certain proportion of their 1990 values. The only indicator of this kind that has a cut-off point is \$1.25 a day poverty, because 2 per cent used to be the lowest level reported on this indicator. Many other indicators require an absolute level as a target, such as the primary school enrolment. These targets cannot be achieved by the model due to the transformation used. In this case the indicator is treated as achieved if the country has reached this cut-off value. In the case of primary school enrolment, for example, this cut-off value is set at 95 per cent instead of 100. The transformation and cut-off values for indicators are presented in Table 1.

## Calculating regional and country group aggregates and the affected population

### Regional and country group aggregates

The aggregates are estimated by using a weighted average of the actual country values, or imputed country values wherever data are missing for the year required. The reference populations were obtained from *World Population Prospects: the 2012 Revision* (United Nations, 2011) and *World Economic Outlook Database April 2013 Edition*. The same models for estimating trends are used to impute missing values for the year for a country (please see the previous section on how to calculate the trend).

The aggregate values for a specific indicator are calculated through the following process:

Table 1. Cut-off values for selected MDG indicators

Indicator	MDG target	Cut-Off	Transformation	Quadratic Function (when data permits) poverty
\$1.25 per day poverty	Half 1990 value	2	Logit	
Underweight children	Half 1990 value	None	Logit	
Primary enrolment	100	95	Logit	
Reaching last grade	100	95	Logit	
Primary completion	100	95	Logit	
Gender primary	1	0.95	Log	
Gender secondary	1	0.95	Log	
Gender tertiary	1	0.95	Log	
Under-5 mortality	One third 1990 value	None	Logit	
Infant mortality	One third 1990 value	None	Logit	
Maternal mortality	Reduce by 3/4 1990 value	None	Logit	
Skilled birth attendance	Reduce by 3/4 (without)	None	Logit	
Antenatal care (= 1 visit)	100	95	Logit	
HIV prevalence	Reverse the trend		Logit	Yes
TB incidence	Reverse the trend		Logit	Yes
TB prevalence	Reverse the trend		Logit	Yes
Forest cover	Reverse the trend		Logit	(not applicable)
Protected area	Reverse the trend		Logit	(not applicable)
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP	Reverse the trend		None	Yes
Safe drinking water	Half 1990 value (without)	None	Logit	
Basic sanitation	Half 1990 value (without)	None	Logit	
Safe drinking water	Half 1990 value (without)	None	Logit	

Note: Protected Area and Forest Cover are marked "not applicable" as they tend to stay constant/show very little variation for most of the time and hence quadratic or other polynomial functional forms cannot be fitted.

- Estimate the indicator values for the countries (see the previous section, estimating the trend) that do not have data in a year.
- Using the reference populations, a weighted average of the country values is calculated to obtain the aggregate value for the region or country group.
- If the country was classified as regressing in an indicator, the latest available value will be used as estimate for following years, assuming that the country will maintain at least that level of the indicator and will not get worse.

## Affected population

The calculation of the affected population is based on the aggregate value of the indicator for the region and the total reference population for the region. More specifically, the following processes are used for computing the affected population for different types of indicators.

In case a higher value of an indicator represents a worsening outcome (e.g. \$1.25 a day poverty, underweight children), the affected population is calculated by:

$$CV * TRP$$

where *CV* is the converted value of the indicator at the aggregate level (between 0 and 1) and *TRP* is the total reference population in the region.

In case a higher value of an indicator represents improvement in outcome (e.g., primary enrolment, births by skilled professionals), the affected population is calculated as:

$$(1 - CV) * TRP$$

In this last category there are some indicators, such as gender primary, gender secondary and gender tertiary, for which the affected population is computed as:

$$\frac{(1 - CV) * TRP}{2}$$

Finally, there are some indicators without reference populations, such as forest cover, protected areas, for which it is therefore impossible to calculate the affected populations.

Regional and country group aggregates are reported only when the countries account for more than one half of the total reference population in a region or country group.

**Table 2. Data series names and responsible agency**

Short indicator name	Original indicator name	Responsible agency
<b>Goal 1</b>		
\$1.25 per day poverty	Population below \$1 (PPP) per day, percentage	World Bank
Country line poverty	Population below national poverty line, total, percentage	World Bank
Underweight children	Children under 5 moderately or severely underweight, percentage	UNICEF
<b>Goal 2</b>		
Primary enrolment	Total net enrolment ratio in primary education, both sexes	UIS
Reaching last grade	Percentage of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach the last grade of primary, both sexes	UIS
Primary completion	Primary completion rate, both sexes	UIS
<b>Goal 3</b>		
Gender primary	Gender Parity Index in primary level enrolment	UIS
Gender secondary	Gender Parity Index in secondary level enrolment	UIS
Gender tertiary	Gender Parity Index in tertiary level enrolment	UIS
<b>Goal 4</b>		
Under-5 mortality	Children under 5 mortality rate per 1,000 live births	UNICEF
Infant mortality	Infant mortality rate (0-1 year) per 1,000 live births	UNICEF
<b>Goal 5 A</b>		
Maternal mortality	Maternal mortality ratio	WHO, UNICEF
Skilled birth attendance	Births attended by skilled health personnel, percentage	WHO, UNICEF
Antenatal care (≥ 1 visit)	Antenatal care coverage, at least one visit, percentage	WHO, UNICEF
<b>Goal 6</b>		
HIV prevalence	People living with HIV, 15-49 years old, percentage	UNAIDS
TB incidence	Tuberculosis incidence rate per year per 100,000 population	WHO
TB prevalence	Tuberculosis prevalence rate per 100,000 population	WHO
<b>Goal 7</b>		
Forest cover	Proportion of land area covered by forest, percentage	FAO
Protected area	Terrestrial and marine areas protected to total territorial area, percentage	UNEP
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP	Carbon dioxide emissions (CO <sub>2</sub> ), kg CO <sub>2</sub> per \$1 GDP (PPP) (CDIAC)	Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center
Safe drinking water	Proportion of the population using improved drinking water sources, total	WHO, UNICEF
Basic sanitation	Proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities, total	WHO, UNICEF

## Technical Note 2: Addressing the question of “Did the MDGs make a difference”?

### Introduction

The monitoring of the MDGs has predominantly focused on whether the various targets are met or not. Alternative to this approach is to evaluate the extent to which the progress towards the targets was accelerated following the introduction of the MDGs.

Sakiko Fukuda-Parr and Joshua Greenstein (2010) studied the acceleration in progress in the under-five mortality rate by comparing the average annual rate of reduction (AARR) of the period of time preceding the MDGs to that of the period of time after the introduction of the MDGs. The AARR was introduced by UNICEF in its reports “The state of the world’s children” to monitor and evaluate the global trend in underweight prevalence among children under five and child mortality. The AARR measures the rate of change of a given indicator from baseline to the current year. When estimates of the indicators are available for multiple years, regression analysis method can be used to calculate the AARR. The approach is appealing because it takes into account the fact that it becomes more challenging to achieve the same magnitude of progress towards a particular target at higher levels of achievement. In other words, the approach allows for non-linear acceleration.

### Data sources

The data used for the analysis of acceleration in progress towards achieving MDGs in Asia and the Pacific are from the Global Millennium Development Goals Indicators Database (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/>). The analyses presented in the current report are based on data updated on 1 July 2013 and accessed on 27 July 2013. For all the indicators under Goal 2 and 3, UNESCO Institute for Statistics provided the data on 15 May 2013. For the poverty indicators under Goal 1, data were obtained from the poverty and inequality database from the World Bank on 30 July 2013.

### References

Fukuda-Parr, S. and J. Greenstein (2010). *How Should MDG Implementation Be Measured: Faster Progress or Meeting Targets?*. IPC-IG Working Paper. Brasilia.

Hailu, D. and R. Tsukada (2011). *Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: A Measure of Progress*. IPC-IG Working Paper. Brasilia.

### Calculation of the AARR

If the level of the indicator in a baseline year  $t_0$  is  $Y_0$  and assuming an exponential function, any data point can be expressed as:

$$Y_{t_i} = Y_0(1-r)^{(t_i-t_0)}$$

where the  $r$  is the average annual rate of reduction (AARR).

If some algebra is applied to the previous expression, it is possible to obtain the following:

$$\ln(Y_{t_i}) = \ln(Y_0) + (t_i - t_0)\ln(1-r) = \ln(Y_0) + t_i\ln(1-r) - t_0\ln(1-r) = \beta t_i + C_0$$

where  $\beta = \ln(1-r)$  and  $C_0 = \ln(Y_0) - t_0\ln(1-r)$

From  $\beta = \ln(1-r)$  it is possible to obtain  $r = AARR = 1 - \exp(\beta)$

### Decision

The AARR is calculated for the two periods of time, pre-MDGs and post-MDGs. Then these two rates are compared allowing for a 5 per cent margin for statistical error. This 5 per cent was chosen following the paper by Degol Hailu and Raquel Tsukada (2011). In the case of an indicator for which the higher the level the better, for example, primary enrolment:

if  $(1.05 * AARR_{pre-MDGs} \leq AARR_{post-MDGs})$  the country is considered as having accelerated the rate of progress for that indicator,

if  $(0.95 * AARR_{pre-MDGs} \geq AARR_{post-MDGs})$  the country is considered as having slowed down the rate of progress for that indicator,

if  $(0.95 * AARR_{pre-MDGs} < AARR_{post-MDGs} \& 1.05 * AARR_{pre-MDGs} > AARR_{post-MDGs})$  the country is considered as having maintain the rate of progress for that indicator.

All these decisions can be adjusted in the case of an indicator for which the lower the level the better.

## Technical Note 3: Selected MDG Indicators

### Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

	\$1.25 per day poverty (%)		Country line poverty (%)		Underweight children (% under age 5)	
	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>						
China	60.2 (90)	11.8 (09)	6.0 (96)	4.6 (98)	12.6 (90)	3.6 (10)
Hong Kong, China	...	...	...	...	...	...
Macao, China	...	...	...	...	...	...
DPR Korea	...	...	...	...	55.5 (98)	18.8 (09)
Republic of Korea	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mongolia	...	...	38.7 (10)	27.4 (12)	11.0 (92)	4.7 (10)
<b>South-East Asia</b>						
Brunei Darussalam	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cambodia	44.5 (94)	18.6 (09)	53.2 (04)	20.5 (11)	42.6 (96)	28.3 (10)
Indonesia	54.3 (90)	16.2 (11)	17.6 (96)	12.0 (12)	29.8 (92)	17.9 (10)
Lao PDR	55.7 (92)	33.9 (08)	45.0 (92)	27.6 (08)	39.8 (93)	31.6 (06)
Malaysia	1.6 (92)	0.0 (09)	12.4 (92)	1.7 (12)	22.1 (90)	12.9 (06)
Myanmar	...	...	...	...	32.5 (90)	22.6 (09)
Philippines	30.7 (91)	18.4 (09)	24.9 (03)	26.5 (09)	29.9 (90)	20.7 (08)
Singapore	...	...	...	...	...	3.3 (00)
Thailand	11.6 (90)	0.4 (10)	58.1 (90)	13.2 (11)	16.3 (93)	7.0 (06)
Timor-Leste	...	...	36.3 (01)	49.9 (07)	40.6 (02)	45.3 (10)
Viet Nam	63.7 (93)	16.9 (08)	...	20.7 (10)	36.9 (93)	11.7 (11)
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>						
Afghanistan	...	...	...	36.0 (08)	44.9 (97)	32.9 (04)
Bangladesh	70.2 (92)	43.2 (10)	56.6 (92)	31.5 (10)	61.5 (90)	36.4 (11)
Bhutan	26.2 (03)	10.2 (07)	...	23.2 (07)	14.1 (99)	12.7 (10)
India	49.4 (94)	32.7 (10)	37.2 (05)	29.8 (10)	52.8 (92)	43.5 (06)
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	3.8 (90)	1.4 (05)	...	...	13.8 (95)	9.5 (98)
Maldives	25.6 (98)	1.5 (04)	...	...	32.5 (94)	17.8 (09)
Nepal	68.0 (96)	24.8 (10)	41.8 (96)	25.2 (10)	42.6 (95)	28.8 (11)
Pakistan	64.7 (91)	21.0 (08)	30.6 (99)	22.3 (06)	39.0 (91)	31.5 (11)
Sri Lanka	15.0 (91)	4.1 (10)	26.1 (91)	8.9 (10)	33.8 (93)	21.6 (09)
Turkey	2.1 (94)	1.3 (10)	27.0 (02)	18.1 (09)	8.7 (93)	1.7 (08)
<b>North and Central Asia</b>						
Armenia	17.5 (96)	2.5 (10)	48.3 (01)	35.0 (11)	2.7 (98)	4.2 (05)
Azerbaijan	16.3 (95)	0.4 (08)	49.6 (01)	7.6 (11)	8.8 (96)	8.4 (06)
Georgia	4.7 (96)	18.0 (10)	28.5 (03)	24.7 (09)	2.7 (99)	1.1 (09)
Kazakhstan	4.2 (93)	0.1 (09)	46.7 (01)	5.3 (11)	6.2 (95)	4.9 (06)
Kyrgyzstan	18.6 (93)	5.0 (11)	61.0 (06)	38.0 (12)	10.4 (97)	2.7 (06)
Russian Federation	1.5 (93)	0.0 (09)	19.7 (02)	11.1 (06)	...	...
Tajikistan	49.4 (99)	6.6 (09)	96.0 (99)	46.7 (09)	14.9 (05)	15.0 (07)
Turkmenistan	63.5 (93)	24.8 (98)	...	...	10.5 (00)	8.2 (05)
Uzbekistan	...	...	...	...	13.3 (96)	4.4 (06)
<b>Pacific</b>						
American Samoa	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cook Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fiji	29.2 (03)	5.9 (09)	35.0 (03)	31.0 (09)	...	6.9 (93)
French Polynesia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Guam	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kiribati	...	...	...	...	...	...
Marshall Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...
Micronesia (F.S.)	...	31.1 (00)	...	...	...	...
Nauru	...	...	...	...	...	4.8 (07)
New Caledonia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Niue	...	...	...	...	...	...
Northern Mariana I.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Palau	...	...	...	...	...	...
Papua New Guinea	...	35.8 (96)	...	37.5 (96)	...	18.1 (05)
Samoa	...	...	...	...	...	1.7 (99)
Solomon Islands	...	...	...	22.7 (06)	...	11.5 (07)
Tonga	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tuvalu	...	...	...	...	...	1.6 (07)
Vanuatu	...	...	...	...	10.6 (96)	11.7 (07)

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point.

Source: Poverty and inequality database from World Bank accessed on 30 July 2013; United Nations MDG database for underweight children accessed on 27 July 2013.



## Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

	Primary enrolment ratio (%)		Reaching last grade (%)		Primary completion rate (%)	
	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>						
China	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hong Kong, China	93.03 (01)	97.23 (11)	99.33 (02)	99.43 (10)	96.66 (01)	91.28 (11)
Macao, China	85.61 (99)	87.26 (08)	98.07 (08)	98.27 (09)	100.33 (99)	97.09 (08)
DPR Korea	...	...	...	...	...	...
Republic of Korea	99.33 (99)	98.87 (10)	99.22 (99)	99.28 (09)	104.48 (99)	101.23 (10)
Mongolia	89.62 (99)	98.79 (11)	87.22 (99)	92.84 (10)	85.81 (99)	115.29 (11)
<b>South-East Asia</b>						
Brunei Darussalam	...	...	97.12 (03)	96.58 (10)	121.12 (99)	119.53 (11)
Cambodia	86.94 (99)	98.25 (11)	54.74 (00)	61.34 (10)	40.89 (99)	89.91 (11)
Indonesia	93.96 (00)	98.99 (11)	85.89 (01)	88.00 (10)	92.74 (01)	107.80 (11)
Lao PDR	77.21 (99)	97.35 (11)	54.57 (99)	68.02 (10)	71.02 (99)	92.61 (11)
Malaysia	95.14 (99)	95.89 (05)	97.14 (02)	99.24 (09)	94.97 (99)	98.96 (05)
Myanmar	...	...	55.22 (00)	74.79 (09)	74.14 (99)	103.60 (10)
Philippines	89.82 (99)	88.71 (09)	75.25 (01)	75.78 (08)	87.04 (99)	91.57 (09)
Singapore	...	...	...	98.68 (08)	...	...
Thailand	93.61 (06)	89.68 (09)	...	...	...	87.62 (99)
Timor-Leste	66.84 (05)	90.93 (11)	74.17 (08)	83.56 (10)	79.01 (08)	72.49 (11)
Viet Nam	97.89 (99)	99.42 (11)	82.82 (99)	93.78 (10)	98.18 (99)	104.27 (11)
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>						
Afghanistan	...	...	...	...	...	34.06 (05)
Bangladesh	...	...	66.60 (08)	66.20 (09)	...	...
Bhutan	55.84 (99)	89.35 (11)	81.51 (99)	94.90 (11)	50.73 (99)	95.10 (11)
India	83.47 (00)	98.65 (10)	62.05 (99)	61.37 (01)	68.85 (99)	97.16 (09)
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	86.45 (99)	99.85 (11)	97.44 (00)	98.13 (10)	92.85 (00)	106.06 (11)
Maldives	97.76 (99)	94.58 (11)	...	...	140.17 (05)	107.18 (11)
Nepal	65.12 (99)	71.13 (00)	59.04 (99)	61.69 (07)	63.24 (99)	70.01 (02)
Pakistan	57.88 (01)	72.15 (11)	69.68 (04)	52.21 (10)	61.31 (05)	66.81 (11)
Sri Lanka	99.80 (01)	92.96 (11)	97.79 (01)	97.33 (10)	107.06 (01)	100.61 (11)
Turkey	94.18 (99)	98.92 (10)	94.89 (03)	99.22 (09)	94.19 (04)	100.38 (10)
<b>North and Central Asia</b>						
Armenia	86.93 (02)	96.18 (07)	95.76 (02)	95.98 (10)	93.23 (02)	101.32 (07)
Azerbaijan	88.68 (99)	87.27 (11)	96.26 (99)	97.21 (10)	92.17 (99)	92.81 (11)
Georgia	90.20 (04)	98.44 (11)	99.12 (99)	96.19 (09)	84.18 (99)	116.24 (10)
Kazakhstan	94.02 (00)	99.51 (11)	94.95 (00)	99.55 (11)	92.63 (00)	116.25 (11)
Kyrgyzstan	92.95 (99)	96.06 (11)	94.52 (99)	95.29 (10)	93.58 (99)	95.78 (11)
Russian Federation	94.20 (06)	95.66 (09)	94.76 (99)	96.15 (08)	90.62 (99)	97.93 (09)
Tajikistan	96.11 (00)	97.63 (11)	96.73 (99)	98.92 (10)	92.49 (99)	103.89 (11)
Turkmenistan	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uzbekistan	93.37 (07)	92.79 (11)	99.53 (99)	98.08 (10)	95.59 (99)	92.85 (11)
<b>Pacific</b>						
American Samoa	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cook Islands	86.26 (99)	98.44 (10)	...	...	87.92 (99)	109.85 (11)
Fiji	94.27 (99)	99.01 (11)	82.10 (99)	90.94 (08)	100.04 (99)	103.42 (11)
French Polynesia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Guam	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kiribati	99.13 (99)	99.61 (02)	69.45 (01)	78.91 (03)	107.15 (99)	112.04 (08)
Marshall Islands	98.11 (02)	99.40 (11)	78.39 (05)	83.47 (08)	92.53 (99)	97.28 (11)
Micronesia (F.S.)	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nauru	...	...	...	...	86.97 (01)	97.27 (07)
New Caledonia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Niue	...	98.53 (99)	...	...	85.42 (99)	115.38 (04)
Northern Mariana I.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Palau	...	...	...	...	98.84 (00)	104.45 (04)
Papua New Guinea	...	...	...	...	...	55.11 (00)
Samoa	94.13 (99)	93.35 (11)	90.00 (99)	76.57 (10)	93.90 (99)	98.45 (11)
Solomon Islands	77.05 (05)	87.50 (10)	...	...	...	...
Tonga	91.46 (99)	98.93 (06)	91.13 (00)	90.39 (05)	107.45 (99)	104.02 (06)
Tuvalu	...	...	...	...	109.87 (00)	99.17 (06)
Vanuatu	97.68 (99)	98.91 (05)	68.91 (99)	71.45 (08)	91.20 (99)	83.41 (10)

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point.  
Source: UIS provided data on 15 May 2013.

## Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

	Gender parity index in primary		Gender parity index in secondary		Gender parity index in tertiary	
	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>						
China	1.03 (01)	1.04 (11)	0.95 (01)	1.05 (11)	0.83 (03)	1.13 (11)
Hong Kong, China	0.97 (99)	1.04 (11)	0.98 (01)	1.02 (11)	1.00 (03)	1.10 (11)
Macao, China	0.99 (99)	0.98 (08)	1.05 (99)	0.92 (11)	0.73 (99)	0.97 (11)
DPR Korea	...	...	...	...	...	...
Republic of Korea	1.01 (99)	0.99 (10)	1.00 (99)	0.99 (10)	0.60 (99)	0.72 (10)
Mongolia	1.01 (99)	0.98 (11)	1.26 (99)	1.06 (11)	1.84 (99)	1.49 (11)
<b>South-East Asia</b>						
Brunei Darussalam	0.95 (99)	1.01 (11)	1.09 (99)	1.02 (11)	1.89 (99)	1.69 (11)
Cambodia	0.87 (99)	0.95 (11)	0.53 (99)	0.85 (08)	0.33 (00)	0.62 (11)
Indonesia	0.97 (00)	1.02 (11)	0.95 (00)	1.00 (11)	0.88 (00)	0.87 (11)
Lao PDR	0.85 (99)	0.94 (11)	0.70 (99)	0.85 (11)	0.49 (99)	0.74 (11)
Malaysia	0.98 (99)	1.00 (05)	1.08 (99)	1.07 (10)	1.02 (99)	1.34 (10)
Myanmar	0.98 (99)	1.00 (10)	1.00 (99)	1.06 (10)	1.38 (07)	1.37 (11)
Philippines	1.00 (99)	0.98 (09)	1.10 (99)	1.08 (09)	1.27 (99)	1.24 (09)
Singapore	...	...	...	...	...	...
Thailand	0.97 (99)	0.99 (09)	0.98 (01)	1.08 (11)	1.17 (99)	1.31 (11)
Timor-Leste	0.93 (04)	0.96 (11)	0.98 (04)	1.03 (11)	1.24 (02)	0.70 (09)
Viet Nam	0.93 (99)	0.94 (11)	...	...	0.76 (99)	1.01 (11)
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>						
Afghanistan	0.08 (99)	0.71 (11)	0.35 (03)	0.55 (11)	0.28 (03)	0.24 (09)
Bangladesh	...	...	0.99 (99)	1.17 (11)	0.49 (99)	0.70 (11)
Bhutan	0.85 (99)	1.01 (11)	0.80 (99)	1.04 (11)	0.58 (99)	0.68 (11)
India	0.84 (99)	1.00 (10)	0.70 (99)	0.92 (10)	0.66 (00)	0.73 (10)
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	0.94 (99)	0.99 (11)	0.93 (99)	0.96 (11)	0.80 (99)	1.01 (11)
Maldives	1.01 (99)	0.98 (11)	1.08 (99)	1.13 (04)	2.29 (03)	1.13 (08)
Nepal	0.77 (99)	0.86 (02)	0.70 (99)	0.89 (06)	0.40 (00)	0.60 (06)
Pakistan	0.67 (00)	0.82 (11)	0.77 (03)	0.73 (11)	0.79 (02)	0.91 (11)
Sri Lanka	0.99 (01)	0.99 (11)	1.03 (10)	1.04 (11)	1.92 (10)	1.83 (11)
Turkey	0.91 (99)	0.99 (10)	0.69 (99)	0.92 (10)	0.67 (99)	0.82 (10)
<b>North and Central Asia</b>						
Armenia	1.01 (02)	1.02 (10)	1.06 (02)	1.02 (10)	1.09 (99)	1.30 (11)
Azerbaijan	1.00 (99)	0.98 (11)	0.97 (07)	0.98 (11)	0.62 (99)	1.02 (11)
Georgia	0.99 (99)	1.03 (11)	0.98 (99)	0.95 (08)	1.06 (99)	1.20 (11)
Kazakhstan	1.01 (99)	1.00 (11)	1.00 (99)	0.97 (11)	1.14 (99)	1.44 (11)
Kyrgyzstan	0.99 (99)	0.99 (11)	1.02 (99)	1.00 (11)	1.04 (99)	1.24 (11)
Russian Federation	0.99 (99)	1.00 (09)	1.00 (03)	0.98 (09)	1.35 (03)	1.35 (09)
Tajikistan	0.95 (99)	0.96 (11)	0.86 (99)	0.87 (11)	0.43 (99)	0.52 (11)
Turkmenistan	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uzbekistan	1.00 (99)	0.97 (11)	0.98 (99)	0.98 (11)	0.82 (99)	0.65 (11)
<b>Pacific</b>						
American Samoa	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cook Islands	0.95 (99)	1.03 (11)	1.08 (99)	1.20 (11)	...	...
Fiji	0.99 (99)	1.00 (11)	1.11 (99)	1.08 (11)	1.20 (03)	1.19 (05)
French Polynesia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Guam	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kiribati	1.01 (99)	1.04 (09)	1.23 (99)	1.11 (08)	...	...
Marshall Islands	0.99 (99)	0.99 (11)	1.06 (99)	1.03 (09)	1.28 (01)	1.28 (03)
Micronesia (F.S.)	0.98 (04)	1.01 (07)	1.06 (04)	1.08 (05)	...	...
Nauru	1.33 (00)	1.06 (08)	1.17 (00)	1.20 (08)	...	...
New Caledonia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Niue	1.00 (99)	0.89 (05)	1.10 (99)	1.78 (05)	...	...
Northern Mariana I.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Palau	0.93 (99)	1.03 (07)	1.07 (99)	1.02 (04)	2.35 (00)	2.04 (02)
Papua New Guinea	0.86 (00)	0.89 (08)	...	...	...	0.57 (99)
Samoa	0.98 (99)	1.04 (11)	1.11 (99)	1.15 (11)	1.04 (99)	0.92 (01)
Solomon Islands	0.94 (99)	0.99 (10)	0.76 (99)	0.88 (10)	...	...
Tonga	0.95 (99)	0.96 (07)	1.14 (99)	1.00 (06)	1.35 (99)	1.66 (03)
Tuvalu	1.02 (99)	0.95 (06)	...	1.10 (01)	...	...
Vanuatu	0.98 (99)	0.95 (10)	0.88 (99)	1.02 (10)	0.57 (02)	0.60 (04)

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point.

Source: UIS provided data on 15 May 2013.

## Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

	Under-5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)		Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	
	1990	2011	1990	2011
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>				
China	48.9	14.6	38.7	12.6
Hong Kong, China	...	...	...	...
Macao, China	...	...	...	...
DPR Korea	45.0	33.2	22.9	26.3
Republic of Korea	7.5	4.8	6.4	4.1
Mongolia	106.5	30.7	76.1	25.5
<b>South-East Asia</b>				
Brunei Darussalam	12.3	7.2	9.2	5.6
Cambodia	116.7	42.5	85.1	36.2
Indonesia	81.6	31.8	54.1	24.8
Lao PDR	147.7	41.9	102.1	33.8
Malaysia	17.2	6.5	14.8	5.6
Myanmar	107.4	62.4	76.7	47.9
Philippines	57.0	25.4	40.2	20.2
Singapore	7.5	2.6	6.1	2.0
Thailand	35.0	12.3	28.8	10.6
Timor-Leste	180.0	54.1	135.0	45.8
Viet Nam	49.9	21.7	36.1	17.3
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>				
Afghanistan	192.0	101.1	129.4	72.7
Bangladesh	138.8	46.0	96.5	36.7
Bhutan	138.4	53.7	96.3	42.0
India	114.2	61.3	81.0	47.2
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	61.1	25.0	47.1	21.1
Maldives	105.2	10.7	75.7	9.2
Nepal	134.6	48.0	93.5	39.0
Pakistan	122.2	72.0	94.6	59.2
Sri Lanka	28.9	12.2	24.2	10.5
Turkey	72.0	15.2	59.8	11.5
<b>North and Central Asia</b>				
Armenia	47.2	17.5	40.4	15.6
Azerbaijan	94.5	44.7	75.4	38.5
Georgia	46.9	20.5	40.2	18.3
Kazakhstan	57.0	28.3	48.0	25.0
Kyrgyzstan	70.3	30.6	57.9	27.0
Russian Federation	27.3	11.9	23.0	9.8
Tajikistan	114.3	63.3	89.1	52.8
Turkmenistan	94.3	52.5	75.2	44.6
Uzbekistan	75.3	48.6	61.6	41.5
<b>Pacific</b>				
American Samoa	...	...	...	...
Cook Islands	19.1	9.5	16.4	8.1
Fiji	29.6	16.4	24.7	14.1
French Polynesia	...	...	...	...
Guam	...	...	...	...
Kiribati	87.6	47.4	64.1	37.7
Marshall Islands	51.9	26.2	40.8	22.1
Micronesia (F.S.)	56.4	41.5	43.9	33.5
Nauru	40.0	40.0	32.4	32.4
New Caledonia	...	...	...	...
Niue	14.2	21.1	12.2	18.0
Northern Mariana I.	...	...	...	...
Palau	32.3	18.6	27.0	14.3
Papua New Guinea	88.0	57.8	64.3	44.8
Samoa	29.5	18.7	24.6	16.0
Solomon Islands	41.8	21.6	33.7	18.4
Tonga	24.5	15.4	20.7	13.2
Tuvalu	57.6	30.1	44.7	25.1
Vanuatu	38.5	13.2	31.3	11.4

Source: United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013.

## Goal 5: Improve maternal health

	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)		Skilled birth attendance (%)		Antenatal care (≥ 1 visit) (%)	
	1990	2010	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>						
China	120	37	94.0 (90)	99.6 (10)	69.7 (92)	94.1 (10)
Hong Kong, China	...	...	...	...	...	...
Macao, China	...	...	...	...	...	...
DPR Korea	97	81	96.7 (00)	100.0 (09)	97.1 (00)	100.0 (09)
Republic of Korea	18	16	98.0 (90)	100.0 (97)	...	...
Mongolia	120	63	93.6 (98)	99.8 (11)	89.8 (98)	99.0 (10)
<b>South-East Asia</b>						
Brunei Darussalam	29	24	98.0 (94)	99.9 (09)	100.0 (94)	99.0 (09)
Cambodia	830	250	34.0 (98)	71.0 (10)	34.3 (98)	89.1 (10)
Indonesia	600	220	31.7 (91)	79.4 (07)	76.3 (91)	92.7 (10)
Lao PDR	1,600	470	19.4 (00)	20.3 (06)	26.5 (01)	35.1 (06)
Malaysia	53	29	92.8 (90)	98.6 (09)	73.6 (03)	90.7 (09)
Myanmar	520	200	46.3 (91)	70.6 (10)	75.8 (97)	83.1 (10)
Philippines	170	99	52.8 (93)	62.2 (08)	83.1 (93)	91.1 (08)
Singapore	6	3	...	100.0 (98)	...	...
Thailand	54	48	99.3 (00)	99.5 (09)	85.9 (96)	99.1 (09)
Timor-Leste	1,000	300	25.8 (97)	29.3 (10)	70.9 (97)	84.4 (10)
Viet Nam	240	59	77.1 (97)	92.9 (11)	70.6 (97)	93.7 (11)
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>						
Afghanistan	1,300	460	14.3 (03)	38.6 (11)	16.1 (03)	47.9 (11)
Bangladesh	800	240	9.5 (94)	31.7 (11)	25.7 (94)	54.6 (11)
Bhutan	1,000	180	14.9 (94)	64.5 (10)	51.0 (00)	97.3 (10)
India	600	200	34.2 (93)	52.3 (08)	61.9 (93)	74.2 (06)
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	120	21	86.1 (97)	97.3 (05)	76.5 (97)	98.3 (05)
Maldives	830	60	90.0 (94)	94.8 (09)	81.0 (01)	99.1 (09)
Nepal	770	170	7.4 (91)	36.0 (11)	15.4 (91)	58.3 (11)
Pakistan	490	260	18.8 (91)	43.0 (11)	25.6 (91)	60.9 (07)
Sri Lanka	85	35	94.1 (93)	98.6 (07)	80.2 (93)	99.4 (07)
Turkey	67	20	75.9 (93)	91.3 (08)	62.3 (93)	92.0 (08)
<b>North and Central Asia</b>						
Armenia	46	30	99.7 (90)	99.5 (10)	82.0 (97)	99.1 (10)
Azerbaijan	56	43	97.3 (90)	99.4 (10)	98.3 (97)	76.6 (06)
Georgia	63	67	96.6 (90)	99.9 (09)	74.0 (97)	97.6 (10)
Kazakhstan	92	51	99.0 (90)	100.0 (10)	92.5 (95)	99.9 (06)
Kyrgyzstan	73	71	98.9 (90)	98.3 (10)	97.3 (97)	96.9 (06)
Russian Federation	74	34	99.2 (90)	99.7 (10)	...	...
Tajikistan	94	65	90.3 (91)	87.7 (10)	71.3 (00)	88.8 (07)
Turkmenistan	82	67	95.8 (96)	99.5 (06)	98.1 (00)	99.1 (06)
Uzbekistan	59	28	97.5 (96)	99.9 (06)	94.9 (96)	99.0 (06)
<b>Pacific</b>						
American Samoa	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cook Islands	...	...	99.0 (91)	100.0 (08)	100.0 (05)	100.0 (08)
Fiji	32	26	100.0 (98)	99.7 (10)	...	100.0 (08)
French Polynesia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Guam	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kiribati	...	...	72.0 (94)	79.8 (09)	88.0 (94)	88.4 (09)
Marshall Islands	...	...	94.9 (98)	99.0 (10)	...	81.2 (07)
Micronesia (F.S.)	140	100	92.8 (99)	100.0 (09)	...	80.0 (08)
Nauru	...	...	...	97.4 (07)	...	94.5 (07)
New Caledonia	...	...	...	...	...	...
Niue	...	...	99.0 (90)	100.0 (08)	100.0 (05)	100.0 (08)
Northern Mariana I.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Palau	...	...	99.0 (90)	100.0 (10)	100.0 (07)	90.3 (10)
Papua New Guinea	390	230	53.2 (96)	53.0 (06)	76.7 (96)	78.8 (06)
Samoa	260	100	76.0 (90)	80.8 (09)	...	93.0 (09)
Solomon Islands	150	93	83.5 (94)	85.5 (07)	...	73.9 (07)
Tonga	67	110	92.0 (91)	98.4 (10)	99.0 (08)	97.9 (10)
Tuvalu	...	...	100.0 (90)	97.9 (07)	...	97.4 (07)
Vanuatu	220	110	87.0 (94)	74.0 (07)	...	84.3 (07)

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point.

Source: United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013.

## Goal 6: Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases

	HIV prevalence (% ages 15-49)		TB incidence rate (per 100,000)		TB prevalence rate (per 100,000)	
	1990	2009	1990	2010	1990	2010
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>						
China	...	0.1 *	153	75.0	215	104.0
Hong Kong, China	...	...	127	78.0	163	99.0
Macao, China	...	...	89	73.0	115	94.0
DPR Korea	...	...	344	345.0	768	422.0
Republic of Korea	0.1 *	0.1 *	167	100.0	223	149.0
Mongolia	0.1 *	0.1 *	405	223.0	934	348.0
<b>South-East Asia</b>						
Brunei Darussalam	...	...	71	70.0	90	89.0
Cambodia	0.5	0.6	580	424.0	1,667	817.0
Indonesia	0.1 *	0.3	206	187.0	445	281.0
Lao PDR	0.1 *	0.3	492	213.0	1,490	540.0
Malaysia	0.1	0.4	127	81.0	227	101.0
Myanmar	0.2	0.6	393	381.0	894	506.0
Philippines	0.1 *	0.1 *	393	270.0	1,003	484.0
Singapore	0.1 *	0.1	63	37.0	79	46.0
Thailand	1.0	1.2	138	124.0	199	161.0
Timor-Leste	...	...	498 ( 02 )	498.0	834 ( 02 )	701.0
Viet Nam	0.1 *	0.5	204	199.0	403	323.0
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>						
Afghanistan	0.1 *	0.1 *	189	189.0	326	351.0
Bangladesh	0.1 *	0.1 *	225	225.0	501	411.0
Bhutan	0.1 *	0.3	784	192.0	1,782	230.0
India	...	...	216	181.0	465	249.0
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	0.1 *	0.2	31	21.0	47	31.0
Maldives	0.1 *	0.1 *	150	34.0	299	44.0
Nepal	0.1 *	0.3	163	163.0	349	243.0
Pakistan	0.1 *	0.1	231	231.0	566	350.0
Sri Lanka	0.1 *	0.1 *	66	66.0	110	101.0
Turkey	0.1 *	0.1 *	53	24.0	51	24.0
<b>North and Central Asia</b>						
Armenia	0.1 *	0.2	17	55.0	25	78.0
Azerbaijan	0.1 *	0.1	305	113.0	711	177.0
Georgia	0.1 *	0.2	280	125.0	675	159.0
Kazakhstan	0.1 *	0.2	79	129.0	107	168.0
Kyrgyzstan	0.1 *	0.4	92	128.0	163	175.0
Russian Federation	...	...	47	97.0	79	124.0
Tajikistan	0.1 *	0.3	70	193.0	115	350.0
Turkmenistan	...	...	101	74.0	165	96.0
Uzbekistan	...	...	125	101.0	248	177.0
<b>Pacific</b>						
American Samoa	...	...	26	7.8	46	13.0
Cook Islands	...	...	11	6.0	14	7.7
Fiji	0.1 *	0.1 *	112	26.0	232	33.0
French Polynesia	...	...	31	23.0	40	29.0
Guam	...	...	47	65.0	60	84.0
Kiribati	...	...	116	356.0	257	462.0
Marshall Islands	...	...	137	536.0	261	924.0
Micronesia (F.S.)	...	...	379	200.0	455	294.0
Nauru	...	...	89	33.0	114	42.0
New Caledonia	...	...	99	25.0	128	32.0
Niue	...	...	42	40.0	54	52.0
Northern Mariana I.	...	...	91	60.0	117	77.0
Palau	...	...	45	153.0	57	256.0
Papua New Guinea	0.2	0.7	308	346.0	678	534.0
Samoa	...	...	36	9.6	53	13.0
Solomon Islands	...	...	312	103.0	615	162.0
Tonga	...	...	38	16.0	59	27.0
Tuvalu	...	...	536	228.0	933	381.0
Vanuatu	...	...	127	67.0	146	97.0

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point; \* Less than 0.1.

Source: United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013.

## Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

	Forest cover (% land area)		Protected area (% territorial area)		CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (kg CO <sub>2</sub> per \$1 GDP (PPP))	
	1990	2010	1990	2010	1990	2009
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>						
China	16.7	21.9	13.05	16.12	1.9695	0.9084
Hong Kong, China	...	...	41.15	41.88	0.2019	0.1206
Macao, China	...	...	...	...	0.1304	0.0329
DPR Korea	68.1	47.1	1.56	1.66	...	...
Republic of Korea	64.5	63.0	3.91	5.26	0.5061	0.4290
Mongolia	8.0	7.0	4.10	13.78	1.8814	1.1537
<b>South-East Asia</b>						
Brunei Darussalam	78.4	72.1	24.76	29.58	0.5054	0.5046
Cambodia	73.3	57.2	0.03	23.76	0.0612 ( 93 )	0.1502
Indonesia	65.4	52.1	3.93	9.05	0.4040	0.4657
Lao PDR	75.0	68.2	1.47	16.68	0.0594	0.1307
Malaysia	68.1	62.3	12.81	13.93	0.4521	0.5570
Myanmar	59.6	48.3	2.45	5.97	...	...
Philippines	22.0	25.7	2.88	5.06	0.2656	0.2457
Singapore	2.9	2.9	2.47	3.39	0.6105	0.0510
Thailand	38.3	37.1	10.51	16.41	0.4269	0.5568
Timor-Leste	65.0	49.9	1.71 ( 00 )	6.25	0.1842 ( 02 )	0.1236
Viet Nam	30.2	44.5	3.00	4.72	0.3584	0.6011
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>						
Afghanistan	2.1	2.1	0.37	0.37	0.0213 ( 02 )	0.2451
Bangladesh	11.5	11.1	0.91	4.24	0.1975	0.2537
Bhutan	64.6	69.1	14.25	28.35	0.1326	0.1321
India	21.5	23.0	4.55	5.00	0.6533	0.5338
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	6.8	6.8	5.40	6.96	0.6206	0.7547 ( 09 )
Maldives	3.3	3.3	...	...	0.3366 ( 95 )	0.4603
Nepal	33.7	25.4	7.70	16.38	0.0467	0.1157
Pakistan	3.3	2.2	9.81	10.56	0.3784	0.3879
Sri Lanka	36.4	28.8	13.86	15.40	0.1093	0.1338
Turkey	12.6	14.7	1.79	2.11	0.3331	0.3260
<b>North and Central Asia</b>						
Armenia	12.3	9.3	6.93	8.10	0.7571 ( 92 )	0.2786
Azerbaijan	11.3	11.3	6.20	7.36	2.2052 ( 92 )	0.5667
Georgia	40.0	39.5	2.55	3.68	1.1967 ( 92 )	0.3083
Kazakhstan	1.3	1.2	2.45	3.32	2.6752 ( 92 )	1.3959
Kyrgyzstan	4.4	5.0	6.36	6.33	1.2353 ( 92 )	0.5796
Russian Federation	49.4	49.4	4.82	11.35	1.4082 ( 92 )	0.8634
Tajikistan	2.9	2.9	1.94	4.77	0.6971 ( 92 )	0.2145
Turkmenistan	8.8	8.8	2.99	3.18	1.5426 ( 92 )	1.4329
Uzbekistan	7.2	7.7	2.12	3.35	3.1420 ( 92 )	1.3280
<b>Pacific</b>						
American Samoa	90.0	90.0	2.08	16.84	...	...
Cook Islands	62.5	66.7	0.01	0.06	...	...
Fiji	52.2	55.5	0.28	5.99	0.3271	0.3611
French Polynesia	15.0	42.3	0.04	0.11	...	...
Guam	47.3	47.3	3.27	5.27	...	...
Kiribati	14.8	14.8	0.37	20.22	0.1584	0.3026
Marshall Islands	72.2	72.2	0.05	0.71	...	...
Micronesia (F.S.)	91.4	91.4	0.06	0.09	0.2593 ( 97 )	0.3128
Nauru	0.0	0.0	...	...	...	...
New Caledonia	45.9	45.9	1.40	30.50	...	...
Niue	80.8	73.1	1.87 ( 00 )	1.87	...	...
Northern Mariana I.	73.9	65.2	0.08	19.95	...	...
Palau	82.6	87.0	0.45	28.20	1.0425 ( 91 )	0.9127
Papua New Guinea	69.6	63.4	0.95	1.41	0.3050	0.2062
Samoa	45.9	60.4	0.94	2.34	0.2957	0.2260
Solomon Islands	83.0	79.1	0.01	1.05	0.2223	0.1545
Tonga	12.5	12.5	0.05	9.45	0.2715	0.3677
Tuvalu	33.3	33.3	0.06	0.33	...	...
Vanuatu	36.1	36.1	0.39	0.45	0.1393	0.1250

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point.

Source: United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013.

## Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

	Safe drinking water (% population)		Basic sanitation (% population)	
	1990	2010	1990	2010
<b>East and North-East Asia</b>				
China	67	92	24	65
Hong Kong, China	...	...	...	...
Macao, China	...	...	...	...
DPR Korea	100	98	53 ( 92 )	82
Republic of Korea	90 ( 91 )	98	100	100
Mongolia	54	85	50 ( 94 )	53
<b>South-East Asia</b>				
Brunei Darussalam	...	...	...	...
Cambodia	31	67	9	33
Indonesia	70	84	35	59
Lao PDR	40 ( 94 )	70	20 ( 94 )	62
Malaysia	88	100	84	96
Myanmar	56	84	55 ( 91 )	77
Philippines	85	92	57	74
Singapore	100	100	99	100
Thailand	86	96	82	93
Timor-Leste	53 ( 95 )	69	37 ( 95 )	39
Viet Nam	58	96	37	75
<b>South and South-West Asia</b>				
Afghanistan	5 ( 91 )	61	21 ( 91 )	28
Bangladesh	76	83	38	55
Bhutan	86 ( 97 )	97	38 ( 97 )	45
India	70	92	18	35
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	91	95	81	100
Maldives	93	99	68	98
Nepal	67	88	7	35
Pakistan	85	91	27	47
Sri Lanka	68	93	68	91
Turkey	85	100	84	91
<b>North and Central Asia</b>				
Armenia	91 ( 92 )	99	89 ( 92 )	90
Azerbaijan	70	80	57 ( 94 )	82
Georgia	85	98	96	93
Kazakhstan	96	95	96	97
Kyrgyzstan	77 ( 91 )	89	93 ( 91 )	93
Russian Federation	93	97	74	70
Tajikistan	61 ( 93 )	66	89 ( 93 )	95
Turkmenistan	86 ( 94 )	71	98	99
Uzbekistan	90	87	84	100
<b>Pacific</b>				
American Samoa	94	100	97	97
Cook Islands	100	100	100	95
Fiji	85	96	57	87
French Polynesia	100	100	99	97
Guam	100	99	97	97
Kiribati	50	66	28	39
Marshall Islands	92	94	65	76
Micronesia (F.S.)	91	89	19	55
Nauru	93 ( 96 )	96	66	66
New Caledonia	94 ( 98 )	98	100	100
Niue	99	99	69 ( 91 )	100
Northern Mariana I.	94	97	84	98
Palau	90	95	46	100
Papua New Guinea	33	40	20	19
Samoa	89	98	93	92
Solomon Islands	78 ( 00 )	79	25 ( 00 )	29
Tonga	99	99	95	92
Tuvalu	90	98	73	83
Vanuatu	62	91	35 ( 92 )	58

Note: The number in parenthesis is the year of the data point.  
Source: United Nations MDG database accessed on 27 July 2013.

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# Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda Asia-Pacific Regional MDGs Report 2012/2013

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This publication follows the United Nations practice in references to countries. Where there are space constraints, some country names have been abbreviated. In the Asian Development Bank, China is referred to as the People's Republic of China and Kyrgyzstan is referred to as the Kyrgyz Republic. The phrases such as "Asia and the Pacific", "the Asia and Pacific region" and "Asia-Pacific region" refer to the Asia and Pacific region.

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The Millennium Development Goals have helped rally political support for global efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable human development. The Asia-Pacific region has achieved remarkable progress on the MDGs, particularly on reducing income poverty; however, it still has a significant ‘unfinished agenda’. People in the region continue to face major deprivation, along with many new and unaddressed development challenges.

As the finishing line for the MDGs approaches, this report articulates Asia-Pacific aspirations for a post-2015 development framework. It calls for concerted and accelerated action on 11 measurable goal areas. Countries will need to bring together the three pillars of sustainable development – economic prosperity, social equity and environmental sensitivity – and replace short-term horizons with longer-term sustained benefits. Likewise, they will need to address issues of social justice, human rights and equity. Building on the MDGs, a post-2015 global agenda that is applicable to all will need to take into account huge variations in country circumstances. Learning from the MDG experience of the Asia-Pacific region, the new development framework should allow for customization of targets and indicators, along with flexibility for additional national goals. It should make clear who is responsible for achieving the goals and for ensuring the means of implementation of the new development agenda, at global, regional and national levels.

The report has been produced by ESCAP, ADB and UNDP. Other UN organizations, funds and programmes participating in the Regional Coordination Mechanism have also contributed significantly. Members of the ESCAP Advisory Committee of the Permanent Representatives provided valuable feedback.

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