

Economic Commission for Europe  
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,  
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,  
Economic Commission for Africa  
and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

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# A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda



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## *Preface*

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As we approach the deadline for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the five Regional Commissions - Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) - have come together to propose a joint regional perspective on the ongoing global debate on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

The origins of this report can be traced back to a meeting held in Beirut in October 2011, when the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions agreed on the need for a joint report on the development options beyond 2015. The preparation of the report has been coordinated by ESCWA – in its capacity as the previous coordinator of the Regional Commissions – in close collaboration with the other four Regional Commissions.

The key objective of the report is to identify key regional priority areas for a global development agenda from a regional perspective. It also underlines the need to adapt global goals to regional and national ones. It assesses the political and socioeconomic context in which the current MDG agenda was formulated and the challenges and opportunities it presented. With the goal of learning from this experience, the report assesses the progress achieved in the implementation of MDGs. While there are many commonalities among the regions, their different circumstances also call for a nuanced approach that addresses regional specificities within the global development agenda. These regional specificities can be summarized as follows:

In [Africa](#), rapid growth in the last decade has been associated with improvements in primary enrollment, HIV/AIDS and gender parity. However, given the initially low levels of development, most countries are unlikely to achieve MDGs. This is particularly true for the health targets. Even where progress has been substantial, the quality of service delivery remains poor and aggregate performance masks subregional and country disparities. In general, North Africa has made more progress on MDGs than Southern, East, West and Central Africa, and rural areas tend to lag behind urban areas in MDG performance. Spatial and gender inequalities in terms of access to services, coupled with high unemployment rates and a lack of decent jobs, are typical features of African economies.

However, those features are not homogeneously characteristic of all subregions. Unlike North Africa, where the availability of jobs is the main challenge, in Southern, East, West and Central Africa the large informal sector combined with weak social protection systems have nurtured a

large pool of vulnerable jobs that barely meet the basic needs of the workforce. Notwithstanding its marginal contribution to climate change, Africa is highly exposed to climate-related hazards but has limited capacity to adapt to such challenges. The continent's vulnerability to natural and economic shocks stems largely from the primarily mineral and commodity -based structure of African economies, which also suffer from enclave sectors and producers that are confined to the low-value end of the spectrum in the global value chain. Not only does that undermine the ability of the continent to create jobs and generate revenue, it also compromises its fiscal capacity to invest adequately in social services. A transformation agenda that prioritizes inclusive growth underpinned by commodity-based industrialization is likely to promote job creation and generate the needed resources for social development and climate-change adaptation. Furthermore, by creating alternative sources of livelihood, economic diversification minimizes exposure to external shocks and contributes to sustainable human and social development.

In [Europe](#), the most immediate need is to restore growth and reduce unemployment. The current weak performance of the region should be addressed through appropriate macroeconomic policies. Those need to be accompanied by public investment in education and infrastructure and by private sector investment and innovation. Better regulation of the financial sector is required to promote stability, and the growing economic inequality within countries should be addressed through policies that focus more on redistribution. In addition, established social safety nets should be more finely targeted to the needs of the disadvantaged in order to improve their effectiveness and make them more fiscally sustainable over the long term. Health insurance should become universal and public health policy should prioritize the most afflicted groups. Labour market institutions also need to be reformed to encourage formal employment, higher wages, safer workplaces and more inclusive decision-making. Anti-discrimination policies should ensure that minorities and other groups facing discrimination are treated more equitably. The region's rapidly ageing populations will require a redesign of cities, transportation systems, work life and pension systems. Energy efficiency should be improved from source to end use, while the share of renewables in the energy mix should be increased. Further measures are required to reverse the declining biodiversity of the region, and more regional cooperation is needed to address other transboundary environmental issues including the management of shared water basins. Economic governance should be improved, and the deterioration in human and political rights in some of the transitional economies should be reversed. Compromises to the frozen political conflicts of the region should be found, including through policies that further promote economic integration throughout the region. The middle-income countries of the region are increasingly becoming donors and therefore should be more engaged in the global partnership for development.

These are the fundamental challenges confronting the region in the next several decades, and ECE is working with its member States, the United Nations system in the region and other stakeholders to ensure that those issues are firmly addressed in the post-2015 framework.

A new development agenda should be conceived as a global endeavour involving developing and developed countries, while taking into account regional specificities, challenges and lessons learned.

In the case of [Latin America and the Caribbean](#), the discussion of a post-2015 development agenda comes at a relatively auspicious moment. In the last ten years the region has witnessed continued democratic governance, greater economic growth, diminishing levels of poverty and even a slight reduction of inequality in the distribution of income, though the region still has some of the highest rates of inequality in the world. Latin America and the Caribbean has made significant progress in meeting several MDGs since the 1990 base year. Although there are marked differences among and within countries, poverty and extreme poverty rates have declined from 48.4 per cent and 22.6 per cent respectively in 1990 to 29.4 per cent and 11.5 per cent in 2011, with further reductions forecast for 2012. The region has also made progress in reducing malnutrition and child mortality rates, achieving universal primary education and providing access to safe drinking water and to basic sanitation. However, insufficient progress has been made in reducing hunger and undernourishment, achieving gender parity in the workplace and national parliaments and reducing maternal mortality. Although the consumption of ozone-depleting substances has decreased, the region shows increasing rates of deforestation and carbon dioxide emissions and has been unable to stop environmental degradation, protect biodiversity and ensure environmental sustainability, thus falling short of meeting the targets set under MDG 7. A number of targets under MDG 8 have also been missed, especially those mostly depending on a global partnership for development, such as achieving fair and balanced trade, enhancing technology transfer, and instituting a reformed global financial architecture that facilitates better access to adequate sources of financing for development. MDG 8 also calls for an improved framework for dealing with external debt issues.

The global financial crisis of 2008 made clear that the region has become more resilient to economic turmoil in spite of an increasingly volatile international context. However, that positive trend also shed light on numerous gaps and structural shortcomings that signal the limits of the current model of development. As an example, despite important strides made in reducing poverty rates, there are still 167 million poor people in the region, pointing to the many challenges ahead and the need for a more ambitious yet realistic agenda for the future. Experience in the Latin American and Caribbean region also shows that economic growth fails to achieve sustainability when it does not address the issues of environmental protection, consumption patterns and energy waste and pollution; it also fails to address inequality in the absence of public policies. Reductions in extreme poverty rates are of limited value if the threat of falling back into poverty persists and if inequalities based on gender, ethnicity and territorial factors remain.

The transformative potential of public policy is not achieved by purely managing public finances and keeping inflation under control. States need to assume a leading role in promoting sustainable development and structural change. Finally, targeted social policies and programmes are of limited impact if not implemented as part of a universal and distributive social protection system that reduces vulnerability and disrupts the intergenerational transmission mechanisms of social exclusion and inequality.

With more than half of the world's population, more than a third of the global economic output, the highest average regional growth in the world and more than 40 per cent of global energy demands, all issues in the [Asia-Pacific](#) context are a matter of scale. Asia-Pacific economic growth has anchored the world economy during the current global economic crisis and lifted tens of millions of people out of poverty in the last few decades. Although its economies are resilient, the region still remains home to roughly two-thirds of the world's poor. In addition, human and economic insecurity levels remain elevated, as the people of the region are buffeted by high, volatile prices of food and fuel, problems that are further compounded by devastating natural disasters and climate change. The poorest and most vulnerable communities have been the hardest hit in the absence of adequate and comprehensive social protection measures.

The Asia-Pacific economies are in a time of great transition and confront major challenges. The region faces persistent problems of poverty, hunger and vulnerable jobs; growing inequality within and among countries; deficit in critical infrastructure; and shortages in energy and water. Violence against women and girls is still entrenched in the region. It also faces multiple emerging threats to development and an ever-growing number of transboundary issues such as financial crises, commodity price volatility, natural disasters and climate change. In the face of this global turbulence, uncertainty and volatility, the Asia-Pacific experience shows that countries cannot continue to grow first and distribute later, nor can they grow first and clean up later. We cannot hope to burn and consume our way to future prosperity. The resource and carbon-intensive, environmentally damaging and socially inequitable development path, followed by so many including industrialized Western countries, is a dead end. Therefore, key priority areas for the Asia-Pacific region ought to be strengthened resilience, more inclusive and more equitable development paths, and a more resource-efficient, low-carbon environmental strategy for shared prosperity.

In the past decade [the Arab region](#) has witnessed marked socioeconomic improvement. Considerable progress was achieved especially in meeting health and education goals. The region saw improvement in net school enrolment rates, literacy of young adults aged 15-24 and gender parity in primary schooling. Infant mortality rates were halved in most Arab countries. Yet this reassuring picture tells only one part of the story. The region continued to suffer during the period from persistent poverty and inequality, the highest youth unemployment rate in the world particularly among women, a governance deficit, and a destabilizing erosion of human welfare due

to conflict and foreign occupation. Ironically, some of the best regional performers in meeting MDGs include Egypt, Tunisia and Syria, three countries where long-standing grievances led to the toppling of regimes in two and to a violent civil war in the other. The discrepancy between measures of MDG achievement and actual well-being in those countries highlights more than anything the shortcomings of the measures and the risk of ignoring other essential components of human development, namely freedom, good governance and human security.

As we move forward to 2015, it is not difficult to determine what the priorities of the Arab region should be. Millions have said it loud and clear in the streets and squares of Arab towns and cities: freedom, dignity and social justice. Each of those demands is complex and multilayered.

In short, freedom is not simply freedom from poverty, hunger and oppression but extends to the freedom of nations and peoples from the confiscation of their collective rights by foreign powers. The world may have folded the era of colonialism and foreign occupation as it closed the books on the twentieth century, but the region has not. The Israeli occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories remains the only and longest-lasting occupation in modern history, violating not only the rights of people directly suffering from it but also the will of the international community. In order to achieve human development that some consider synonymous with freedom, ridding the world of foreign occupation must be a priority for humanity in the post-2015 period.

Social justice and dignity go beyond decent work, better distribution of income and adequate access to public services to include an end to the marginalization and exclusion of the weaker segments of society. Achieving this alone requires that States become States for all their peoples and not solely for one ethnic group or the adherents of a single religion. Social justice and dignity also entail showing zero tolerance for discrimination against women, moving toward inclusive democratic governance based on the full respect for human rights and ensuring simultaneously the rule of the majority while protecting the rights of the minority. As we chart our way forward, only an honest and committed effort by all to “listen to the voices of the people” will take us out of the vicious cycle of poverty, exclusion, conflict and instability.



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## *List of Acronyms*

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AARR	Average Annual Rate of Reduction
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUC	African Union Commission
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
G-20	The Group of Twenty
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDGs	International Development Goals
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals

MKUKUTA	Tanzania National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPPRSD	Azerbaijan State Programme on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development
TB	Tuberculosis
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNTT	United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women



## *Introduction*

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In September 2011, the Secretary-General requested Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) “to establish a core group of dedicated senior technical experts to coordinate system-wide preparations on ongoing efforts and propose a unified vision and road map for the definition of a United Nations development agenda post-2015, in consultation with all stakeholders.”<sup>1</sup>

As a result of this request, the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda (UNTT) was established and launched in January 2012. UNTT is co-chaired by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UNDP, and is composed of more than 60 entities of the United Nations system, including all the Regional Commissions. Its terms of reference include the formulation of a system-wide vision and road map to contribute to the global debate on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

In June 2012, UNTT issued a report to the Secretary-General entitled “Realizing the Future We Want for All”.<sup>2</sup> The report identifies a future vision based on the core values of human rights, equality and sustainability, and proposes to reorganize a post-MDG framework along four dimensions: (i) inclusive social development; (ii) inclusive economic development, (iii) environmental sustainability, and (iv) peace and security. The report concludes by stressing the need to develop

a post-2015 agenda that responds to people’s aspirations through “clear, easy-to-communicate goals that will help guide coherent policy action at the global, regional and national levels.”<sup>3</sup> The present report is designed to make a regional contribution to that global policy debate, including by identifying practical difficulties in achieving such policy coherence at different levels.

In August 2012, the Secretary-General issued a landmark annual report on “Accelerating Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals: Options for Sustained and Inclusive Growth and Issues for Advancing the United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015”.<sup>4</sup> The Secretary-General’s report summarizes the recent progress towards achieving MDGs and provides general recommendations on how to continue advancing the development agenda beyond 2015, including taking action to ensure coherence between the follow-up to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, and the preparations for a post-2015 agenda.

While the report of the Secretary-General advocates a development agenda that maintains a clear strategic focus on human development, it also stresses that the post-2015 strategy will have to confront new global challenges. However, what is often overlooked in the discussions of such global challenges is that they often manifest themselves in different ways at the regional and subregional levels. Thus, the strategic responses to such

challenges will also have to be variegated at those levels. This recognition underlines the importance of clarifying ‘regional perspectives’ and strengthening regional cooperation in pursuing the post-2015 development agenda. In assessing the MDG agenda, a great deal of discussion has focused on the tension between maintaining clear global goals and targets and adapting such goals and targets to national realities. A significant number of commentators have remarked that the MDG agenda has been too focused on the global level and has not taken due account of national specificities.

Many of the MDG goals have been framed as general *relative* targets, including the well-known poverty target, namely *halving* the proportion of people in extreme poverty by 2015. A country’s capacity to reach such a target depends a great deal on its concrete starting-point. For example, if in 1990 (the MDG base year), a large proportion of a country’s population was extremely poor, it might have had great difficulty in halving poverty. However, even though it might miss the 2015 ‘target reduction’, some analysts have argued that it could still be considered successful if it had significantly accelerated the rate at which it reduced poverty, compared to its previous pre-MDG trend.

The debate on the most appropriate measure of a country’s performance has focused on the national level. But one of the important points that this publication stresses is that in particular regions or subregions, there might be a substantial number of countries with similar disadvantaged starting-points. Conversely, there might be a substantial number with more

advantaged starting-points where targets, and perhaps even goals, might be more ambitious.

Those differences in initial conditions, whether positive or negative, need to be taken into account when development strategies are formulated. Such conditions could relate, for example, to the degree of poverty and inequality, the character of demographic trends (such as ageing or a growing ‘youth bulge’), the nature of natural disasters (such as desertification), the severity of common health challenges (such as HIV/AIDS), and so forth.

The regional level can therefore represent a promising practical level at which countries can usefully caucus and confer among one another on their comparative experiences. But the benefits of such a regional approach have not been highlighted in strategic discussions about the MDG agenda. Hopefully, this kind of approach will change in the post-2015 strategy. This report is designed to make a significant contribution towards strengthening regional perspectives on the formulation of the post-2015 agenda. Enhanced awareness of such regional commonalities implies that regional organizations, such as the Regional Commissions, are well placed to help bridge the gap between global goals and national realities. For example, recent sociopolitical developments in the Arab region help to inform the post-2015 debate by highlighting that making national progress on existing MDG indicators does not always mean that the development expectations of the majority of the population are met. Therefore, attempts should be made to better cover missing economic, social and political dimensions in the future debate. In other words, intervening

*at the regional level* on the MDG agenda does, indeed, make strategic sense.

Current global economic trends also suggest that there will likely be greater cooperation at the regional level in the future, especially considering ongoing difficulties in reaching multilateral agreements on how to effectively address economic, social and environmental challenges. The so-called ‘Rise of the Global South’, marked by the economic ascendancy of such major emerging economies as China, India and Brazil, can also bolster more concerted regional initiatives as well as the expansion of South-South cooperation. Such a strategic option appears increasingly attractive as the developed world continues to experience economic stagnation and fiscal austerity and retreats from giving priority to providing international development assistance.

Efforts could accelerate, in particular, on strengthening regional financial institutions, such as those recently initiated in South America and Southeast Asia (for example, Banco del Sur and the Chiang Mai Initiative). If properly designed, such new potentially expanded sources of development financing could support more ambitious forms of regional cooperation. All in all, the viability of development cooperation at the regional level appears to be increasing. Hence, what we have called the ‘missing dimension’ of regional cooperation with regard to the current MDG agenda could become a much more prominent dimension of post-2015 development efforts.

Regional organizations could have an important role to play in helping countries set ‘realistically’ ambitious development targets. Just as importantly, such organizations could

also help countries identify the most appropriate means to achieve their own development targets. The MDG framework has been frequently criticized for setting goals but providing very scant practical advice on how to attain them.

In various consultations on the post-2015 development agenda, there is now considerable discussion on how organizations of the United Nations system could offer more useful practical advice on achieving the next set of global development goals. But there is also concern that such organizations should not succumb to being prescriptive, particularly since ‘Washington Consensus’-endorsed<sup>5</sup> policy coherence has already provided a negative example of such an approach. Hence, trying to achieve policy coherence on a post-2015 development agenda at the global, regional and national level appears to be a particularly complicated endeavour.

In response to such contradictions, active consultations among countries at the regional or subregional level appear to be a promising avenue for assisting countries in identifying practical policy options that are both suited to their development conditions – that is, their MDG starting-points – and consistent with the guiding principles and pathways identified by a global development agenda. Such an approach holds out the promise of being able to combine both strategic coherence and practical flexibility in the pursuit of commonly agreed global goals.

If this view is indeed correct, then it is imperative to begin investigating the potential for organizing and financing regional institutional mechanisms that can provide a

meaningful bridge between the formulation of globally agreed goals and the identification of realistic national targets and relevant national policies and programmes to achieve them.

In this endeavour, the Regional Commissions can play a critically important intermediary role in bringing national policymakers together at both the regional and subregional levels to compare development realities and experiences. They can also identify the most appropriate level of ambition and the most relevant policy and financing modalities to achieve progress at the national level towards the post-2015 development goals collectively agreed by the international community. This report is designed as a platform to further develop those ideas and thus strengthen the role of the Regional Commissions as institutional conduits between the global and national levels.

In particular, the report aims to address the relevance and significance of the regional perspective in formulating a post-2015 development agenda. It is also designed to identify a few key priority areas and messages for the post-2015 period.

The report is composed of four chapters, which follow this introduction. Chapter I provides a historical perspective on the development of the current MDG agenda. Chapter II reviews the progress in implementing MDGs. Chapter III seeks to identify the key regional development issues that need to be addressed in a post-2015 development agenda. Chapter IV synthesizes the contributions of the previous chapters, provides key recommendations on policy directions and offers some suggestions on implementation mechanisms for a post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

# I.

## *A Historical Perspective on the Current MDG Agenda*

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### A. Introduction

The beginning of the millennium witnessed the adoption of the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* by the General Assembly. In the Declaration, representatives of United Nations Member States committed their nations to a new global partnership for development by establishing a series of time-bound targets, with a deadline of 2015.<sup>1</sup> The adoption of this Declaration led to the subsequent elaboration of MDGs (see annex I).

The eight MDGs marked a significant step in the international development agenda as they offered a unique opportunity for focusing international policies and economic resources on achieving progress on human development priorities around the world. They contributed to cementing a new global partnership to tackle key development challenges and to galvanizing international attention and resources to address those challenges.

Some of the MDGs strengths in terms of conceptualization, format and implementation are widely recognized by the international community.<sup>2</sup> The MDG framework is simple, transparent and serves as a benchmark to measure progress over time and across regions. This integrated framework has influenced policy formulation in terms of setting human development priorities across different regions. It has also served to channel global and

national resources towards the implementation of those development priorities. The clear definition of goals and targets further contributed to improving policy monitoring and building capacity at the national level.

The value of the goals can be seen from three different perspectives: (i) as a clear set of global norms for development; (ii) as an incentive for policy change at the national level (notably in developing countries) and (iii) as a positive influence on the aid budgets of traditional donors.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, it is now recognized that the MDG approach had some weaknesses, including<sup>4</sup> (i) not adequately incorporating some of the important concepts contained in the Millennium Declaration and not paying enough attention to some key strategic development issues; (ii) inadequate consultation with the representatives of developing countries, which weakened local ownership and “led to the perception of a donor-centric agenda”; (iii) insufficient attention to the importance of different initial levels of human development across countries and regions; and (iv) insufficient priority accorded to the “enablers of development”, such as national policies and international support needed to advance the MDG agenda. The last point is particularly important since the MDG framework has

focused on the outcomes of development, as opposed to the means to achieve those outcomes.

Similarly, the format of the MDG framework has been criticised for lacking clarity “on how to tailor global targets to national realities and regional dynamics”<sup>5</sup>. This is an important consideration that will be addressed in more detail in this report. In addition, the MDG framework pays insufficient attention to the conditions of vulnerable groups and does not address the qualitative dimensions of service provision, such as health and education. Other key development areas are inadequately addressed, including violence against women, productive employment, social exclusion, inequality, reproductive health, biodiversity and governance, amongst others. Some of the targets have also been criticized for being imprecise. This applies, in particular, to the urban slum dwellers target of MDG-7 and to several of the targets in MDG-8.

Some of these format weaknesses might have led, in turn, to implementation problems, including not taking into sufficient account nationally specific conditions, the complexities of the development process, the need for structural transformation and the importance of institution-building. There have also been some weaknesses in achieving an effective global partnership for development, notably in the areas of debt sustainability, market access, and in terms of access to essential medicines and new technology.<sup>6</sup>

These shortcomings raise important questions about how to frame a post-2015 development agenda. There is also the need to take into consideration the uneven progress achieved across goals and targets. As the next

chapter discusses more fully, while considerable progress has been recorded on the attainment of many MDGs, serious challenges remain with regard to some of the goals and targets.

There is no doubt that significant progress has been achieved at the global level.<sup>7</sup> Such progress includes:

- The achievement of the global poverty reduction target and a substantial reduction of extreme poverty in most regions;
- The general achievement of parity between girls and boys in primary education;
- The general achievement of the target of halving the share of people without access to improved drinking water sources;
- Important strides in achieving universal primary education and reducing child mortality in many countries, notably in regions that are facing the greatest challenges, such as in most parts of Africa;
- A significant decline in global malaria deaths and the spread of tuberculosis, together with significant increases in the access to treatment of people living with HIV.

At the same time, progress has been unequally distributed among and within regions. And the recent global crises have had a detrimental impact on attaining several MDGs and targets. Some key areas where progress has lagged behind expectations include:<sup>8</sup>

- Hunger, which continues to be a critical global challenge, including in highly populated subregions, such as South Asia;
- Vulnerable employment, which has declined relatively little and remains a major problem for women and youth in many regions;

- Maternal mortality rates, in which the decline is certainly not on track to meet the MDG target by 2015;
- Disparities between rural and urban areas in terms of access to safe drinking water;
- The considerable growth of the world's slum-dwelling population well beyond the 100 million maximum slum dwellers targeted by MDG-7.

The fact that some MDGs have not been achieved in many developing countries highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach to development that takes into account important political, economic, social and environmental factors across different regions and countries. Particular attention needs to be paid to the outcome of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,<sup>9</sup> and the development and incorporation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) into a post-2015 framework. In addition, the MDG framework does not give sufficient attention to issues of income inequality, wealth and opportunities, women's empowerment and the empowerment of the poor.<sup>10</sup> Those weaknesses call for a revised approach to a post-2015 development agenda in order to align goals and targets more meaningfully with regional and national development challenges and priorities. Those weaknesses also highlight the importance of placing responsibility on both the developed and developing world for the attainment of human development at the global level.

Rather than focus on the content of MDGs *per se*, this chapter examines the political and economic processes, circumstances and paradigms that gave rise to the creation and

specification of MDGs. An analysis of such processes and paradigms is important not only for understanding the origins and the conceptual bases of MDGs, but also for highlighting the areas of change and reform required for the identification of a future development agenda. This chapter will underscore the need, in particular, for aligning a global development agenda more realistically with national and regional realities and trends.

As elaborated in chapter 2, such an objective stresses the importance of assessing progress toward MDGs on the basis of the starting points and historical trends in each region and subregion. This approach will safeguard against exerting unfair pressure on less developed countries to meet globally defined goals. A strong regional dimension to analysis and policy-setting is also required in order to keep pace with changing regional socioeconomic and political dynamics. Region-specific developmental challenges require, to some degree, regional solutions that are based on the formulation and implementation of more carefully identified policy responses. Such an approach also calls for a more 'bottom-up' approach to the global debate on the future United Nations development agenda by better reflecting the concerns and aspirations of those mostly affected by that debate.

## B. The Political Origins of MDGs

Understanding the nature of the political context and processes that resulted in the creation of MDGs can provide significant



insights into how they were formulated and help inform the discussion on formulating a future global development agenda. MDGs were not only an articulation of the increasing international concern with issues of poverty and underdevelopment, which had come to prominence in the preceding decades, but were also the logical consequence of decisions made at a series of international development summits and diplomatic negotiations.

This section seeks to shed some light on what could be called a “global public policy framework” for understanding the structural forces and the dynamic links between actors that helped shape, together with other key factors, the emergence of MDGs.<sup>11</sup> This approach helps highlight the “fluid, dynamic and intermeshed relations of politics, markets, culture and society” that resulted in the complex interaction of actors, some of whom are “more visible, persuasive and powerful than others”.<sup>12</sup> Such processes and interactions have played a key role in the creation and articulation of MDGs.

The 1980s and the aftermath of the debt crisis marked a major shift in global development thinking. That decade witnessed the rising importance of the Washington-based International Financial Institutions (IFIs), notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, as the trend-setters of the global development agenda. This trend was largely due to their increased lending, in the form of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), to debt-burdened developing countries. Also, the collapse of the Soviet Union gave rise to a period of socioeconomic crisis in the transition economies as they went through

a “second cycle of primary capitalist accumulation”,<sup>13</sup> with their social-welfare systems under attack. Their conversion to capitalist economic systems also generated a sense of ‘market triumph’ and provided a wider platform for the dominance of market-based ideological frameworks in various economic and political spheres.

This trend was reflected in the implementation of market-based reform policies and privatization strategies in countries that adopted SAPs. The growing influence of the Washington-based IFIs came at the expense of the role and involvement of the non-funding bodies within the United Nations. However, the failure, or at best, the limited success of SAPs in generating the promised economic stabilization, which left recipient countries with high levels of inflation, unemployment, poverty and inequality,<sup>14</sup> resulted in an inevitable resurgence of the United Nations in the early 1990s, motivated by the objectives of promoting human development and reducing poverty.

The 1990s was also a decade of economic, political and environmental turmoil around the world, making the call for more ambitious development priorities by the end of the decade even more urgent. The first Gulf War of 1991, the economic and financial meltdown in Japan, the financial crisis in Mexico (1994), the Asian financial crisis affecting Thailand, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Indonesia (1997-1998), and the financial crises in Brazil (1999) and Argentina (2001) were among some of the recurrent crises that reinforced the worsening conditions of the poorest segments of the society, those most vulnerable to unemployment and cuts in wages



and social benefits. The mid-1990s also brought about an increase in the number of cataclysmic natural disasters, such as the Mozambican floods, Hurricane Mitch, and the Chinese, Indian and Iranian earthquakes. At the same time, the health pandemic of HIV/AIDS had reached full scale, with dire prognoses for Africa and Asia. Political crises and turmoil persisted (and worsened) in parts of Central and Western Asia,<sup>15</sup> from Afghanistan to Palestine.

As a result of those trends—and despite the relatively strong performance of China and India—the average annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita growth rates for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Southern, East, West and Central Africa in the 1990s were 1.3 per cent and –0.6 per cent, respectively. In developing countries as a whole, the average annual rate of growth of gross capital formation (public and private investment) slowed down from 2.1 per cent during the period 1980-1990 to 1.7 per cent during 1990-2002.<sup>16</sup> In low-income countries, where investment growth is critical to reaching MDGs, the growth rate slowed from 4.7 per cent to 4.2 per cent, and it dropped sharply in lower middle-income countries, from 3.4 per cent to 0.3 per cent.<sup>17</sup>

The publication of UNDP's first *Human Development Report* in 1990 and the re-activation of United Nations Summits and Conferences<sup>18</sup> in the same year initiated a decade of summits that would highlight the issue of poverty reduction as a central global development objective. The Children's Summit of 1990 is considered of particular significance in highlighting the challenges of poverty, health care and primary education and generating political and financial commitments

towards that end, renewing energy and hope in the effectiveness of the United Nations as a vehicle for debates, declarations and commitments to global developmental issues.<sup>19</sup>

Other key events included the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (The "Rio Summit"), which focused public attention on the issues of environment and development, and resulted in some critical outcomes that have shaped the global sustainable development agenda, including Agenda 21, as well as treaties on climate change, desertification and biodiversity<sup>20</sup>. This event was followed by the more low-key 1992 International Conference on Food and Nutrition in Rome, which set the target of halving the number of hungry people in the world, a target that would later gain much significance within the MDG framework. The World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 re-affirmed the commitment of United Nations members to human rights and fundamental freedoms and propelled forward the process leading to the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo was significant for the MDGs process as its deliberations, for the first time, explicitly expanded into development and discussions of rights-based approaches to development, moving away from the demography and family planning focus of earlier such summits.<sup>21</sup>

The mid-1990s witnessed two key global social conferences: the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen in March 1995 and the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing

only six months later. The Copenhagen summit was structured around the three pillars of poverty reduction, employment and social integration, with poverty reduction attracting the most attention. Many United Nations agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) were quick to endorse the summit's focus on eradicating poverty, and were followed by many multilateral and bilateral agencies, which began to adopt poverty reduction as their key developmental objective in the ensuing period. The Beijing conference was important for providing a high-profile platform for strengthening the women's movement and its lobbying power for gender equality.

The next step in this process was to secure financing for the ambitious promises made at those global summits. However, that was a difficult task as a result of the end of the Cold War and the resultant "aid fatigue" of the mid-1990s, which came on the heels of the mixed experience of policies tied to the aid conditionalities of SAPs. The creation of *Groupe de Reflexion* in 1995 by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>22</sup> was an attempt to re-energize aid efforts by advocating for an understanding of aid as an investment rather than as a current expenditure. The two major areas of the *Groupe's* negotiations were, first, the reduction of income poverty through economic growth and, second, the importance of gender equality and empowerment. These efforts evolved into what later became known as the DAC International Development Goals (IDGs), formulated in 1996 and approved by the OECD members (see annex II).

The IDGs' initial impact was minimal, both amongst the larger donor countries and multinational institutions, as well as among developing countries, especially because the latter had almost no involvement in formulating IDGs beyond attending a few consultation conferences. IDGs were reduced into two achievable, measurable and popular goals within OECD circles: eradicating poverty and promoting gender empowerment. Structural issues such as reducing income inequalities between the developed and developing countries and minimizing the negative effects of globalization would not have gained OECD backing at that time. Although the non-governmental community and civil society organizations endorsed the OECD concern with promoting universal primary education and reducing child and infant mortality rates, they remained critical of the fact that some of the actions under the control of the OECD member countries, such as increased aid, more debt forgiveness, and fairer trade, were not included in IDGs and that the narrow framework of the reduction of extreme poverty did not allow for broader, more inclusive rights-based approaches to development.

The full impact of IDGs would depend on the adoption by IFI of these goals. Although they went relatively unnoticed at the IMF, the World Bank's 1997 *Global Monitoring Report* featured IDGs as a monitoring framework to highlight the Bank's advantage in collecting data, analysing development indicators and measuring development.<sup>23</sup> While reflecting the broad concerns expressed at the United Nations summits of the previous decade, DAC's

leadership of the international development agenda, based on support from OECD members, meant that developed-country priorities tended to determine the specific content of IDGs.

This trend was further apparent in the contrast between the DAC's approach of results-based management versus the United Nations' more encompassing development vision. For example, while UNDP highlighted "moderating inequality [as] the first step in ending poverty", DAC avoided any discussion of global income and asset inequalities.<sup>24</sup> Concerning policy ownership, while the United Nations emphasized global goals with national targets and policies, DAC advocated partnerships among actors in order to achieve *globally* set goals and policies. This growing divide in the international policy debates and DAC's increasing prominence set the basis for the ways in which MDGs were formulated and structured a few years later.

Following a decade of summits, the highly-anticipated United Nations General Assembly in New York in 2000 resulted in the *Millennium Declaration*, which was based on a document submitted as a report of the Secretary-General, entitled *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. This declaration was designed to provide the Millennium Summit with a background document upon which agreement could be forged. It tended to reinforce poverty eradication as the leading global issue, though it took a strategic approach that was different from IDGs' poverty reduction stance. This United Nations document sharpened the focus on the importance of *pro-poor* economic growth and technological advancement as a

way of leapfrogging earlier stages of development. It also called for renewed focus on the problems of Africa. However, it did not provide a strong emphasis on gender equality or stress the importance of addressing reproductive health. The emphasis on the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the benefits of widely-available technology originated in the speculative Internet bubble, formed in 2000 and led by the financial services sector which is a strong advocate of ICTs and their ability to lead to a sustained increase in economic productivity. The focus on the problems of Africa was the result of the continent's completion of its second 'lost decade' of development and poverty reduction.

As a way of setting goals also for the rich countries, the text of the *Millennium Declaration* placed major emphasis on trade access, debt relief, and official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries, while stressing the importance of working with the pharmaceutical industry to bring about breakthroughs in developing HIV/AIDS vaccines and related drugs. Although such concerns were not fully reflected in MDGs, they were nevertheless recognized by the *Millennium Declaration* as key aspects of poverty reduction in developing countries.

Diplomatic discussions took place in summer 2000 in order to negotiate the final text of the *Millennium Declaration*. As a result, extreme poverty retained top priority; education was emphasized; infant, child and maternal mortality were retained at the expense of the more controversial reproductive and sexual health rights;<sup>25</sup> and tackling major

diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria were highlighted. Other important targets, such as achieving decent work for youth and the benefits of new technologies were maintained though they were not ascribed priority. Though the goals for the actions of rich countries to support global poverty reduction were mentioned, no targets were specified and thus these countries were not subject to any binding commitments.

The unanimous approval of the *Millennium Declaration* in September 2000 set the stage for the next task of defining the specific goals and targets for development before allocating tasks to different multilateral organizations and raising the funds for achieving those goals. Efforts by high-level technical experts from DAC and United Nations organizations, which were tasked with harmonizing IDGs and the *Declaration's* goals at a World Bank meeting in March 2001, finally resulted in the adoption and publication of MDGs. Negotiations resulted in defining the goals in clear and quantifiable terms. To a certain extent, IDGs formed the basis of MDGs, with the clear exception of the issue of reproductive health, which proved to be politically unacceptable to some important United Nations member countries. However, gender equality and women's empowerment, although presented primarily through the channel of educational access, became an explicit goal.

A significant addition to the *Millennium Declaration* was MDG-8, which highlighted the responsibilities of developed countries in achieving the universal development targets. Although discussions over the latter countries' aid and debt relief commitments had already

taken place, no explicit goals had yet been set. The MDGs technical team identified seven targets and 17 indicators for Goal 8,<sup>26</sup> including increasing the quantity and improving the quality of ODA, improving market access for poor countries, debt relief, employment generation and increased access to technology and essential drugs. However, unlike for the other seven MDG indicators, many of the MDG-8 indicators were not quantifiable. Participants in the Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey in 2002 also approved MDGs and explicit donor commitments were made, but those commitments proved to be below expected levels.<sup>27</sup>

It can be argued that the leadership of the processes of formulating and implementing MDGs has had a large bearing on the nature of their specific goals. During their evolution, MDGs were determined initially by the outcomes of United Nations summits, with the leadership transferring to DAC in the mid-1990s, and once again passing back to the United Nations Secretariat and the General Assembly in the late 1990s in the lead-up to the Millennium Summit. The final political and technical negotiations that defined MDGs in 2001 were conducted by a taskforce from the United Nations, OECD, the World Bank and IMF. Although the initial implementation was influenced by the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*<sup>28</sup> (PRSP) initiative of the World Bank and IMF, and by the United Nations' Millennium Project,<sup>29</sup> today there are a larger number of actors involved in the process.

What emerges from the above review is that MDGs were born as a result of a multifaceted

process over a long period of time, emerging from various global summits and conferences and involving a large number of actors and institutions, finally brought together through the momentum created by the turn of the millennium. Many analysts contend that the outcomes of these processes appear to have been predominantly influenced, in the end, by the priorities and objectives of large donor countries rather than the needs and priorities of developing countries. Moreover, it can be argued that the MDGs framework does not take adequate account of the underlying structural problems and disparities in global economic structures nor does it adequately reflect the development challenges at both the regional and national level. In framing a new post-2015 development framework, these concerns should be thoroughly discussed and assessed since they are bound to have a bearing on the choice of both goals and targets, on the one hand, and the strategies and programmes chosen to achieve them, on the other.

### C. The Prevailing Development Paradigm

The *Millennium Declaration* projected the intention of broadening the focus of development to include human-centred, sustainable and equitable development, and to expand the concept of poverty from income poverty to multidimensional human poverty. However, the growth, aid and governance agendas have also had a strong influence on the process of MDG formulation. It could be argued that within the mainstream economic

discourse, development is perceived as growth-mediated, aid-mediated or, more recently, governance-mediated.<sup>30</sup>

The growth agenda argues that trade liberalization, privatization and deregulation of the economy are required in order to achieve MDGs; the aid agenda maintains that an injection of external resources into such sectors as health, education and agriculture is crucial for achieving MDGs; and, finally, the governance agenda argues that to foster development, it is essential to reform the institutional structures of developing countries in line with a global set of institutional values and practices.<sup>31</sup>

The growth agenda's strong focus on macro-level growth has tended to ignore the problem of structural inequalities within and between countries, which militate against efforts to advance people's well-being. This approach has also tended to rely on external resources for financing reforms, with little attention paid to issues of distributional equity. Recent efforts, such as the emergence of 'inclusive growth' or even "inclusive green growth"<sup>32</sup> as a strategic framework and the new focus on 'multi-dimensional' poverty<sup>33</sup>, have moved the debate towards a more socially focused agenda, even if policy-level activities still tend to focus on issues such as income poverty.

Another major challenge that needs to be addressed is the gradual decline in the levels of developmental and infrastructural aid and a rise in 'softer' areas of assistance, including institution-building and governance reforms.<sup>34</sup> Since the 1980s, for example, ODA to agriculture and industry has declined sharply. Some analysts have also argued that the

adoption of MDGs has accelerated this trend since this framework has tended to put the emphasis on basic education as opposed to tertiary and vocational education and has placed little emphasis on developing productive capacities or basic infrastructure in developing countries. Some critics have provocatively called this approach “a promotion of welfare and aid dependence over growth and self-reliance”.<sup>35</sup> As table 1 shows, the first phase of MDG implementation (2000-08) experienced a significant increase in ODA allocation to social infrastructure, social services and debt relief – in comparison with the 1990-99 period and even the 1980-89 one – at the expense of economic infrastructure and production sectors. This issue will be further discussed in chapter II.

A different but equally important challenge that should be better addressed is the need to

promote socioeconomic development approaches that are environmentally sustainable and thus take into account post-MDG dramatic changes in environmental conditions. For example, recent research identifying planetary boundaries and critical environmental thresholds to human development should be taken into consideration.<sup>36</sup> In addition, the recent report of the United Nations Environment Programme on the green economy outlines several concurrent crises that have either sprung up or accelerated during the last decade.<sup>37</sup> These include crises in climate, biodiversity, fuel, food, water and more recently in the financial system. Accelerating climate-changing emissions indicate a mounting threat of runaway climate change, with potentially disastrous human consequences. Those challenges are poorly addressed in the existing MDG framework and should be further developed in a future global development agenda.

**Table 1. Sectoral allocation of net ODA disbursement by OECD/DAC members, 1980-2008 (percentage)**

SECTOR	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2008
Social infrastructure and services	25.22	26.94	33.96
Economic infrastructure and services	19.05	19.79	13.03
Production sectors	23.95	16.28	13.31
Commodity support/General programme assistance	15.86	9.96	4.59
Debt relief	2.58	10.31	16.08
Humanitarian aid	1.72	4.72	6.28
Administrative costs of donors	2.32	4.48	5.14
Support to non-governmental organizations	1.41	1.31	2.85
Refugees in donor countries	---	0.91	2.32
Unallocated/unspecified	7.88	5.27	2.44

Source: United Nations, 2010b.

Notes: Figures refer to period averages as a proportion of total ODA disbursed by member countries of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC).



Besides some key gaps in the identification of MDG focus areas, there are also critical shortcomings in MDG implementation. Those shortcomings can be grouped together into three areas: (1) impact of the dominant policy package in place before and during the formulation of MDGs, (2) MDGs as means versus ends and (3) quantification of development.

### *1. The dominant policy package*

The emergence and expansion of the so-called ‘Washington Consensus’ in the 1980s and 1990s was based on policy packages that often worked against the implementation of the human development agenda embodied in most MDGs.<sup>38</sup> Generally speaking, the ‘Washington Consensus’ tended to focus on tight fiscal and monetary policy, reduction of the role of the State, trade liberalization, privatization and financial deregulation. This development approach provided a policy framework for structural adjustment programmes introduced in many developing countries before and during the formulation of the MDG framework. However, there is evidence to show that the economic reforms contained in structural adjustment programmes rarely produced the desired economic growth and social progress, including poverty reduction and employment generation.<sup>39</sup>

Expansionary fiscal policies, centred on public investment, are crucial elements of growth and the reduction of poverty and inequality in less developed countries. This became particularly evident during and after the 2008-09 global financial crisis. Public investment is crucial for achieving MDGs, not only through building basic social and

economic infrastructure, but also by generating employment and providing a more efficient context for attracting private investment. Those factors will in turn help to expand both the aggregate demand for goods and services and an economy’s aggregate supply (namely, its productive capacity). As a recent United Nations flagship economic and social publication concludes, “fiscal policies should be counter-cyclical and supportive of employment creation and human development.”<sup>40</sup> Needless to say, it is not only the quantity of public investment but also its *quality* that are of critical importance.

However, the quality of such investments depends to a large extent on their structure: if they are capital-intensive, rely on large contractors or depend heavily on imported materials, then their benefits could be marginal to the economy, whereas investment in employment-intensive public investment projects, which hire or subcontract small and medium-sized contractors and use local suppliers of materials, could often utilize public resources more optimally. To maximize its impact on poverty reduction, public investment needs to expand from providing basic education and health to constructing such essential infrastructure as rural roads, energy grids and irrigation works. A general increase in the economy’s growth rate will not necessarily trickle-down to the poorest unless public investment is targeted towards rural and agricultural development, especially in more remote or less developed areas. China’s Great Western Development Strategy is a good recent example of focusing public investment on poor regions.<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, there is a need to align counter-cyclical monetary policies with capital account movements. As also shown in the above-mentioned United Nations flagship publication, “conducting counter-cyclical monetary policies has become increasingly difficult ... [in countries with] open capital accounts”.<sup>42</sup> United Nations member states such as Chile and Malaysia have managed to make monetary policies more effective by controlling and regulating international capital flows. As the recent East Asian experience shows, monetary policy should “be coordinated with financial sector and industrial policies, including directed and subsidized credit schemes and managed interest rates, so as to directly influence investment and savings.”<sup>43</sup> From this perspective, monetary policies are also essential for accommodating expansionary, investment-focused fiscal policies that can have a positive impact on poverty reduction, employment generation and human development.<sup>44</sup>

The negative social impact of the 1997 Asian financial crisis eventually led to the realization that an “augmented Washington Consensus” was required.<sup>45</sup> This augmented policy framework included social safety nets and poverty reduction strategies. Those strategies were best reflected in the formulation of PRSPs in the late 1990s as a social development component of a debt-relief strategy for poor developing countries. However the PRSP strategy continued to be dominated by orthodox economic policies which tended to undermine poverty reduction and employment generation. According to the above-mentioned United Nations flagship publication, “PRSPs turned out to be more

a set of compensatory social policies constrained by external pressures related to fiscal consolidation than examples of coherence over the broader range of development policies”.<sup>46</sup>

The 2008-2009 global financial crisis has highlighted the dangers of the unbounded deregulation of the financial system, particularly in terms of triggering economic instability and contributing to unequal access to financial services. The weakened financial sectors of less developed countries have failed to mobilize the required domestic financial resources or maintain national oversight over the efficient allocation of these resources to productive investment. Such policies are critical for stimulating economic activity, expanding employment and reducing poverty.

Monetary and financial policies should thus be conducive to the development of productive sectors, including labour-intensive small and medium enterprises, agricultural and rural non-farm activities. In other words, financial inclusion should be a prominent feature of monetary and financial policies. It is also worth stressing the asymmetric impact of financial crises. This means that the recovery of poverty rates to pre-crisis levels is slow compared to the pace of recovery of per capita income levels. In the case of Latin America, for example, ECLAC has shown that this dynamic has continued to affect the most vulnerable populations and has hindered further progress towards achieving several MDGs.<sup>47</sup>

## 2. MDGs as ‘ends’ versus ‘means’

A key aspect of the development orthodoxy, which has been reflected in the formulation



and implementation of the MDGs, is the distinction between means and ends with regard to economic development. Mainstream economic thinking has tended to regard policies such as tight macroeconomic policies, trade liberalization, privatization and financial deregulation as ends in their own right, rather than as possible means towards the ultimate objectives of expanding employment or reducing poverty.

This approach has affected how the MDG framework has been implemented in many countries. Originally designed with overriding human development goals in mind, such as the reduction of poverty, hunger and illiteracy, the MDG framework has been unable to identify the specific means or policies through which these objectives could be achieved. For example, would such ends be advanced through public or private investment, fiscal stimulus or austerity, employment generation or the control of inflation? This inability to influence the choice of policy options has left the field open to more conservative approaches to macroeconomic and structural policies and a heavy reliance on ODA as the engine of change.<sup>48</sup>

As discussed in a recent United Nations report on the post-2015 agenda, the original MDG framework has provided few recommendations on ‘development enablers’, and this inability has led to “rigid national policy agendas, following international benchmarks, rather than local conditions”.<sup>49</sup> As discussed in the next chapter, it has become increasingly clear that success in achieving MDGs requires developing country-specific strategies, namely policies adapted to each country’s

socioeconomic structures, historical trajectory and future developmental priorities. This concrete approach assumes that there are no ready-made recipes or one-size-fits-all remedies.

As countries have striven to adapt the MDG framework to their national conditions, it has become more evident that global development agendas should be adjusted to the concrete realities in each country as well as to each subregion and region. Such an approach would confer the added benefit of promoting greater *national ownership* of any new global development agenda. Such an approach would also call for practical recognition of the differences among countries: not only the differences in their level of development, but also the differences in their political regimes, social conditions and cultural backgrounds. This approach would also take into account important differences across regions and subregions and the need for consultation processes at these levels in order to identify the appropriate policy measures.

### *3. The pros and cons of the quantification of development*

The MDG framework has been heavily influenced by the realization that global targets should be quantifiable. This has involved relying on setting numerical objectives, using quantitative indicators of success and basing evaluation methods on quantitative outcomes. While quantification approaches are no doubt important for measuring development progress, quantifiable indicators must be complemented by information on quality dimensions.

It is clear that there are strengths in establishing quantifiable indicators and targets,

in terms of their comparability across regions and their adaptability in measuring progress on development dimensions over time. As recently argued by a leading development economist, any development strategy “that is concrete and implementable needs to monitor the results, and setting clear numerical targets is the best way to do so.”<sup>50</sup> Establishing targets and indicators also has advantages in terms of advocacy and directing global and national efforts and resources towards human development priorities.<sup>51</sup> In fact, as discussed above, one of the weaknesses in the formulation of Goal 8 is precisely that, unlike the other MDGs, many of its indicators are not quantifiable and there are no specific deadlines for their implementation.

At the same time, the quantification approach also has its limitations. For example, the MDG approach to poverty reduction relies on the methodologically and conceptually problematic indicator used by the World Bank, namely, the international poverty line of 1.25 United States dollars (US\$) per person per day, in 2005 purchasing power parity terms.<sup>52</sup> The shortcomings of this income poverty line include its inability to consider the multidimensional nature of poverty and the inherent difficulties in applying it to nationally specific poverty conditions in many developing countries.<sup>53</sup> While international poverty lines can play an important role in monitoring global and regional trends, the multidimensional nature of poverty at the national level should incorporate important non-income dimensions of deprivation, including various dimensions of inequality and social exclusion.<sup>54</sup>

Since the MDG-1 poverty target does not include those non-income dimensions, multidimensional alternatives should be considered for a post-2015 framework.<sup>55</sup> For example, in the Arab world, poverty measurements at the national level, either in terms of income or human capabilities, reflect “the convergence of social, economic and political exclusion, which is glaring for the majority of the Arab rural population.”<sup>56</sup> But a different picture emerges in the region when the international poverty line of US\$ 1.25 per day is used, since it suggests a “very low poverty incidence ... [given that] this poverty line is too low to allow for any objective comparison of money-metric poverty in Arab countries relative to other developing regions.”<sup>57</sup>

Similarly, in the area of education, boosting enrolment ratios does not take into account the quality of educational outcomes in many developing countries. Other indicators, such as drop-out rates or the level of educational resources available per child, might be needed in order to develop a more accurate portrayal of educational outcomes. In many developing countries, there is a considerable discrepancy between the share of children who enrol in primary school and the share of children who graduate with the ability to actually read and write.

Sometimes the Millennium Development Goal does not match the target. This is the case with regard to the ambitious task of achieving gender equality and empowerment, reduced in MDG-3 to sex parity primarily in the education sector. In other cases, the quantifiable target is poorly constructed. This is the case with regard to the target of significantly improving the

lives of 100 million urban slum-dwellers between 1990 and 2015. In fact, the total number of slum-dwellers has already increased well beyond 100 million since 1990.<sup>58</sup>

Given the impact that quantification methods can have on policy prescriptions, more effort is needed to devise new methods of measuring development, together with promoting greater national capacity-building and ownership of the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes. There should also be a greater effort to assess the quality of outcomes. Much of this kind of effort will probably have to be concentrated at the regional or subregional level, where capacity-building initiatives, often spearheaded by the Regional Commissions, have already been undertaken.

Improving the quality of the data that are already being collected to measure MDG progress is also needed. For example, the quality of data for some of the MDG health indicators needs substantial improvement. This is the case for basic life indicators, since births and deaths are frequently not fully registered in the poorest countries.

## D. Global and Regional Development Perspectives

### *1. Addressing the inequality gap*

As will be elaborated in the next chapter, progress on attaining MDGs has been unequally distributed across regions, subregions and countries. One of the major shortcomings of the formulation of the MDG framework has been the inadequate attention paid to

inequality, both within developed and developing countries and between them.

The issue of unequal income distribution has gained increasing importance for international development institutions in recent years. For example, the United Nations, in its 2010 report on the World Social Situation, stresses the central importance that the distribution of income and assets plays in achieving poverty reduction. In particular, the report concludes that a “high premium must be placed on interventions that correct inequalities in the initial distributions of assets, including human resources, in an egalitarian manner in order to foster more inclusive growth”.<sup>59</sup>

Inequality matters in development because it affects people’s effective access and entitlement to resources. Inequality in income and wealth is usually intimately related to social marginalisation and exclusion. Many poor people face discrimination based on sex, race, religion and ethnicity.<sup>60</sup> These socially excluded groups also frequently suffer from spatial inequalities. This condition implies that they are physically concentrated in disadvantaged locations such as remote and challenging rural terrains or overcrowded slum neighbourhoods. Social, economic and spatial inequalities together can result in political exclusion, since the poor are often denied voice and influence in collective social decisions and political realms.

There is thus a need to focus on the critical importance of extreme inequalities in hampering the reduction in absolute poverty. There is evidence to show that higher levels of inequality tend to slow down the degree to which a given rate of growth translates into

poverty reduction.<sup>61</sup> Hence, economic growth can contribute to promoting the quest for social justice only if it is accompanied by policies which support a more equitable distribution of resources, assets and opportunities.

One possible illustration of the insufficient attention paid to inequalities at the national level in the current MDG framework is the fact that economic disparities are only considered in the third indicator of the first target of the first goal. This indicator is the share of the poorest quintile in national consumption. This is a very limited indicator, which is often disregarded in most MDG assessments since it shows little variation over time. The reason is that “there [can] be dramatic shifts at the other [rich] end of the distribution without shifting the relative position of the poorest too much”.<sup>62</sup>

It is also worth emphasizing in this context that MDG-1 was amended in 2008 to include access to productive and decent employment in recognition that poverty cannot be structurally addressed, nor inequality reduced, without the widespread generation of opportunities for decent work. However, success in this endeavour requires a broader approach to macro-economic policy and the effective integration of social, labour-market and industrial policies.<sup>63</sup>

Similarly, the issue of gender equality and empowerment has been articulated solely in relation to the goal of primary education. In fact, in a significant number of developing countries, females outperform males at every level of education except the primary level. For example, there are often more women than men enrolled in universities.<sup>64</sup> However, progress in this sphere does not usually translate into

higher levels of employment or income for women. Gender equality and women’s empowerment are thus critical development dimensions that are inadequately addressed in the existing MDG framework. They should be approached from a human rights and democratic governance perspective, including adequate representation in all key government institutions, as well as in employment and civil society. The key issue is to ensure that women are empowered to participate equally in decision-making processes at all levels, from the household and community levels to the global and national ones.

In addition to addressing inequalities within countries, it is critical to address deep-rooted structural inequalities between developed countries and developing countries. A prime example of such inequalities is the use of farm subsidies by many developed OECD countries. Even though assumptions about the benefits of competition in global markets would suggest that such subsidies should be removed, there is no target date for their abolition in several major industrialized countries.<sup>65</sup>

MDG-8 was supposedly designed to set ambitious goals and targets for reforms in developed countries. However, not only does MDG-8 fail to address the unequal structural nature of the relationships between developed and developing countries, as is manifested in unequal relations in trade, finance and migration, but it is also the only MDG in which there are no meaningful targets that oblige developed countries to make significant changes in their policies and practices. Virtually the only ‘targets’ set for those countries are the objective of allocating 0.7

per cent of GDP to ODA and some clauses related to debt relief. According to some critics, the global partnership for development that should be the basis of MDG 8 is little more than an attempt to reinforce a conditional aid agenda. Even with regard to debt relief and debt sustainability, this MDG does not address the root causes of the problem. It does not oblige developed countries to conduct the kind of financial auditing that would help improve the classification of debts or enact the legislation needed to resolve outstanding disputes.<sup>66</sup>

In the efforts initiated to begin framing a new global development framework, it will be necessary to acknowledge that the global institutions and practices governing the relationships between developed countries and developing countries will need substantial reform. There has to be more meaningful progress towards building a genuine partnership of equals at the global level.<sup>67</sup> Part of this effort will no doubt be mounted at the regional level, where developing countries are likely to form stronger bonds of regional cooperation. If global cooperation falters in the future, there is still likely to be significant initiatives at the regional and subregional level with regard to development cooperation.

## *2. Addressing the missing regional dimension*

The global food, energy and financial crises of 2007-2010 highlighted the fragility of global food supply systems and exposed systemic failures in the workings of financial and commodity markets and major weaknesses in the mechanisms of global governance. The rapid worldwide spread of the financial crisis

in the United States and, more recently, the uncertainty in global financial markets generated by the sovereign debt crises in Europe have underscored the interconnectedness of the global economy. Higher and much more volatile world food and energy prices reflect decades-long neglect of agriculture, negative impacts of climate change, higher exposure and vulnerability to disasters, the use of land for bio-fuel production at the expense of food production, as well as energy and commodity market speculation. These international crises have posed serious challenges to progress on achieving the MDGs and increased the difficulties of elaborating a post-2015 development framework.

Long-term trends also pose serious challenges to development. For example, world population has increased by two billion over the past quarter century, with about 78 million people being added to the world's population every year. The demographic explosion in some of the poorer countries in the world implies that employment generation will continue to be one of the major global economic challenges of the coming decades. Estimates show that by 2050 the global economy would need to be able to provide a decent living for more than 9 billion people, of whom 85 per cent would be living in today's developing world.

Within the developing world, Africa alone is projected to account for about half of the absolute increase in population and to be home to nearly one quarter of the world's population by 2050.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, it is also estimated that by 2050, 70 per cent of the world's population is projected to live in urban areas. Many of the new urban dwellers are likely to be

concentrated in developing countries, many of which would be least able to cope with the pressing demands for decent jobs, adequate housing and basic urban services.<sup>69</sup>

Within the context of such global difficulties and contradictions, a stronger regional dimension to analysis and policy-setting, especially among developing countries, appears to be appropriate. When new global goals are set by a post-2015 development framework, greater attention will have to be paid to regional priorities and regional solutions. The Arab region provides concrete evidence of the importance of taking regional perspectives into consideration when setting global development objectives and performance criteria. For example, the employment of youth (15-24 years old) is a particularly daunting challenge in the region. Although the absolute growth in employed youth has been impressive over the last two decades, due to fast Arab population growth, the overall youth employment-to-population ratio in the region fell from 27.2 per cent to 24.3 per cent between 1991 and 2009.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, in 2009, while 41 per cent of young men were employed, the rate for young women was only 14 per cent. As a result, youth unemployment poses a major challenge in this region. Youth unemployment was estimated to be as high as 24 per cent during 2005-2011. This level was more than double the world average and accounted for more than half of all unemployed in the region.<sup>71</sup>

This employment challenge – notably youth employment – can be considered as one of the main drivers of recent sociopolitical developments in the Arab region, although other forms of youth exclusion, such as lack of political participation, have also played a key

role. In fact, increasing segments of the Arab population are now striving to identify a new development paradigm based not only on economic growth and decent employment, but also on the broader concerns of inclusiveness, participation, social justice, democratic governance and political freedom. Moreover, “growth dividends have become increasingly concentrated in the hands of political and economic elites” of countries in the region which have imposed a social contract based on the exchange of political freedom for “the provision of certain services, such as public employment, access to public healthcare and education and exemption from or low taxation”<sup>72</sup> as well as subsidies on food and energy. There is also an urgent need in this region to address the multidimensional pattern of exclusion, which is not adequately captured in the current MDG framework.<sup>73</sup> In addition, the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine must end, given not only its harsh socioeconomic development impact on the Palestinians, but also its threats to regional security and stability. In light of such considerations, a regional perspective has the potential to provide a viable concrete foundation for a development agenda that has relevance to the problems faced by countries in this region.

A regional analytical lens can also help produce more appropriate policy responses to global crises. For example, while many Arab countries have been protected from the recent global economic crisis or have been able to employ countercyclical policies to good effect, the less developed Arab countries have been severely constrained in the deployment of both fiscal and monetary instruments, and their continued progress on many MDGs has been threatened.



These differential effects of the crisis underline a key broad message: regional solutions are required to address regional challenges. For example, it is increasingly recognized that jobs are fundamental to sustained poverty reduction and the creation of conditions for the sustainable achievement of MDGs. But at the same time, the effective use of structural policies for trade and investment, along with progressive macroeconomic policies and regional coordination mechanisms, can help generate the kind of widespread productive employment that would be necessary to continue progress against poverty, hunger, illness and illiteracy. Some of the recent development successes in East Asia point out the importance of adopting such policies.

The usefulness of a stronger regional perspective on MDGs suggests that greater efforts should be mounted to identify and build up institutional mechanisms that can help advance development efforts at this level. There is the clear need, for example, for vehicles that can facilitate greater consultation and cooperation among countries in the same region or even subregion. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the Regional Commissions have been successful in initiating capacity-building efforts to gather data, develop statistics and monitor progress on goals and targets. They could also play a critical role in helping countries adapt any new set of global development goals to regional and subregional conditions, and in fostering the exchange of regional best practices. No doubt, such a role would involve some kind of policy advisory function, helping Governments to translate

global goals into realistic national targets and identifying the policy and fiscal means necessary to reach those targets. But it is important to stress that such a role should be designed primarily to afford national Governments the ‘policy space’ to meaningfully assess various options and help them select those policies that are considered the most relevant to overcoming their specific challenges.

For such regional initiatives to achieve sufficient momentum, there needs to be an adjustment at the level of global governance structures to allow for the pursuit of regional priorities and policies. A global framework that allows for specific regional analysis of development challenges and needs will not only encourage the identification of more effective policy responses at the regional level but will also facilitate the overall achievement of global development objectives.

Such a change in approach would require a restructuring of global thinking and institutional structures to allow for such regional approaches to be meaningfully applied. Currently, the multilateral trade, finance and environmental architectures lack the required coherence. They differ in constituencies and in the distribution of voice and power among their respective memberships. Moreover, there have been innumerable voices raising the problem of ‘democratic deficits’ at the level of international financial institutions. Such deficits, as well as the failure to approve multilateral frameworks, have spurred countries to seek regional solutions, especially on trade and financial policies.

## E. Concluding Remarks

MDGs have probably been more influential in setting the United Nations international development agenda than any other globally coordinated initiative in the past, including during the four United Nations development decades between 1960 and 2000. MDGs have been instrumental in placing key development issues at the centre of international debate and action, including poverty, hunger, gender equality, access to water supply and sanitation, external debt and international aid. The MDG framework has also contributed to cementing a new global partnership for development on the basis of agreed priorities and galvanizing international efforts to meet those priorities.

However, as this chapter has argued, there is a clear need to improve the MDG development agenda. For example, a post-2015 development agenda needs to place greater emphasis on goals and policy areas that can now be identified as being critical to future progress on human development. Probably more important will be the challenge of incorporating into a new global development framework SDGs, which have risen in importance partly as a result of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) – held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012 – and most

importantly as a result of recent dramatic changes in environmental conditions. It is widely recognized and acknowledged that a Sustainable Development Framework and a new International Development Framework born out of discussions and evaluations of MDGs) cannot make significant progress along separate, disconnected tracks. They must be united under the framework of one comprehensive United Nations global development framework.

There is increasing agreement on the need for a “truly global agenda with shared responsibilities for all countries”, which will also require reformed global governance mechanisms.<sup>74</sup> There is also significant agreement that such a global agenda has to be anchored in four key development dimensions: inclusive economic development, inclusive social development, environmental sustainability and peace and security.

The distinctive contribution of this joint report of the five Regional Commissions is to strengthen the regional perspective on development, as one of the most important means for successfully linking a global development agenda to national implementation. As the discussion of the Arab uprisings in this chapter has helped to show, region-specific developmental challenges are largely dependent on regional solutions.



## II.

# *Review of Progress in Implementing MDGs*

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## A. Introduction

MDGs have provided a development framework with a clear focus on measurable and time-bound targets. This chapter reviews progress in their implementation and assesses the influence of the MDG framework on policy debates and priorities. Specifically, the chapter will evaluate the progress made in achieving MDGs from an inequality perspective.

## B. An assessment of progress in the implementation of MDGs at the regional level

As discussed in chapter I, the MDG framework has provided a common worldwide platform to address poverty and has put human progress at the forefront of the global development agenda. One of the strengths of the framework is its simple definition as a set of concrete and time-bound goals and targets that can be monitored by indicators. This framework has allowed comprehensive assessments of progress in implementation at all levels (global, regional and national). For example, the Millennium Development Goals Report 2012<sup>1</sup> presents charts for different regions of the world with the levels of the indicators in selected years compared to the 2015 target. At the regional level, Regional Commissions have

also assessed the progress of countries towards MDGs and published the results in regional MDG reports. Some of these results are presented in the rest of this section. It is important to note that these results are not totally comparable due to different methodologies used in those regional reports.

### *1. Progress in Africa*

ECA has produced a series of reports presenting current status of the MDG performance and progress in the African continent. In 2012, ECA, in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the United Nations Development Programme–Regional Bureau for Africa jointly published a report on assessing MDG progress in Africa.<sup>2</sup> The status of progress is reported both at the indicator level and the goal level. The performance of 44 MDG indicators is monitored according to the following categories: rapid progress, good progress, moderate progress, little progress, slow progress, no progress and no updated data. Table 2 summarizes the progress in implementation at the goal level in Africa as a whole.

Poverty has been decreasing in Africa due to steady economic growth in the past decade.

**Table 2. Progress in Africa**

Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Status	Remarks
<b>Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</b>	Off track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US\$1.25-a-day poverty in Southern, East, West and Central Africa declined from 56.5% to 47.5% during 1990-2008</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education</b>	On track: net enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average enrolment exceeds 80%</li> <li>Issues of quality remain</li> <li>Most countries are not expected to meet the completion target</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women</b>	On track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good progress at primary level but weak parity at secondary and tertiary levels of education</li> <li>High representation in parliament</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 4: Reduce child mortality</b>	Off track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Declining, but slowly</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 5: Improve maternal health</b>	Off track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Declining, but slowly</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</b>	Off track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HIV/AIDS on the decline, especially in Southern Africa, due to behavioral change and access to antiretroviral therapy, but this decline is not rapid enough to meet the target.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability</b>	On track: improved water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few countries have reforestation plans</li> <li>Emissions minimal for most countries with little increase</li> <li>Most countries reduced consumption of ozone-depleting substances by more than 50%</li> </ul>

Source: ECA, 2012a.

The region is also doing well in several indicators, such as universal primary education, gender parity in primary school enrolment, the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament, HIV/AIDS prevalence rates, access to antiretroviral drugs

and the share of women in nonagricultural wage employment. Although indicators relating to goals 4, 5, and 6 have shown positive progress, the level of child and maternal mortality is still alarmingly high in many countries in the region. The report also

looks into several dimensions of inequality, including spatial, income, social and geographical dimensions. It proposes that policymakers improve the quality and unequal distribution of social services in the continent.

## 2. *Progress in Asia and the Pacific*

ESCAP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNDP have produced a series of regional MDG reports, which examine progress towards the achievement of MDGs not only for the Asia and the Pacific region as a whole, but also its subregions and individual countries. The data underlying the MDG progress classification tables are from the global MDG database.<sup>3</sup> Using at least two data points which are at least three years apart since 1990, a country, region or subregion is grouped into the following 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

According to the latest Asia-Pacific MDG Report,<sup>4</sup> the region as a whole has already reached the targets of reducing by half the proportion of people living on less than US\$1.25 per day and halving the proportion of people without safe drinking water. Some other areas where progress has been achieved include: ensuring gender parity at the three educational levels; reversing the spread of HIV and tuberculosis; increasing the areas

covered by forests and those with protected status; and reducing the consumption of ozone-depleting substances. Furthermore, the region is on track to ensure that all children attend primary school.

Conversely, the region is classified as a slow achiever in: the reduction of the proportion of children under 5 years who are underweight; the reduction of child, infant and maternal mortality; the increase of access to maternal health care services; and the increase of access to basic sanitation. The report pays particular attention to closing the gaps in health and nutrition outcomes in the region. In addition, the region has been unable to keep children enrolled in primary school. The region is classified as regressing or making no progress only in one of the tracked indicators: the level of carbon dioxide emissions. However, excluding China and India, the region has also regressed with regard to the forest cover indicator.

Table 3 presents a summary of the progress of the region as a whole and selected country groups in specific indicators. As shown in the table, the progress has not been even across subregions and country groups. North and Central Asia and South-East Asia are the subregions with the highest progress, having the largest number of indicators classified as *early achiever* or *on-track*. But in South-East Asia, there has been no progress or regress with regard to two indicators: forest cover and carbon dioxide emissions. Forest cover has also declined in South Asia (excluding India), and in the Pacific subregion. At the country level, middle income countries have made more progress than low-income countries.

**Table 3. Progress in Asia and the Pacific and selected country groups**

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 ODF substance consumption 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 Russia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Asia-Pacific LDCs	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Asia-Pacific Low Income	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Asia-Pacific Middle Income	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

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

Source: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Asian Development Bank, and United Nations Development Programme (2012). *Accelerating equitable achievement of the MDGs: Closing gaps in health and nutrition outcomes*. Bangkok: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

However, there are areas where progress in every subregion or country group presented has been slow, such as in the reduction of child, infant and maternal mortality. Country-level progress classification reveals that disparities are more visible at this level and progress has not been even, as mentioned in the next section.

### 3. Progress in Europe and Central Asia<sup>5</sup>

Significant progress in achieving MDGs in the ECE region was being made in almost every area prior to the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, but the severe downturn during the crisis and sluggish recovery since 2009 has resulted

in slower improvement. The crisis increased unemployment and poverty in much of the region and has significantly weakened government finances so that less resources were available for improving educational and health infrastructure and providing income maintenance for low-income families. The deteriorating sovereign debt situation in the advanced economies has resulted in a scaling back of ODA for closing the financing gap in much of the developing world. Unfortunately the economic outlook for the coming year for the ECE region is quite subdued and thus without a more focused effort by its member States the achievement of some of the goals by

2015 may not be possible. In the emerging economies of Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, poverty and hunger and lack of access to education and health care are not as widespread as in parts of the developing world. These deprivations are thus increasingly confined to marginalized groups including ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, persons with disabilities, the long-term unemployed and, in few cases, women and girls.

Progress in MDG implementation could be accelerated at minimal cost if the social and economic policies of Governments would focus on creating more equitable societies and improving living standards with better designed policies for reaching those disadvantaged groups. Generally, progress has been greater in the new European Union member States from Central Europe and European Union candidate countries from South-Eastern Europe. However, higher unemployment and/or lower incomes have forced households in those countries to economize not only on luxuries and conveniences but also on necessities.

The lower income countries from the Caucasus and Central Asia as well as the relatively less advanced transition economies of South-Eastern Europe whose economic and political transition has been delayed or sidetracked have been less successful in achieving MDGs. In those emerging economies, progress in the health sector has deteriorated because a number of Governments have reduced public spending or restricted access to health services, leaving income-constrained families unable to pay the

difference and actually having to further cut out-of-pocket expenditures on medical care and pharmaceutical products. Progress in addressing HIV and multi-drug resistant tuberculosis epidemics has been especially disappointing in much of the region. Education expenditures, both public and private, have been better protected. There are some targets, especially in the environmental area, however, where the lack of progress is more widespread and there is a need for changes in economy-wide activities; some of these goals remain unfilled even in the region's advanced economies of Western Europe and North America.

Throughout the region the fiscal sustainability of existing social safety nets and social insurance systems are of increasing concern given the large increases in sovereign debt resulting from the crisis, the relatively poor growth performance of the region, and the ageing of the population. Significant changes will be necessary in the institutional design of those systems.

#### *4. Progress in Latin America and the Caribbean*

ECLAC has prepared several reports which examine the progress in the region towards MDGs. The latest report was published in 2010. The assessment focuses on quantitative targets and indicators have been adapted to reflect regional realities. In the case of extreme poverty, national poverty lines that are comparable among countries in Latin America were used. Those lines tend to be higher than the one set at the international level (US\$ 1.25 per day), and therefore the level of extreme

poverty for the region tends to be higher. In the case of MDG-2, the assessment of progress was based on the completion of primary education as reported in household surveys. Because of this, the results presented in the regional report of ECLAC differ from those published in the global MDG Report.<sup>6</sup>

According to the report, MDG progress made by the region as a whole, especially in reducing extreme poverty, took place between 2002 and 2008, prior to the global financial crisis. One of the main challenges faced by the region is to maintain that pace of progress. Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole is on track to reach the targets related to extreme poverty, child mortality and access to safe drinking water and sanitation. However, there has been insufficient progress in four of the nine targets assessed, including undernourishment, completion of primary education, gender parity in national parliaments and maternal mortality.

Table 4 presents the results of the progress assessment in the region as a whole and in its two broad subregions (Latin America and the Caribbean subregions).<sup>7</sup> The table shows that the Latin American subregion has made the same progress as the region as a whole. However, the Caribbean subregion has been progressing faster in reducing undernourishment than the region as a whole. Conversely, the Caribbean subregion has been slower in ensuring that children complete primary education, reducing child mortality and extending the access to sanitation to the population.

### *5. Progress in the Arab countries*

In the Arab region, ESCWA has produced a series of Arab MDG Reports – covering both

review of progress in implementation and policy analysis – in cooperation with the League of Arab States and regional United Nations agencies. The 2011 Arab MDG report notes that “the failure of the developmental strategies of the past ... was triggered by the need for political change”, which points to the interdependence of the Arab uprisings and the implementation of MDGs.<sup>8</sup> The report identifies a series of current regional challenges, including (i) lack of democracy, weak governance and ineffective institutions; (ii) unemployment, expansion of the informal sector and low productivity; (iii) poverty and inequality; (iv) discrimination against women and youth; (v) conflict and foreign occupation; (vi) lack of regional integration; (vii) unsustainable natural resource management; and (viii) poor data availability and quality. The forthcoming 2013 Arab MDG report – being prepared in collaboration with the League of Arab States – also looks at progress in implementation and examines what worked and what did not work well in the region. The report will present four specific policy proposals both for the short and medium-to-long terms (that is, beyond 2015), covering immediate relief measures, social protection, governance reform and regional partnerships.

In addition, ESCWA has produced a statistical report to chart the progress of MDGs in the Arab region,<sup>9</sup> which assesses the prospects of achieving the MDG goals and targets, and sets out the need for targeted policymaking where necessary. Highlighting disparities at the subregional,<sup>10</sup> national and subnational levels, the report focuses on inequality between urban and rural areas,

women and men, and girls and boys. According to the report, enrolment and survival rates for children in primary education are on track, and elimination of gender disparity in education has been attained in both primary and secondary education. However, the empowerment of women remains a distant goal, while levels of poverty, child malnutrition and population suffering from undernourishment remain high and are not on track to achieve the target. There have been significant reductions made in both infant and child mortality. The region is progressing well towards meeting its target, and despite a marked increase in the number of births attended by skilled health personnel since the early 1990s, recent data show alarming rates of both maternal mortality and adolescent births. Moreover, there has been only a marginal

decrease in the incidence of tuberculosis since 1990. With regard to MDG-7, the region has considerably decreased its consumption of ozone-depleting substances. However, it has significantly increased both its use of water resources and its carbon dioxide emissions since the 1990s.

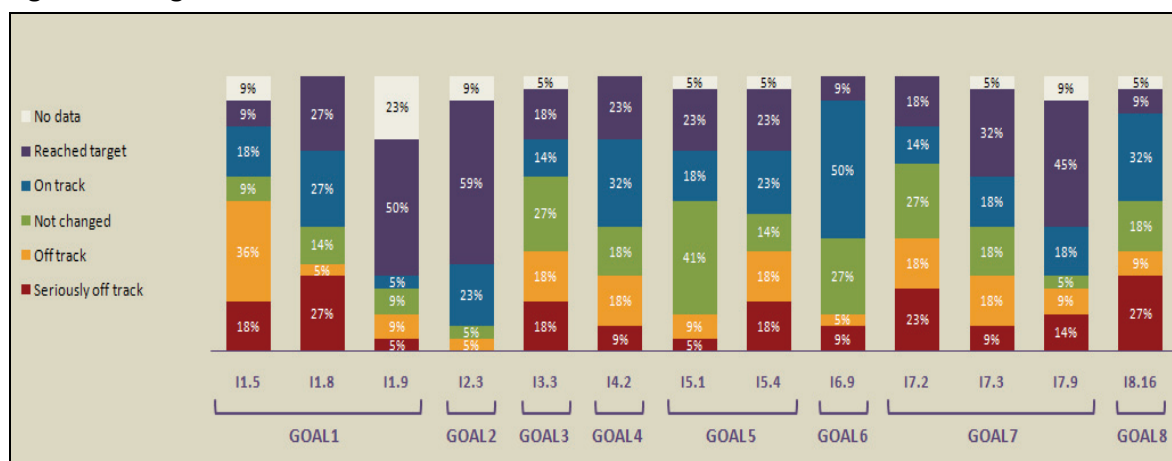
ESCWA has also produced several wall charts and the Arab MDG Atlas,<sup>11</sup> which provides a visual comparative mapping of indicators and trends over the past years with a brief descriptive analysis of progress and regression. Those documents help to highlight good practices and achievements made in attaining national goals. Figure I presents the summary of progress in achieving MDGs by 2010 in the 22 Arab countries by targets and goals (weighed averages).

**Table 4. Progress in Latin America and the Caribbean**

	Goal 1			Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Goal 7	
	Target 1.A	Target 1.C		Target 2.A	Target 3.A	Target 4.A	Target 5.A	Target 7.C	
	Extreme poverty	Underweight	Undernourishment	Completion of primary education	Women in national parliaments	Child mortality	Maternal mortality	Access to safe drinking water	Access to sanitation
Latin America and the Caribbean	moderate	moderate	moderate	high	moderate	moderate	high	high	Low
Latin America	moderate	moderate	moderate	high	moderate	moderate	high	high	Low
The Caribbean	moderate	moderate	moderate	moderate	Low	moderate	high	high	moderate
	The region/subregion has already met the target or is close to meeting the target								
	The region/subregion is on track and will reach the target if prevailing trends persist								
	The region/subregion is not on track and will not reach the target if prevailing trends persist								
	The region/subregion has made no progress towards the target or there has been a setback								
	Missing or insufficient data								

Source: ECLAC. (2010). *Achieving the Millennium Development Goals with equality in Latin America and the Caribbean: Progress and challenges*. Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, available from <http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getprod.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/5/39995/P39995.xml&xsl=/mdg/tpl-i/p9f.xsl&base=/mdg/tpl-i/top-bottom.xsl>.



**Figure I. Progress in the Arab countries<sup>12</sup>**

Source: Arab Millennium Development Goals Atlas (E/ESCWA/SD/2011/Technical paper.1).

Notes: The indicators in the bar charts are as follows:

- 11.5: Employment-to-population ratio, both sexes, percentage.
- 11.8: Children under 5 moderately or severely underweight, percentage.
- 11.9: Population undernourished, percentage.
- 12.3: Literacy rates of 15-24 year olds, both sexes, percentage.
- 13.3: Seats held by women in national parliament, percentage.
- 14.2: Infant mortality rate (0-1 year) per 1,000 live births.
- 15.1: Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births.
- 15.4: Adolescent birth rate, per 1,000 women.
- 16.9: Tuberculosis incidence rate per year per 100,000 population (mid-point).
- 17.2: Carbon dioxide emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>), thousand metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- 17.3: Consumption of all Ozone-Depleting Substances in Ozone Depletion Potential metric tons.
- 17.9: Proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities, total.
- 18.16: Internet users per 100 population.

## C. Review of MDG progress from an inequality perspective

Since 2000, the implementation of MDGs has contributed to reducing extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease; expanding women's and girls' opportunities; as well as promoting an environmentally sustainable society. These impressive results partly reflect their focus on the implementation of clear targets. However, this focus on targets,

particularly those monitored in terms of national and global averages, can mask growing disparities. This section underscores the disparity/inequality aspect of MDGs from the global to the intra-national level.

### 1. Global progress

As chapter I shows with regard to the overall progress in the implementation of MDGs at the global level, several targets have already been achieved or are close to achievement by the



2015 deadline.<sup>13</sup> This includes the poverty reduction target, parity between boys and girls in primary education and access to improved water sources. However, there has been slow progress in other areas, as the selected indicators in figure II below show. For example, the proportion of own-account and unpaid family workers in total employment, which is considered a proxy for vulnerable employment, has dropped from 67 per cent in 1991 to an estimated 58 per cent in all developing regions in 2011. Although maternal mortality has considerably declined between 1990 and 2010, this reduction is still far from the 2015 target. Furthermore, the number of both undernourished people and slum dwellers has continued to grow. The estimated number of people suffering from hunger in developing regions has increased from 791 million in the 1995-1997 period to 836 million in 2000-2002 and reached 850 million in 2006-2008, which was comparable to that of the 1990-1992 period.

## 2. *Regional disparities*

The progress towards the achievement of MDGs has not only varied across different targets and indicators, but has also been unequally distributed across regions, subregions and countries, as well as among different population groups within countries. The regional disparities are shown in the progress chart below (figure III). The chart provides information on progress in the implementation of 16 indicators in 9 subregions, according to four categories: (i) target already met or expected to be met by 2015; (ii) progress insufficient to reach the target if prevailing trends persist; (iii) no

progress or deterioration; and (iv) missing or insufficient data. Given that different regions are characterized by different initial development conditions and face different development challenges, caution should be taken when comparing their performance. Thus, a subregion may appear to lag behind other regions, but it may have actually made considerable progress when compared to its historical record, and given its initial conditions and development challenges.<sup>14</sup>

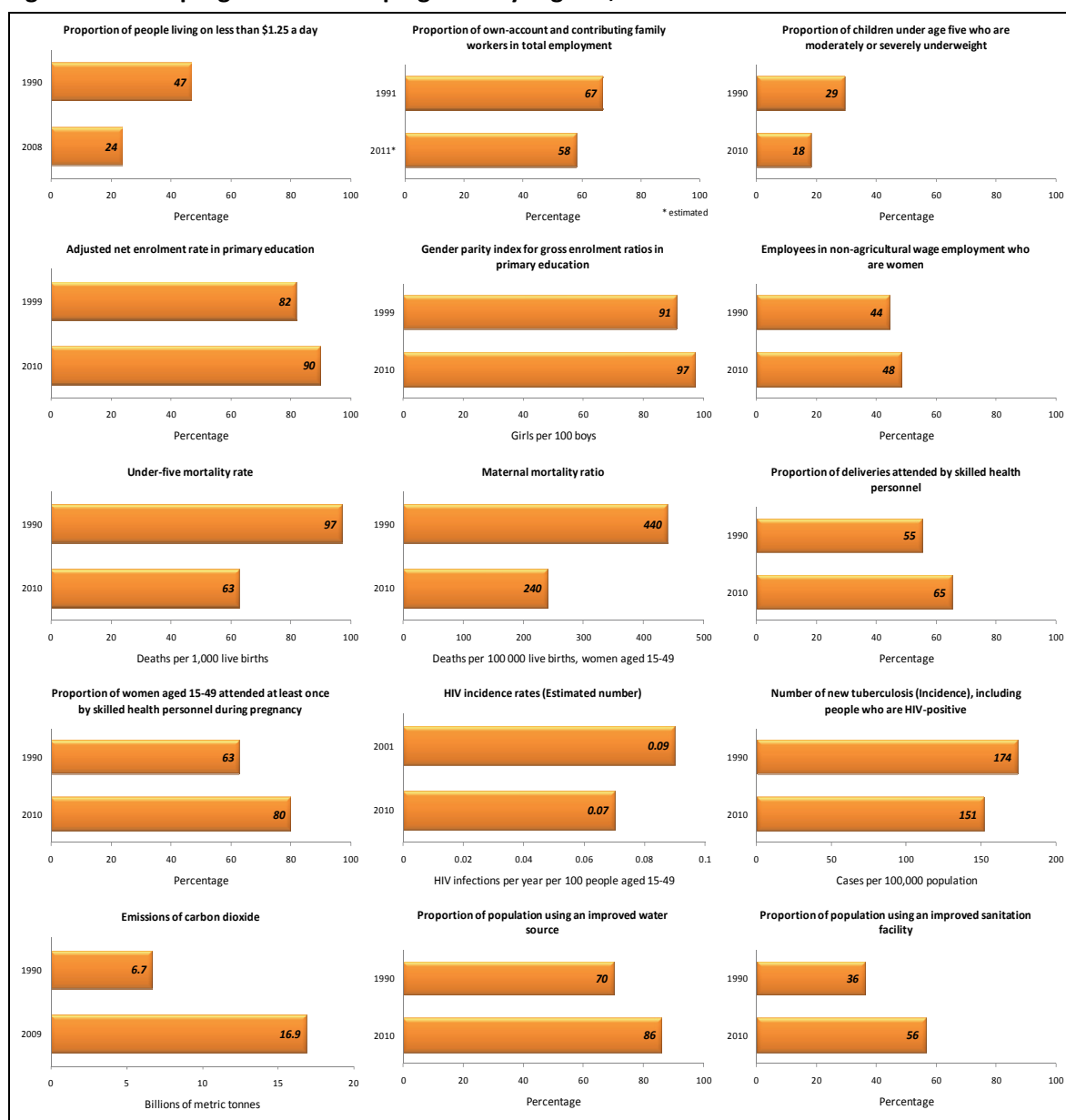
Figure III shows that some subregions have experienced greater progress than others. For example, East Asia is the best performer among the nine subregions. Out of 16 targets, it has already achieved or is expected to achieve 12 targets by 2015. This subregion is followed by North Africa and South-East Asia, both of which have achieved or will achieve 9 out of 16 targets, and Latin America and the Caribbean and the Caucasus and Central Asia (8 out of 16 targets).

In the African continent, North Africa performs better than the rest of Africa in almost all targets presented in the chart, except the target relating to HIV/AIDS, where there is no progress or deterioration in North Africa, albeit at low numbers of infected people. Within the Asian continent as a whole, there has also been mixed progress towards the achievement of MDGs, ranging from East Asia with the highest number of targets expected to be achieved by 2015, to South Asia (6 targets) and Western Asia<sup>15</sup> (4 targets). However, both East Asia and Western Asia share the number of targets in which there has been no progress or deterioration: universal primary education and the political representation of women in

the case of the former; and hunger and improvement in the lives of slum dwellers in the case of the latter. In fact, within the broader

Asia and Pacific region, Oceania is the subregion with the highest number of targets which are unlikely to be met (5 targets).

**Figure II. MDG progress in developing country regions, selected indicators**



Source: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2012.

Note: The graphs present aggregated values of selected MDG indicators of all developing regions which include North Africa, Southern, East, West and Central Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Caucasus and Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, South-east Asia, Western Asia and Oceania.

Figure III. The MDG progress chart

Goals and Targets	Africa		Asia				Oceania	Latin America & Caribbean	Caucasus & Central Asia
	Northern	Sub-Saharan	Eastern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western			
GOAL 1   Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger									
Reduce extreme poverty by half	low poverty	very high poverty	moderate poverty	high poverty	very high poverty	low poverty	very high poverty	moderate poverty	low poverty
Productive and decent employment	large deficit in decent work	very large deficit in decent work	large deficit in decent work	large deficit in decent work	very large deficit in decent work	large deficit in decent work	very large deficit in decent work	moderate deficit in decent work	moderate deficit in decent work
Reduce hunger by half	low hunger	very high hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger	high hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger	moderate hunger
GOAL 2   Achieve universal primary education									
Universal primary schooling	high enrolment	moderate enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	high enrolment	–	high enrolment	high enrolment
GOAL 3   Promote gender equality and empower women									
Equal girls' enrolment in primary school	close to parity	close to parity	parity	parity	parity	close to parity	close to parity	parity	parity
Women's share of paid employment	low share	medium share	high share	medium share	low share	low share	medium share	high share	high share
Women's equal representation in national parliaments	low representation	moderate representation	moderate representation	low representation	low representation	low representation	very low representation	moderate representation	low representation
GOAL 4   Reduce child mortality									
Reduce mortality of under-five-year-olds by two thirds	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality
GOAL 5   Improve maternal health									
Reduce maternal mortality by three quarters	low mortality	very high mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	high mortality	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	low mortality
Access to reproductive health	moderate access	low access	high access	moderate access	moderate access	moderate access	low access	high access	moderate access
GOAL 6   Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases									
Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	low incidence	high incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence	low incidence
Halt and reverse the spread of tuberculosis	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality	moderate mortality	low mortality	high mortality	low mortality	moderate mortality
GOAL 7   Ensure environmental sustainability									
Halve proportion of population without improved drinking water	high coverage	low coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage	low coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage
Halve proportion of population without sanitation	high coverage	very low coverage	low coverage	low coverage	very low coverage	moderate coverage	low coverage	moderate coverage	high coverage
Improve the lives of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	very high proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	high proportion of slum-dwellers	high proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	–
GOAL 8   Develop a global partnership for development									
Internet users	high usage	moderate usage	high usage	moderate usage	low usage	high usage	low usage	high usage	high usage
<div>The progress chart operates on two levels. The words in each box indicate the present degree of compliance with the target. The colours show progress towards the target according to the legend below:</div> <div><div>Target already met or expected to be met by 2015.</div><div>No progress or deterioration.</div><div>Progress insufficient to reach the target if prevailing trends persist.</div><div>Missing or insufficient data.</div></div>									
For the regional groupings and country data, see <a href="http://mdgs.un.org">mdgs.un.org</a> . Country experiences in each region may differ significantly from the regional average. Due to new data and revised methodologies, this Progress Chart is not comparable with previous versions.									
Sources: United Nations, based on data and estimates provided by: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Inter-Parliamentary Union; International Labour Organization; International Telecommunication Union; UNAIDS; UNESCO; UN-Habitat; UNICEF; UN Population Division; World Bank; World Health Organization—based on statistics available as of June 2012.									
Compiled by Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations.									

Source: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2012.

Latin America, the Caribbean and Caucasus and Central Asia have shown comparable performance in terms of the number of targets achieved, but also have different priority areas for future attention. In Latin America and the Caribbean, areas in which there has been insufficient progress include poverty reduction, employment generation and improvement in the lives of slum dwellers. In the Caucasus and Central Asia, three particular areas of concern – where there has been no progress or deterioration – are universal primary education, HIV/AIDS and access to improved drinking water.

The above summary shows that monitoring MDGs at an aggregated level can disguise disparities at a lower level of disaggregation. In other words, an achievement of MDG targets at the global level does not necessarily imply subregional accomplishment. For example, the world has achieved the MDG-7 target on improved drinking water five years ahead of the 2015 deadline. Nevertheless, there has been no progress in two subregions (Oceania and Caucasus and Central Asia) and insufficient progress in three other subregions (North Africa; Southern, East, West and Central Africa; and Western Asia), although the levels of coverage in these subregions vary widely. The same global-regional picture emerges in other key areas, such as poverty reduction and universal primary education.

Furthermore, the global targets do not allow for monitoring and reporting on regional specific challenges affecting the achievement of the goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. For example, while the Declaration aims to improve access to water

supply and sanitation, the methodology applied for monitoring progress on these goals is framed from a health perspective. In doing so, the methodology does not consider the continuity, reliability or quality of access to water supply and sanitation services as the measure of achievement but is simply limited to improved access. This is particularly problematic in the Arab region where progress appears to be achieved in meeting the water supply target, even though many countries in the region reporting 100 per cent access to water supply services actually have access to water for only a few hours once or twice a week. In order to address this challenge and in preparation for a post-2015 development framework, ESCWA is implementing an MDG+ Initiative at the request of the Arab Ministerial Water Council. This initiative establishes a regional monitoring mechanism for improved reporting on water supply and sanitation targets that build on the MDG targets and are based on a set of region-specific indicators. These indicators have been vetted and approved by the League of Arab States and its associated intergovernmental bodies.<sup>16</sup>

### *3. National disparities*

Between-country disparities are also masked when the regional averages are reported. This is the case for many MDG indicators, if not all, at a national level. One clear example is gender equality in primary school, an indicator that is at parity or close to parity in the nine above-mentioned subregions. Nonetheless, the ratio of girls to boys in primary education remains unevenly shared in different countries in each subregion (figure IV). In the countries for

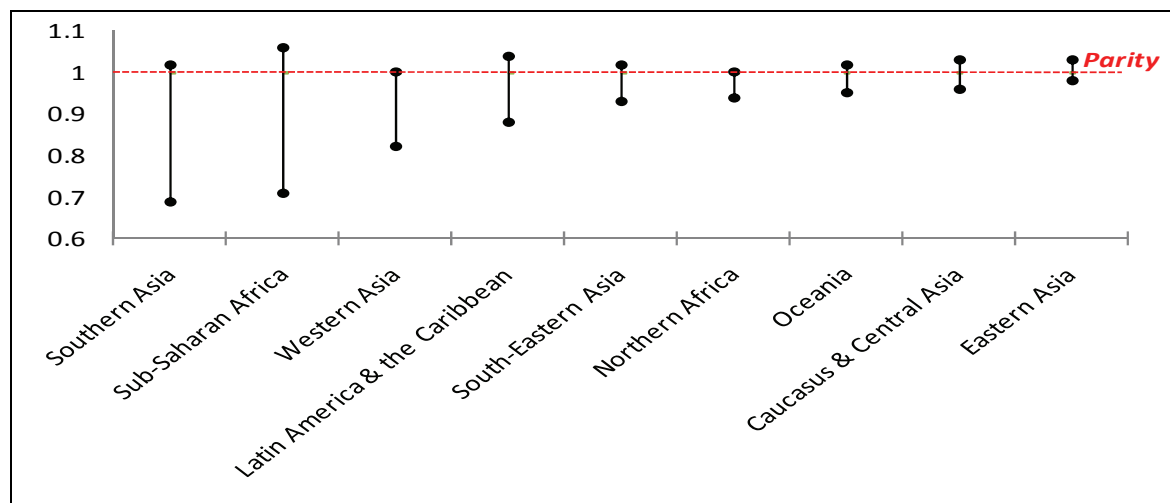
which data were available in 2010, the gender parity index in primary level enrolment ranged from 0.69 to 1.02 in South Asia; 0.71 to 1.06 in Southern, East, West and Central Africa; 0.82 to 1 in Western Asia<sup>17</sup>; 0.88 to 1.04 in Latin America the Caribbean; 0.93 to 1.02 in South-East Asia; 0.94 to 0.96 in North Africa; 0.95 to 1.02 in Oceania; 0.96 to 1.03 in Caucasus and Central Asia; and 0.98 to 1.03 in East Asia. These data show important disparities in the achievement of gender equality in primary education.

Another example demonstrating between-country disparities is the prevalence of tuberculosis (TB). Looking at countries in East Asia, for example, TB prevalence rate per 100,000 people in 2010 ranged from as low as 100 in Hong Kong, China to as high as 399 in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. TB is more prevalent in Mongolia, with 331 cases in every 100,000 population, than 22 out of 48 countries in Southern, East, West and Central Africa.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, despite

significant progress in reaching the target of the Goal 1 on poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, a report by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) indicates that the wealth gap in Latin America and the Caribbean has been widening with the richest 20 per cent of the population on average earning 20 times more than the poorest 20 per cent.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, within the broader Arab region, there are significant disparities in under-five mortality, maternal mortality, adolescent fertility and the prevalence of tuberculosis in the four major categories of countries of the region.<sup>20</sup>

While progress towards the achievement of MDGs is related to a series of economic factors, such as levels of national income and development, political vulnerability should also be taken into consideration. Fragile and conflict-affected States have shown the slowest progress towards MDGs. This may be due to weak capabilities and the inability of those States to deliver basic services to their citizens.

**Figure IV. Gender parity index in primary level enrolment, 2010**



Source: The United Nations MDG Database.

#### *4. Intranational disparities*

Even within a nation, regardless of the speed of progress, the implementation of MDGs does not benefit the entire population equitably. This is confirmed in the Asia and the Pacific region by examining within-country disparities of health-related MDG outcomes of 22 countries in the region.<sup>21</sup> Statistical results suggest that within-country differences in MDG achievements can be explained by gender, wealth status of households, urban/rural residence and level of education. Wealth and education tend to be the two most important factors. Other determinants of intra-country disparities include ethnicity, language, social class and geographical area of residence. These sociocultural forces persist even after taking into account wealth and education. For instance, prevalence of underweight children is significantly higher in some castes and tribes in India and Nepal. Similarly, in the Philippines and Pakistan, children born to families of some ethno-linguistic groups have distinctly lower under-five mortality rates. Significant disparities also exist between states, regions and/or provinces, which are partly associated with specific policies and programmes of different local administrations. One explanation could be differences in household wealth and levels of education between administrative divisions. However, results from statistical analysis reveal that, after factoring in relevant individual and household characteristics, some states, regions and provinces still appear to perform better than others.

This phenomenon is undoubtedly not unique to Asia and the Pacific countries. Rather, it is true to probably every single

country. Not surprisingly, within the most unequal region in the world, Latin America and the Caribbean, there are considerable inequalities in different population groups. In Panama and Peru, for example, the number of rural people living under extreme poverty in 2008 was estimated to be five times higher than those living in cities. In addition, there are significant gender differences within urban areas. In Panama in 2008, for example, for people aged 20 to 59 who lived in urban areas, extreme poverty was nearly twice more prevalent among women than men.<sup>22</sup>

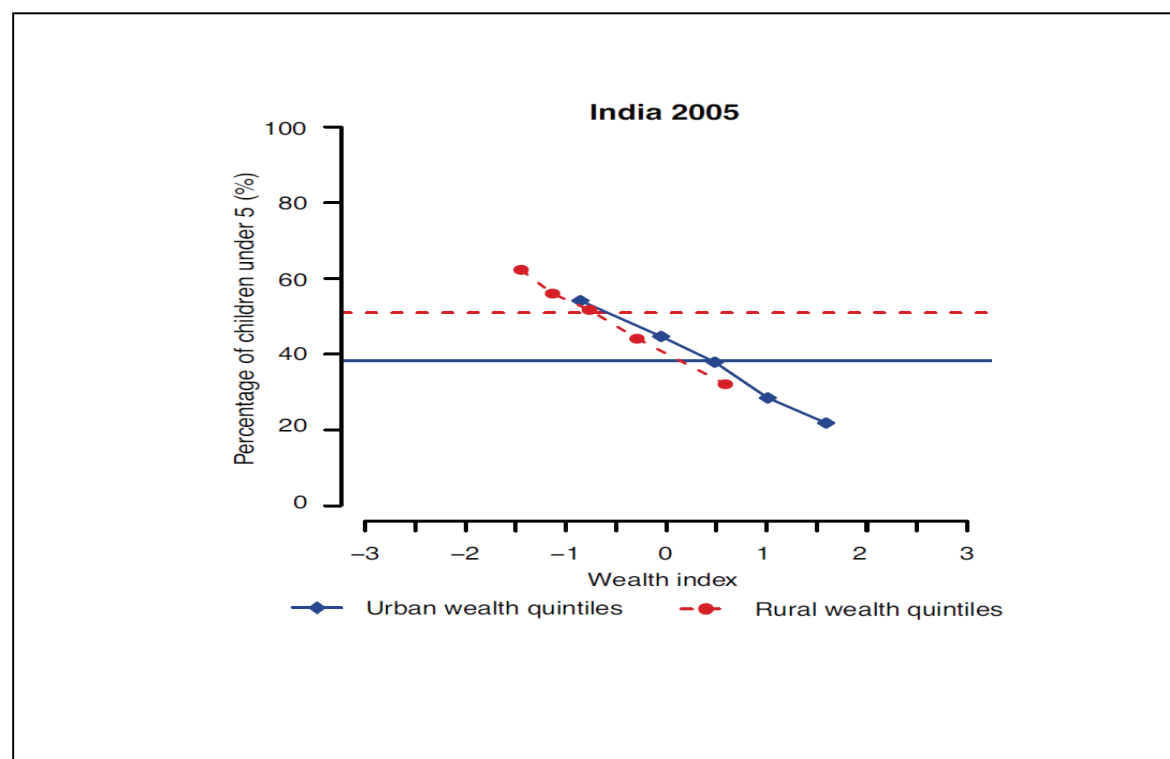
Among drivers of within-country disparities, the urban-rural divide has been repeatedly reported for most MDG indicators. In developing countries, children living in rural areas are almost twice more likely to be underweight and less likely to celebrate their fifth birthday than those living in urban areas. Although the target of ensuring access to improved drinking water has been globally met, the provision of drinking water in rural areas is lagging behind the coverage in cities. Moreover, urban populations had 1.7 times higher access to improved sanitation facilities than their rural counterparts in the developing world in 2010. At the same time, there are often greater disparities within both urban and rural areas. This is illustrated in figure V in terms of the prevalence of moderately and severely underweight children in India in 2005.

Figure V presents averages of underweight prevalence in Indian urban areas (38 per cent) and rural ones (51 per cent), which also shows a considerable urban-rural gap in the nutritional status of children. Urban and rural populations are disaggregated into quintiles by household

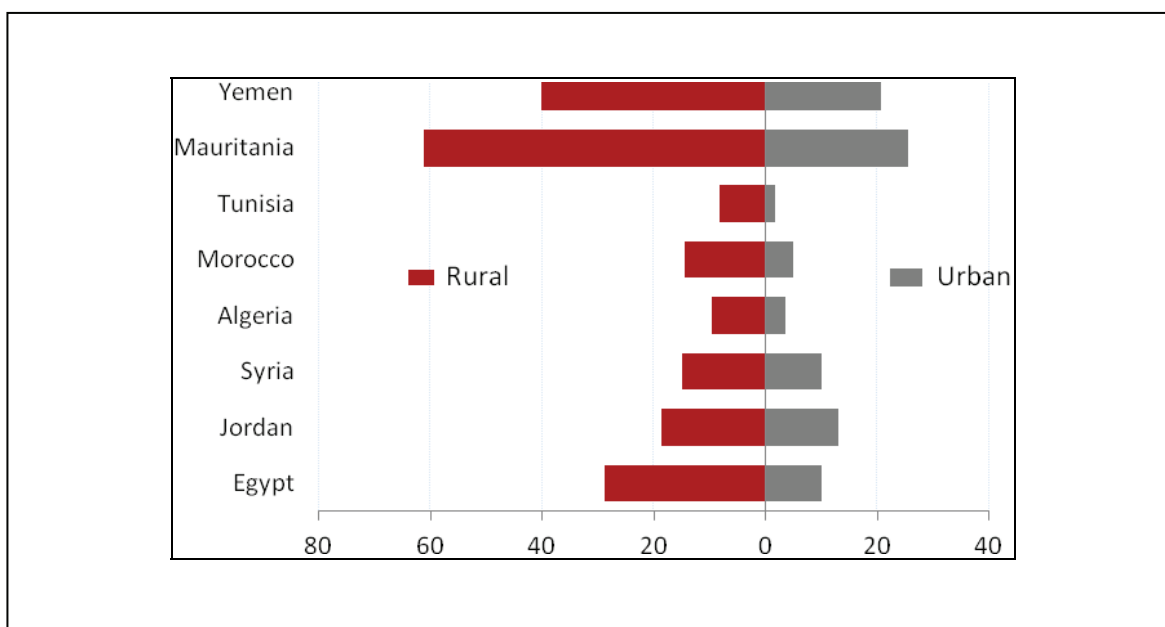
wealth, measured in terms of asset ownership. Several conclusions can be drawn from figure V in terms of disparities. Children of the wealthiest 20 per cent of rural households are much better nourished than those living in urban areas on average as well as those from the poorest 60 per cent of urban households, while the nutritional condition of the urban poor in India is even worse than the rural average. In addition, although urban children are better nourished than rural ones in general, the gaps are comparable. The difference in underweight prevalence between the richest and poorest quintiles is 32 percentage points in urban areas and 30 percentage points in the rural areas.

Similarly, in most Arab countries, the incidence of poverty tends to be higher in rural areas and increases at a faster rate than urban poverty. In Jordan, for example, the rural-urban gap has narrowed over the years as poverty has decreased, while in Morocco it has widened as poverty has increased. Although most of the poor in the region live in rural areas, urban poverty is also a concern in many Arab countries as a result of increasing rural migration to the cities.<sup>23</sup> Figure VI below shows the gap between those living below the national poverty line in rural and urban areas in selected Arab countries.

**Figure V. Urban-rural gaps in under-5 children underweight by wealth quintiles, India 2005**



Source: The Asia-Pacific Regional MDG Report 2011/12.

**Figure VI. Rural and urban population below national poverty line, latest data (percentage)**

Source: ESCWA, Charting the progress of the Millennium Development Goals in the Arab region: A Statistical Portrait (ESCWA/SD/2009/Technical Paper. 5).

#### D. An assessment of MDG progress using an acceleration method

The MDG framework has recognized strengths but also problems and challenges to its implementation, which has generated several criticisms on how to monitor progress. As discussed in chapter I, the framework tends to focus on the targets rather than on the means to achieve them and the quality of outcomes. There are also questions about global versus national monitoring. The co-chair of the United Nations inter-agency group that developed MDGs has argued that since the goals are globally defined and based on global trends, the assessment of progress for meeting the

targets by 2015 can only be done at the global level.<sup>24</sup> Other analysts argue that the nature of the goal should determine whether it would apply at the national level or not.<sup>25</sup> For example, universal primary education can only be attained globally if all countries achieve it. Other targets can be achieved even if not all countries are on track to do so, such as halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

It is also clear that the different development needs and initial conditions of countries were not reflected in the selection of targets. The MDG framework does not take into consideration the differences in efforts that countries would need to make in order to achieve the same relative degree of progress or



to accelerate progress, nor does it account for differences in population size and the scale of existing deprivation. One leading analyst, for example, argues that the goals were “poorly and arbitrarily designed to measure progress against poverty and deprivation”.<sup>26</sup> The arbitrary selection of targets (absolute or relative) and the lack of clarity on whether they should apply to individual countries or not has led to what has been described as *unrealistic* goals, especially for Africa. Finally, the fact that some targets were defined numerically or quantitatively and others were not formulated in explicit or numeric terms (such as 6.A, 6.C, 7.A, 7.B, 7.D and those under Goal 8) is often mentioned as creating an additional challenge to monitoring progress.

### 1. *The acceleration method*

As a response to the problem of measuring countries’ progress, it is proposed that the focus of the discussion be changed. Instead of analyzing whether targets were met or not, it would be more important to consider the influence of MDGs on the development agenda, and whether they adequately account for the considerable acceleration in progress made by countries with low initial levels of development.

One approach to assess progress is to use a time-distance measure, which is defined as the difference in time when two events occurred or two units reached a given level of an indicator.<sup>27</sup> This approach compares time series in the horizontal dimension. Another way to examine national progress in achieving the MDG targets is to use a linear annualized rate of improvement required to reach the 2015

goal from the reference year. A country is said to be on track if the latest observed MDG performance stands in a better position than the calculated position, otherwise the country is considered off track.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, other researchers have focused on whether the introduction of MDGs has contributed to the acceleration of progress in key development areas.<sup>29</sup> This assessment makes more sense at the national level than at the global one. Comparisons are made between the rates of change for the periods before and after MDGs are introduced to determine whether an acceleration of improvement takes place. In this case, the rate of change is assumed to be linear. The new assessment of progress differs from the traditional assessment method. For example, access to safe water is traditionally considered an MDG success, but with the new method, only one-third of the countries improved in terms of the rate of progress. This idea has been further developed by including two new features: the recognition of a non-linear trend (the rate of progress in MDG indicators is not linear across time) and the “effort appreciation”, which means that it is more difficult for countries to make progress when indicators are closer to the upper or lower limit: at higher levels, it is harder to make further improvements.<sup>30</sup>

This analysis shows three important results. First, many African countries improved their rate of progress: even assuming that they are not on-track to reach MDGs by 2015, they are making more progress than any of the other countries. Second, least developed countries (LDCs) are accelerating faster in progress than

non-LDCs. Third, most progress in acceleration has been made in goals 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8, while the least acceleration in progress has occurred in goals 3, 5, and 7.

However, one problem with those acceleration methods is that they only consider two data points for the calculation of either rate of progress, that is, before and after the implementation of MDG. In order to partly address this problem, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has introduced the average annual rate of reduction (AARR) as a measure to monitor and evaluate the global trend in underweight prevalence among children under five and child mortality. AARR quantifies the rate of change of a given indicator from a baseline to the current year. When estimates are available for multiple years, this method allows the calculation of AARR using a regression analysis. This measure has been used in several recurrent reports entitled "The State of the World's Children". In the latest report prepared by UNICEF<sup>31</sup>, AARR is calculated for all countries worldwide for two indicators (under-five mortality rate and the total fertility rate) and two different periods of time (from 1970 to 1990 and from 1990 to 2010). The report notes that many of the countries that have achieved significant reductions in their under-five mortality rate have also achieved significant reductions in fertility. The UNICEF method has been adapted and applied to analyze progress in achieving MDGs. It tends to capture better the rates of change in different areas by comparing the more recent trends with past trends.

## *2. Results of the acceleration method*

This subsection provides a comparative analysis of the pre-2000 and post-MDG period to determine if the introduction of MDGs has helped accelerate the rate of progress in development. One limitation of this analysis is data availability. For four of the assessed indicators (poverty, children underweight, reaching last grade of primary education and antenatal care), less than half of the 169 countries have enough data to calculate the rate of progress, suggesting the need for the improvement of the information systems of countries to produce internationally comparable data.

As shown in table 5, four African countries, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Namibia and Tanzania lead the list of countries ranking at the top for accelerating the rate of progress in most of the indicators assessed (15 out of 21). In general, it is possible to see that a significant number of African countries have improved their rate of progress significantly and figure among the top 22 countries worldwide.

From the complete results analysis presented in Annex III, it is clear that eleven LDCs are among the top 22 countries where the rate of progress has improved in most indicators. More than half of LDCs have improved or maintained their rate of progress in at least half of the assessed indicators. Among the top 22 countries where the rate of progress has improved in most of the indicators, there are 12 Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). Almost all LLDCs have managed to accelerate or maintain their rate of progress in at least half of the assessed indicators. None of the Small Island

Developing States (SIDS) figures among the top 22 countries with most acceleration. In general, the acceleration of progress in SIDS has been slower than in other countries. Among SIDS, Maldives exhibits significant progress – with an acceleration or maintenance in more than half of the indicators – and is followed by Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. In the Caribbean, only two countries have accelerated or maintained their rate of progress in at least half of the indicators: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. In Oceania, Tonga is the only country where the rate of progress has been accelerated or maintained in 10 out of the 21 indicators, followed by Papua New Guinea with only 9 indicators.<sup>32</sup>

Eight out of the 22 developing countries in Latin America have accelerated or maintained their rate of progress between the two periods of time in more than half of the indicators. The list in this subregion is headed by Honduras and Colombia. In North Africa, only Egypt has been able to accelerate or maintain the rate of progress in 10 indicators, followed by Morocco and Libya with 9 indicators. In the rest of Africa, 31 out of 50 countries have accelerated or maintained the rate of progress in at least 11 indicators between pre- and post-2000 periods. In Western Asia, five of the countries have managed to maintain or accelerate their rate of progress of improvement in most indicators (Iraq is among the countries at the top of the list in this subregion).<sup>33</sup> In the Caucasus and Central Asia, four out of eight countries present acceleration or maintenance of the rate of progress in at least half of the indicators. In South Asia, all countries have been maintaining or accelerating the rate of progress in at least half of the indicators, except

for Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In South-East Asia, only 4 out of 11 countries have managed to maintain or accelerate the rate of progress. In East Asia, Mongolia, China and the Republic of Korea are heading the list of countries with the highest number of indicators accelerating, followed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The acceleration method also offers interesting insights into the achievement of key goals and targets. For example, with regard to the poverty target, most of the countries for which enough data are available have accelerated their rate of reduction of the proportion of people living with less than US\$1.25 a day. The acceleration in the rate of reduction of the proportion of under-five children who are underweight is only observed in about two thirds of the countries with enough data points for this analysis. Conversely, although the 2012 global MDG report<sup>34</sup> notes that the world has met the target of halving the proportion of people without access to improved water resources, only 27 per cent of the countries with enough data for this analysis have managed to accelerate the rate of increase in the proportion of the population using an improved drinking water source, and an additional 20 per cent of the countries managed to maintain their rate of acceleration, which amounts to only 47 per cent of the countries. On a more positive note, while the 2012 global MDG report also notes that progress in the reduction of maternal deaths has been slow and far from the 2015 target, in fact 61.5 per cent of the countries with sufficient data for this analysis show an acceleration in their rate of reduction.

**Table 5. Top 22 countries in the world where the rate of progress has improved in most indicators**

	Goal 1		Goal 2			Goal 3			Goal 4		Goal 5			Goal 6			Goal 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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation		accelerated
Burkina Faso	a	a	a	s	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s	A	15	
Mozambique	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	s	S	15	
Namibia		a	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	s	S	15	
Tanzania (United Republic of)	a	a	a		a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	m	S	15	
Azerbaijan	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	m	s	m	s	a	a	A	15	
Rwanda		a		a	a	a	s		a	a	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	a	s	S	14	
Zambia	s	a	a		a	s			a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	m	a	a	A	14	
South Africa	a	a	s	s	a	a	m		a	a	a		a	a	a	s	s	s	a	a	A	13	
Swaziland	a		a	a	a	a	s	s	a	a	a	s		a	a	a	s	m	a	s	A	13	
Honduras	s	a	a	a	a	s		s	m	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	S	13	
Tajikistan	a			a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		a	s	s	m	s	s	a	A	13	
Turkey	a	a	s		a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	s	s	s	M	13	
Burundi			s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a			a	a	a	a	s	a	s	S	12	
Central African Republic	s	s			a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	S	12	
Ethiopia	a	a	s	s	s	a	a	a	a	a	a				a	a	s	a	a	s	S	12	
Kenya		s	s			a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	m	s	a	s	A	12	
Lesotho		s	a	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	m		s	S	12	
Uganda	a	a				s		a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	s	a	s	s	A	12	
Armenia	a	s						a	m	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	A	12	
India				a	m	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	S	12	
Cambodia	a	a	s		s	a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s	a	m	S	12	
Iraq		a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a		a		m	s	s	m	s	a	A	12	

Source: ESCAP based on data from the United Nations MDG Database accessed on 16 October 2012.

Notes: (a) accelerated the rate of progress, (m): maintained the rate of progress (s): slowed down the rate of progress. The different colors also refer to these different categories for ease of reference.

**Table 6. Percentage of countries according to their acceleration status**

Percentage (%)	SL.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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation
Accelerated	82	61	36	42	59	47	44	52	45	53	61	57	46	77	46	60	22	20	52	27	30
Maintained	2	0	2	0	2	2	1	3	37	28	4	1	9	3	33	5	20	22	1	20	16
Slowed down	17	39	62	58	39	51	55	45	18	19	34	42	45	20	21	35	58	59	47	53	54
# of countries with enough data out of 169	60	71	92	69	112	133	119	87	145	145	135	100	80	104	159	161	167	169	134	152	150

Source: ESCAP based on data from the United Nations MDG Database, accessed on 16 October 2012.

In sum, according to this new analysis, most progress has been made in accelerating the reduction of the proportion of people living with less than US\$1.25 a day and HIV/AIDS prevalence, followed by the proportion of underweight children, the ratio of maternal mortality and TB prevalence. There has been a significant acceleration of progress in the proportion of pupils completing primary school and in the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. Moderate progress has been observed in the reduction of infant mortality rates, carbon dioxide emissions and in the achievement of gender parity in tertiary education. Table 6 summarizes these results.

## E. The Policy influence of the MDG agenda

The previous section discussed the implementation of the MDG framework in terms of the progress registered in several goals and targets. An equally interesting question would be to examine the policy

influence of the MDG agenda. This section will thus discuss the impact of MDGs on policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at global, regional and national levels.

### 1. Impact on international and regional policy

There is a general consensus that MDGs have enormously influenced the global development discourse. World leaders globally adopted the vision of pro-poor development aiming to reduce poverty in its several components of income, nutrition, health and education deprivations, and in the last decades this framework has been generally used by the international community.<sup>35</sup> One key related question is whether this adoption has been translated into an increased allocation of international resources to the MDG agenda. The total amount of ODA from donors to social infrastructure and services increased more than three times in the last two decades, from less than US\$20 billion in 1990 to more than US\$60 billion in 2010. At the same time, the amount of ODA allocated to production

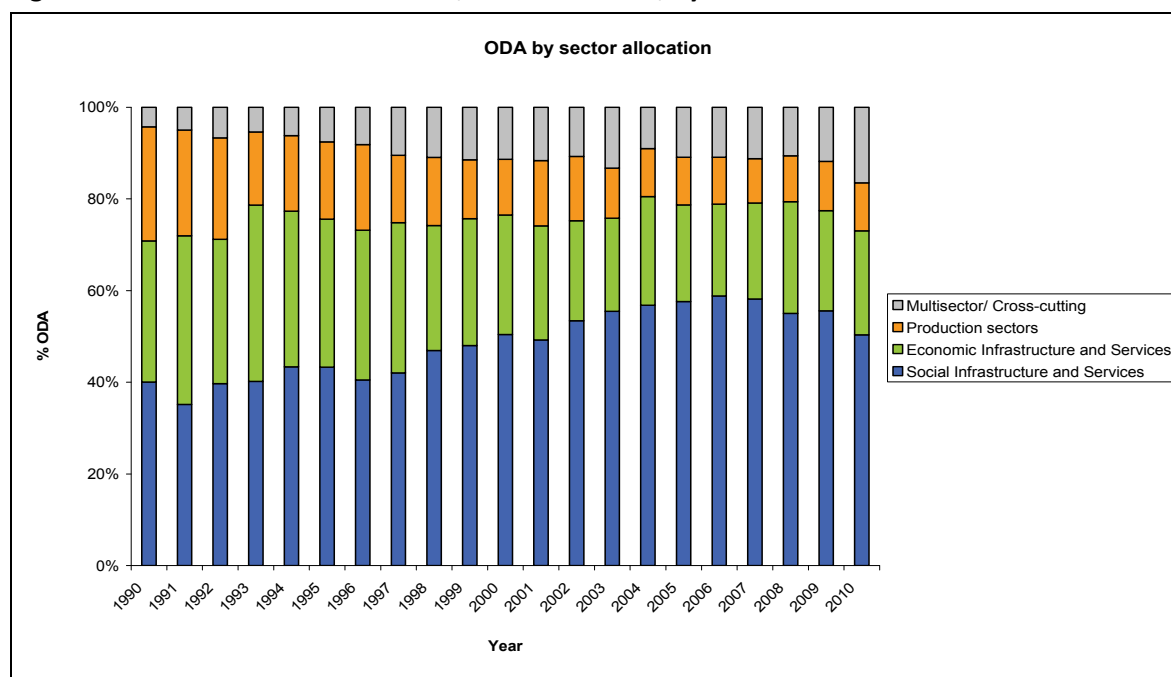
sectors increased by only 12 per cent, from almost US\$12 billion to US\$13.4 billion. This pattern of an increasing proportion of aid allocated to the social sector may be interpreted as evidence of the international commitment towards MDGs. However, the simultaneous decrease in the proportion of ODA towards production sectors may have had consequences yet to be clearly identified, especially in terms of the impact on the economic development capacity of countries (figure VII)<sup>36</sup>. In addition, the overall issue of aid effectiveness becomes critical in terms of its contribution to attaining poverty reduction and other key MDG targets.<sup>37</sup>

Although aid is an important source of funding for development, several other capital flows have emerged with as high international significance (figure VIII). For example, while worldwide remittance inflows were almost as large as ODA in 1990, by 2010 they had become more than three times larger than ODA. Similarly, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows rose from being less than 4 times larger than ODA flows in 1990 to more than 10 times the value of ODA in 2010. And while exports were 60 times larger than ODA in 1990, by 2010 that figure had become almost 120 times larger than ODA.

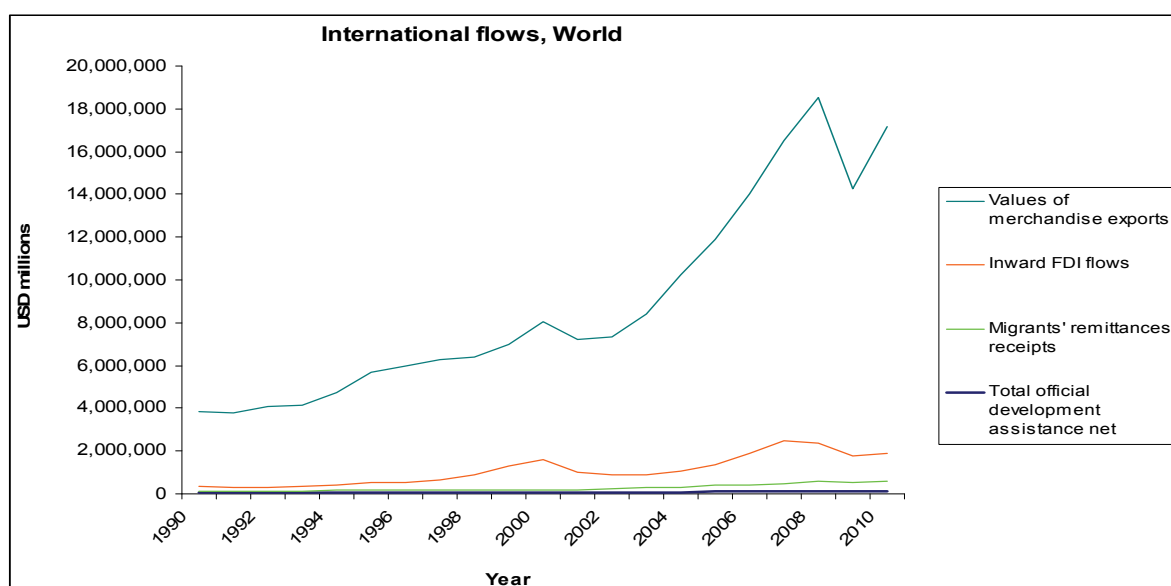
Moving to the regional level, as shown in table 7, the highest annual average growth in ODA happened in Africa and Asia in the first half of the 2000s. This could be connected to the greater international emphasis on the implementation of MDGs in those regions. In terms of other international capital flows, the highest annual average increase in inward FDI in developing countries was registered

in Latin America during the late 1990s and early 2000s, and more recently in developing countries in Oceania. Regarding trade, the highest increase in merchandise exports has taken place in Asian developing countries - both in terms of annual average growth rate and in absolute terms - with the value of exports rising from US\$590 billion in 1990 to more than US\$5 trillion in 2010. This shows that, although ODA as a source of development funding may be important, it is not the most important source of development funding. In order to build a more holistic approach to sustaining development, other international capital flows must be considered, including trade, FDI and remittances, the volume and pattern of which are not determined by the MDG agenda.

The implementation of MDGs has also helped to highlight the increasingly important role of the regional (and subregional) dimensions of development, including regional integration and intraregional cooperation. United Nations regional bodies have supported their respective member States to develop and strengthen their capacities to attain MDGs. For example, ESCAP has mainstreamed MDGs into its work since 2002.<sup>38</sup> Other Regional Commissions, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, multilateral organizations and global NGOs have also provided both technical and financial support to make progress in MDG implementation at the national level. Some other regional institutions supporting the MDG process are listed by region in table 8.

**Figure VII. Distribution of total ODA, from all donors, by sector**

Source: OECD, <http://stats.oecd.org/> accessed on 17 August 2012.

**Figure VIII. International capital flows**

Source: UNCTAD, <http://unctadstat.unctad.org/> accessed on 22 August 2012.

Note: values in United States dollars at current prices and current exchange rates in millions.

**Table 7. International capital flows, annual average growth rate (percentage)**

World	1995-90	2000-95	2005-00	2010-05
Total ODA net	22	18	55	27
Inward FDI flows	39	126	15	31
Values of merchandise exports	35	28	39	34
Migrants' remittances, receipts	30	30	49	39

Developing economies: Africa	1995-90	2000-95	2005-00	2010-05
Total ODA net	18	15	59	31
Inward FDI flows	49	41	88	33
Values of merchandise exports	24	30	53	38
Migrants' remittances, receipts	25	25	48	40

Developing economies: America	1995-90	2000-95	2005-00	2010-05
Total ODA net	28	16	32	38
Inward FDI flows	94	94	17	62
Values of merchandise exports	38	38	37	36
Migrants' remittances, receipts	62	35	62	26

Developing economies: Asia	1995-90	2000-95	2005-00	2010-05
Total ODA net	21	19	83	17
Inward FDI flows	104	44	34	42
Values of merchandise exports	45	33	46	41
Migrants' remittances, receipts	39	37	50	50

Developing economies: Oceania	1995-90	2000-95	2005-00	2010-05
Total ODA net	31	9	33	42
Inward FDI flows	27	8	27	378
Values of merchandise exports	40	25	30	30
Migrants' remittances, receipts	23	30	679	26

Source: UNCTAD, <http://unctadstat.unctad.org/> accessed on 22 August 2012.

Note: Regional groups are based on UNCTAD classification.



**Table 8. Regional institutions supporting development**

Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America and the Caribbean	Arab region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AUC and its NEPAD programme</li> <li>• ECOWAS</li> <li>• East African Community</li> <li>• Economic Community for Central African States</li> <li>• The Community of Sahel-Saharan States</li> <li>• Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa</li> <li>• The Intergovernmental Authority on Development</li> <li>• The Southern African Development Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASEAN</li> <li>• SAARC</li> <li>• Secretariat of the Pacific Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of Caribbean States</li> <li>• Caribbean Community</li> <li>• Andean Community of Nations</li> <li>• Central American Integration System</li> <li>• Latin America Integration Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of Islamic Cooperation</li> <li>• League of Arab States</li> </ul>

In Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an African Union strategic framework for pan-African socioeconomic development, formed to address critical challenges facing the continent: poverty, development and Africa's international marginalization. It aims to promote cooperation between countries in the region and international partners in six thematic areas: agriculture and food security; climate change and natural resource management; regional integration and infrastructure; human development; economic and corporate governance; and cross cutting issues including gender, capacity development and ICT.<sup>39</sup> The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has also developed a regional strategy and plan of action aiming at regional integration for growth and poverty reduction in West Africa.<sup>40</sup>

In Asia and the Pacific, coordinated regional activities have raised MDGs and discussions on the post-2015 process high up in the political agenda, as demonstrated by the programme of the tripartite partnership between ESCAP, ADB and UNDP. Several regional projects have been developed to strengthen national capacities to formulate, implement and monitor development strategies, such as the ESCAP and ECE<sup>41</sup> project to support MDGs. In addition, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) developed in 2011 the ASEAN Roadmap for the Attainment of MDGs<sup>42</sup> which aims at facilitating closer collaboration within and among sectors in ASEAN and collectively helping each other in accelerating the attainment of MDGs. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has set the SAARC Development Goals (2007-2012) which are expected to help member States

galvanize their development efforts and enhance regional cooperation.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, in the Arab region, the League of Arab States has collaborated closely with ESCWA in the preparation of regional MDG reports.

## *2. Impact on national policy*

Impact analyses of MDGs can also be done at the national level by examining how they have influenced policy planning, budget commitments and implementation initiatives. Several countries have integrated MDGs into their national political discourses and, more importantly, into their national development strategies and plans, such as five or ten-year development plans and national development strategies.<sup>44</sup> Examples of national adaptation of MDGs include the adaptation of the framework to country-specific priorities and budgets. For example, in some cases, as in Thailand, the global targets were not sufficiently challenging and more ambitious ones have been defined. In others, there has not been the capacity and clarity on how to adapt global targets and implement them at the national level. In other cases, as in Papua New Guinea, the redefinition of national targets (lower than the global ones) took into account developmental constraints and shortfalls. More examples of several countries around the world are presented in annex IV. Governments' commitments to MDGs are also reflected in the way countries factor in the cost of achieving MDGs and how their expenditure priorities are aligned with MDGs in terms of public expenditure by sector (table 9).

The national pattern of public expenditure in selected regions shows, for example, that in

Asia and the Pacific,<sup>45</sup> governmental commitment to health varies. In some countries, health was deprioritized in the allocation of public resources between 2000 and 2009. The per capita governmental expenditure on health in the region in 2009, expressed in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) rates, ranged from \$0 to \$34 in 7 countries and from \$35 to \$60 in 5 other countries, below the level of PPP\$60 recommended by the World Health Organization. This insufficient spending is seen as a major factor in the lagging performance in health-related MDGs in the region. In the MENA region<sup>46</sup>, public health expenditure as a percentage of total health expenditure increased from 46 per cent in 1995 to 50 per cent in 2010. Although total public spending on education as a percentage of governmental expenditure in the region has decreased from 19.8 per cent in 2006 to 16 per cent in 2008, it is still within the recommended levels of 15 to 20 per cent.

Planning and allocating resources are critical in the implementation of MDGs at national and local levels. Governments may choose between different implementation mechanisms involving local governments, community mechanisms or a mix of both. Local government approaches, where decisions on investments and service provision are municipally decided and delivered, require a delicate balance between central control and local autonomy to ensure local accountability and quality of services.<sup>47</sup> Community-based programmes can play a vital role in reaching targeted people. For instance, in an attempt to reduce acute malnutrition in Niger, a country with intolerable levels of malnutrition due to

drought, recurring food crises, poor feeding practices and inadequate access to health services, a community-based approach was used for the first time in the last decade. Severely malnourished children were treated at home with ready-to-use therapeutic food. With this effort, the number of acute malnutrition treatment facilities rose from 75 in 2005 to 941

in 2007. Despite progress in effectively treating acutely malnourished children in Niger, the prevalence remains high. The challenge is to educate parents, in particular mothers, about preventive practices such as breastfeeding and improving complementary feeding which will improve the overall nutritional status of children.<sup>48</sup>

**Table 9. Public expenditure by sector**

East Asia & Pacific (developing only)	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010
Expense (% of GDP)			12.11		
Public health expenditure (% of government expenditure)			8.91		
Public health expenditure (% of total health expenditure)		44.60	39	46.40	53
Public spending on education (% of government expenditure)		14.11	16.26	16.55	
Interest payments (% of government expense)			9.12	6.91	6.70
Military expenditure (% of central government expenditure)			18	13.85	

Europe & Central Asia (developing only)	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010
Expense (% of GDP)				25.55	28.81
Public health expenditure (% of government expenditure)			11.15	10.63	9.79
Public health expenditure (% of total health expenditure)		67	62	64	65
Public spending on education (% of government expenditure)			15.40	14.09	
Interest payments (% of government expense)			5.18	2.43	3.05
Military expenditure (% of central government expenditure)				13.19	11.17

Latin America & Caribbean (developing only)	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010
Expense (% of GDP)	22.68	18.89	21.16		
Public health expenditure (% of government expenditure)		9.18	8.98		
Public health expenditure (% of total health expenditure)		48.40	48.80	48.20	50
Public spending on education (% of government expenditure)		15.71	14.63		
Interest payments (% of government expense)			13.40	10.29	8.09
Military expenditure (% of central government expenditure)	5	6.78	7.17		
Caribbean small States	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010
Expense (% of GDP)			25.11	27.65	
Public health expenditure (% of government expenditure)			7.68	8.32	
Public health expenditure (% of total health expenditure)		53	53	54	57
Public spending on education (% of government expenditure)		13.10	11.42	8.76	11.48
Interest payments (% of government expense)	21.64	19.68	23.91	23.33	31.43
Military expenditure (% of central government expenditure)					
Middle East & North Africa (developing only)	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010
Expense (% of GDP)				26.56	
Public health expenditure (% of government expenditure)				8.55	
Public health expenditure (% of total health expenditure)		46	45.60	50	50
Public spending on education (% of government expenditure)				19.24	
Interest payments (% of government expense)			11.33	7.41	
Military expenditure (% of central government expenditure)			12.71	12.19	

Sub-Saharan Africa (developing only)	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010
<b>Expense (% of GDP)</b>			22.95	23.15	
<b>Public health expenditure (% of government expenditure)</b>			9.83	10.52	
<b>Public health expenditure (% of total health expenditure)</b>		38	39	42	45
<b>Public spending on education (% of government expenditure)</b>				18.85	
<b>Interest payments (% of government expense)</b>					
<b>Military expenditure (% of central government expenditure)</b>					

Source: WDI database <http://data.worldbank.org/> accessed on 22 August 2012.

Note: Numbers are averages over the reference period. Empty cells indicate non-available data. Regional groups based on the World Bank classification.

Specific policy programmes linking monetary or in-kind transfers to the work of parents and the education and health of children can also support addressing transitory poverty situations and chronic poverty. Successful examples can be found in many countries: public programmes of food for work and food for education in Bangladesh; practices to offer free basic education and school meals in Bhutan; midwifery support for safe delivery in the public health sector in Cambodia; and the “One tambon – one product” programme in Thailand encouraging the production of typical products in villages as a source of extra income.<sup>49</sup>

There is also evidence to show that countries with a strong focus on reducing inequality have obtained marked improvement in MDG progress. For example, Brazil’s Bolsa Familia and Mexico’s Oportunidades programmes have contributed to reducing poverty and improving health and education

conditions.<sup>50</sup> In Jordan, the knowledge-based industries initiative and policy on education for all, paying particular attention to rural areas, has contributed to increasing the net primary enrolment rate from 87 to 98 per cent for both girls and boys between 1990 and 2009.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, since the country gained independence, successive Governments in Sri Lanka have continued to implement primary health care policy particularly on maternal and child health in rural areas, which has resulted in the best MDG indicators relating to maternal and child health in South Asia.<sup>52</sup> In Ghana, a sweeping water reform programme introduced by the Government in the early 1990s targeting the provision in villages has reduced urban-rural differences in access to improved water sources.<sup>53</sup>

These success stories point to three important lessons. First of all, by targeting the most disadvantaged or marginalized, countries can reduce disparities together with an increase

in the overall level of MDG attainment. Second, political commitment is a critical condition for countries to achieve the goals, as the cases of Sri Lanka, Brazil, Mexico and Jordan show. Thirdly, community-based approaches can play a crucial role in reaching the most disadvantaged people, as the above-mentioned case of Niger shows, even if much greater progress is required.

### *3. Impact on policy monitoring and evaluation*

Tracking progress enables the identification of the areas that need special policy attention, and the segments of the population that are vulnerable to unmet targets. However, tracking progress to support the formulation and implementation of evidence-based policies requires that: (i) statistical systems and policymakers have an agreed focus on the most adequate set of indicators for the needs of the regions and the countries; (ii) processes be in place to collect reliable and timely data; (iii) concise models and classification rules be applied to identify important national and regional policy questions; and (iv) data analysis be disseminated in a way that enables their use for policy decisions.<sup>54</sup>

Many developing countries around the world have weak statistical capacities, scarce resources for collecting and compiling data and low technical skills. However, the experience during recent years in which the MDG framework has been adopted shows an increasing commitment by national Governments and international development partners to evidence-based policymaking, contributing to an improvement in the

capacity of countries to produce and disseminate data. Overall, the number of countries for which data is available for a large number of indicator series (between 16 and 22) has increased from 0 in 2003 to 84 in 2006 and 101 in 2011.<sup>55</sup>

In the Asia and the Pacific region, statistical capacity varies widely across countries but there has been considerable overall improvement. Comparing the data available in November 2004 and August 2010 for 18 MDG indicators, all but one of the developing member States of ESCAP improved on the number of indicators meeting the minimum data requirements to track progress, and several countries more than doubled it.<sup>56</sup> ESCAP has been actively supporting countries in the region to improve their statistical capacity. Examples of such initiatives include the regional programmes to improve economic statistics, gender statistics, population and social statistics, and civil registration and vital statistics.<sup>57</sup>

Similarly, ESCWA has tracked the availability of MDG data to capture national statistical capacities since 2008. The assessment results show an overall improvement of the average availability of the MDG indicators in the countries of the region of about 17 per cent between 2008 and 2010, thereby indicating significant progress in data compilation and dissemination to monitor MDGs.<sup>58</sup> ESCWA has recently assessed the capacity of its member countries to produce data in policy areas. The assessment of the level of consistency in value between national and international data by goal in 2012 shows weak national capacity to produce quality

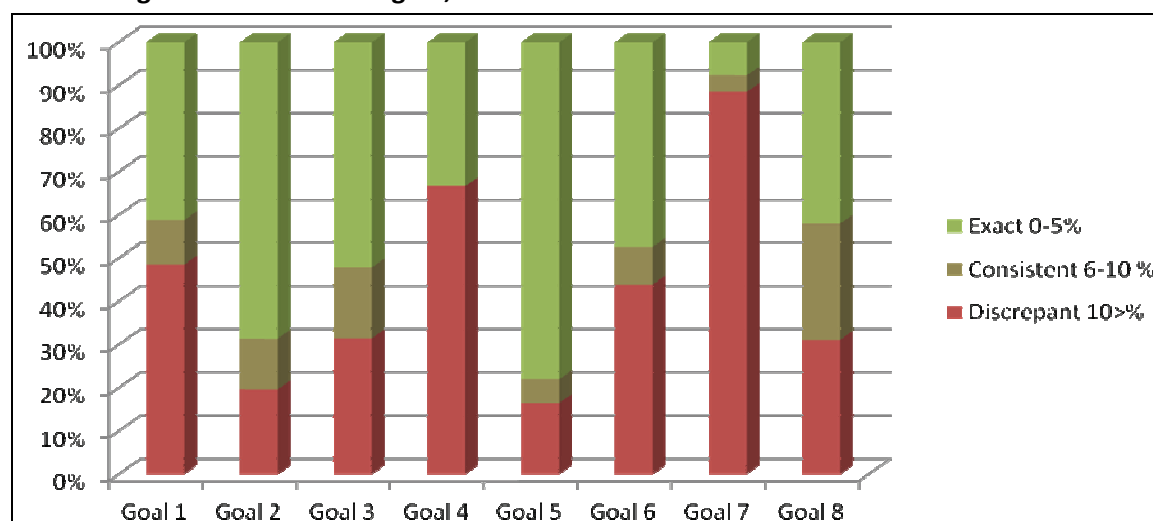
statistics<sup>59</sup> to effectively monitor policy areas related to poverty, employment, literacy, maternal health, tuberculosis, water and slum population, as shown in figure IX. ESCWA is implementing a regional plan for capacity-building activities focusing on these policy areas in collaboration with the specialized agencies.

In Africa, MDG monitoring at the national level has been a challenge. At the regional level, ECA, AUC and AfDB have embarked on the development of programmes that directly respond to this challenge and improve the statistical capacity of African countries. Those programmes include: the Africa Symposium for Statistics Development, an advocacy

framework for censuses and civil registration and vital statistics; the African Charter on Statistics, constituting a framework for the coordination of statistical activities in the continent; and the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa, which provides guidance on the statistics harmonization process in Africa.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC's MDG Statistical Programme, in collaboration with the Statistical Conference of the Americas, has been working on increasing the availability of reliable and high-quality statistical data for monitoring country progress towards the achievement of MDGs in the region.

**Figure IX. Discrepancy level between national and global sources for available data points by goal in the ESCWA region, 2012**



Source: ESCWA, 2012c.

Note: The global sources are derived from UNSD databases.

ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA have been implementing a United Nations Development Account project on “Strengthening statistical and inter-institutional

capacities for monitoring MDGs through interregional cooperation and knowledge sharing”. The project aims to have more up-to-date and comparable MDG data at the national,

regional and global levels by improving statistical capacities and institutional coordination to invigorate the production of MDG indicators, decreasing statistical discrepancies between national, regional and global sources, and strengthening regional MDG networks. This joint project offers a good example of close collaboration among the Regional Commissions to facilitate the implementation of the MDG agenda.

However, challenges remain. The use of household survey data to obtain information on indicators, such as the proportion of population below US\$1.25 a day or under-five children who are underweight, poses constraints on the timeliness and frequency of updated information. Limitations in the number of available observations also impact the assessment of progress and its projections, especially in the areas of poverty reduction, child mortality and maternal mortality. In addition, disaggregated data, which enable the identification of disparities within different geographical areas of a country or between different segments of population, are often inadequate. Those challenges emphasize the need for continuous efforts towards statistical capacity development of many developing countries to support policymakers and to enable citizens to hold their Governments and institutions accountable for the delivery of services and achievements.

Finally, it is worth noting that ICT could provide an important means to enhance service delivery and promote easily accessed services to citizens. By building national capacity and improving access to information and by enabling communication, notably in

developing countries, ICT can play a major role in contributing to the elimination of extreme poverty, combating serious diseases, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women. Key global and national development priority areas, such as health, education, employment and governance can all benefit from increased utilization of ICT applications and e-services (such as e-government, e-commerce, e-learning, e-employment, e-health). In this context, The Geneva Plan of Action<sup>60</sup> of the World Summit on the Information Society stressed that ICT applications (e-services), if streamlined in traditional services, can support sustainable development leading to numerous benefits such as: improving efficiency, reducing processing times, promoting citizen participation and governance, enhancing transparency, and facilitating access to governmental services and public information.

## E. Lessons learned and concluding remarks

Progress towards achieving MDGs has not only varied across different goals, targets and indicators, but also shown significant regional, subregional and national disparities, including disparities among different population groups in each country. Efforts to accelerate the rate of implementation before the 2015 deadline should thus not neglect those who lagged behind. Instead of focusing on MDG implementation at an aggregate level, placing the most vulnerable groups of people and



countries at the centre of policies and programmes to achieve implementation would not only reduce those disparities but also effectively lift the overall progress. This should also hold as a regional lesson for the post-2015 agenda.

The process of MDG implementation has thus helped to highlight the vital role of the regional dimensions of development and promoted the growth of regional integration initiatives and many forms of intra-regional cooperation. MDGs have also been adopted into national contexts, influencing policy planning, budget commitments and implementation initiatives. Several countries around the world have adapted the framework to their specific priorities and budgets.

As far as policy implementation is concerned, experience has shown the added value of approaches involving local governments, community based mechanisms and targeted programmes. Each approach has its own challenges, but also successful stories, highlighting that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Overall, there is plenty of national and regional evidence to show that the MDG framework has been influential in terms of

political commitment and overall awareness of the importance of reducing deprivations. It has provided benchmarks to evaluate progress and made a positive contribution to the mobilization of efforts and resources around a common cause.

Finally, by providing a limited set of concrete and time-bound goals and targets, the MDG framework has produced significant impact in terms of the demand for data and the recognition of the role of statistical assessment of progress. In most cases, data availability for MDG monitoring has been significantly increased and statistical capacity-building activities have been a priority. Statistical system coordination between national and international institutions has improved, as well as the use of data in support of the decision-making process. However, the statistical capacity to provide data for monitoring purposes has not been sufficient in many countries and more efforts should be made in this regard at all levels. This provides an important lesson for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 agenda.



# III.

## *Regional Development Priority Issues Beyond 2015*

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### A. Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals have been at the core of the development narrative since 2000. In one way, however, that narrative represented a significant discontinuity with the post-war development narrative. The development narrative of the first five decades after the Second World War was concerned with the relative wealth of nations. In comparison, the MDG narrative has been more focused on the absolute poverty of individuals. The conceptualization of development shifted from a process concerned primarily with the structure and dynamics of national economies to one concerned with individual well-being.

The accelerated growth ambition of poor countries during the UN development decades of the 1960s to the 1990s was aimed at narrowing the standard of living gap between them and the industrial countries. The discourse on the development process was mainly concerned with finding the motive force of development. Conversely, the MDG framework emphasizes poverty reduction and human development, but provides no link or proposed policy options to the processes of national long-term economic growth, as discussed in chapter I.

This chapter examines the perspective of the different regions and locates their priorities within the context of global priority development issues as the end date of the MDGs approaches. The chapter is informed by:

- (a) The priorities and concerns that emerged from the meetings and reports on the post 2015 development agenda that were organized by the Regional Commissions;
- (b) The discussions of the UN system-wide working group on the post-2015 development agenda, and
- (c) The outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference and in particular, the report of the Secretary General.

The next section examines the socioeconomic and political context for a new global development agenda, and highlights the main elements of a post-2015 development agenda that have emerged from the various consultations and analyses. Section C indicates the priorities of the regions and identifies some commonalities and differences. The final section provides a summary and outlines the main messages of the chapter.

## B. The Context for the Post-2015 Development Agenda

### *1. The evolving socioeconomic and political global context for development in the post-2015 world*

#### **(a) The political economy of development**

The process of developing a post-2015 agenda will take place in an environment substantially different from that of the 1990s when MDGs were negotiated. Among other things, the optimism and international goodwill of that time are not as strong today. There is now broad agreement that the new development agenda must take into account major emerging global challenges. These include changing population dynamics, changes in North-South political economy relations, instabilities in the global food and financial markets, and greater demand for social justice, rights and freedoms. There is also much more wariness and a strong concern about conflict and security. The world of 2015 will also reflect the growing concern about inequalities within and between countries, employment generation and the continuing concern about climate change and other forms of environmental degradation.

As discussed in chapter I, a major implication of the evolving population dynamics is the need to ensure that the priorities of the new agenda are well aligned with the different demographic characteristics of the regions. United Nations estimates are that between 2011 and 2050, the world population will increase by 2.3 billion to a total of 9.3 billion.<sup>1</sup> The new global agenda must address the possible implications of the

demographic dynamics for global economic production, migration capital flows and even security. It will be crucial, among other things, to establish policies across the regions that address the implications of increasing numbers of unemployed youth while continuing to meet the needs of the elderly. Close attention should also be paid to increasing numbers of migrants (both internal and international) and refugees, and to the impacts of the increasing process of urbanization, both globally and in several regions.

As noted in the introduction of this report, another significant element of the changing global context is the growing international role of the larger countries of the South such as Brazil, India and particularly, China. This development is changing the calculus of power in international relations and will be an important factor in determining the post-2015 agenda. The Group of Twenty (G-20) Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors established in 1999 is gradually becoming a leading vehicle in the management of the global economy and financial system. The growing shift in world economic power was reflected in the increase of the voting rights of China and India in the World Bank at its spring 2010 meeting. It is still unclear, however, whether or not this shift will facilitate the adoption of a new agenda that will be more auspicious for developing countries. The instability of global markets and the need to consider a different international financial architecture should constitute central themes in the discussion of the new global agenda. This is clearly indicated by the enormous impact that global financial crises and fluctuations in

commodity prices have had on poverty levels and progress towards attaining MDGs. Many large economies have not emerged fully from the crisis and some major European ones have fallen back into recession, generating existential uncertainty about the Euro. The recovery in the United States has also been much slower than hoped and unemployment rates remain high.<sup>2</sup> All this has continuing negative consequence for growth and development in developing countries.

A fourth major trend is the struggle for rights, freedoms and social justice arising from recent sociopolitical developments in the Arab region. Following previous similar struggles in Latin America and Eastern Europe, the unfolding events in the Arab region can be discussed in the context of a “third wave of democratization.”<sup>3</sup> At the same time, those sociopolitical developments are intrinsically connected to critical socioeconomic challenges, including unemployment and unequal access to services and opportunities. As shown in a recent UNDP regional report, the ongoing struggle for economic, social and political inclusion calls for “new development pathways that give greater prominence to the interlocking issues of democratic governance, social justice and decent employment”.<sup>4</sup>

#### **(b) Unemployment**

The phenomenon of ‘jobless growth’ has been pervasive in Africa as growth has not generated jobs nor led to significant productivity increases. Although not as widespread, jobless growth is also significant in Asia, especially India, and to some extent in Latin America. In the Arab region, an impressive employment annual growth rate of 3.3 per cent between 1991

and 2009 – which is among the highest in developing country regions – is closely associated with poor growth in labour productivity and alarmingly high levels of youth unemployment.<sup>5</sup> According to the International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>6</sup>, around 40 per cent of workers worldwide do not earn enough to keep their families above the US\$2 a day poverty line. The employment component of a sustainable development strategy should aim to raise productivity, especially of the poorest workers.

Employment will be a particularly complex challenge in the post-2015 development agenda, as the “classical” route from agriculture into manufacturing does not seem particularly viable in many countries.<sup>7</sup> The share of agriculture in employment globally has declined from 40 per cent in 2000 to 34 per cent in 2011. However, only 1.7 percentage points (of the 6 per cent decline) went to industry. The bigger balance of 4.3 percentage points went to services. In East Asia, the share of agriculture was down from 47.7 per cent to 35.4 per cent but industry was up by only 4.8 percentage points while services were up by 7.4 percentage points.<sup>8</sup> In the ESCWA region, some of the sectors with the highest shares of employment (as a percentage of total employment), such as construction and the governmental sector, also have the lowest labour productivity rates, which poses a major obstacle to future employment-rich, economic growth strategies.<sup>9</sup>

#### **(c) Poverty and inequality**

The World Bank estimates that the number of poor people (using the US\$1.25 per day international poverty line) globally will decline

to just over 1 billion in 2015, from 1.9 billion in 1990 (table 10). The Asia region has been making the most progress towards eradicating extreme poverty, with particularly impressive results from China. By 2015, the absolutely poor (living on less than US\$1.25 a day) will have declined to 24 per cent in South Asia and 8 per cent in East Asia and the Pacific. However, the region will still have the largest number of poor people. South Asia will have

419 million people living on less than US\$1.25 per day. East Asia and the Pacific will have 159 million people in absolute poverty. In Southern, East, West and Central Africa, the proportion of the population living on less than US\$1.25 a day will have declined significantly in 2015, to 41 per cent from 57 per cent in 1990. Despite decreasing poverty rates, however, the absolute number of poor people will be about 397 million by 2015 from 290 million in 1990.

**Table 10. Estimates of poverty on the poverty line of US\$1.25, by region (1990-2015)**

Population poor (percentage)				
	1990	2005	2008	2015
East Asia and the Pacific	56.2	16.8	14.3	7.7
Of which, China	60.2	16.3	13.1	—
Europe and Central Asia	1.9	1.3	0.5	0.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	12.2	8.7	6.5	5.5
Middle East and North Africa	5.8	3.5	2.7	2.7
South Asia	53.8	39.4	36.0	23.9
Southern, East, West and Central Africa	56.5	52.3	47.5	41.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>16.3</b>
<b>Total minus China</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>—</b>

Poor people (millions)*				
	1990	2005	2008	2015
East Asia and the Pacific	926.4	332.1	284.4	159.3
Of which, China	683.2	211.9	173.0	—
Europe and Central Asia	8.9	6.3	2.2	1.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	53.4	47.6	36.8	33.6
Middle East and North Africa	13.0	10.5	8.6	9.7
South Asia	617.3	598.3	570.9	418.7
Southern, East, West and Central Africa	289.7	394.9	386.0	397.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1908.6</b>	<b>1389.6</b>	<b>1289.0</b>	<b>1019.9</b>
<b>Total minus China</b>	<b>1225.4</b>	<b>1177.7</b>	<b>1116.0</b>	<b>—</b>

Source: World Bank (2012a, Box 1, p.3). Global Monitoring Report. World Bank: Washington DC.

\* Below US\$1.25 a day (2005 PPP).

Furthermore, progress within each of the regions has been uneven. In Latin America, for example, while the region as a whole will meet the poverty goal, the poorest countries would have made the least progress and will not have achieved the goal by 2015. The incidence of extreme income poverty in the MENA region<sup>10</sup> is officially low when compared with other developing country regions, including East Asia, and the proportion of people in extreme poverty is estimated to have fallen between 1990 and 2008.<sup>11</sup> However, the difficulties of applying international income poverty line approaches in most Arab countries calls for a close look at alternative approaches focused on multidimensional poverty.<sup>12</sup> In addition, given the significant proportion of the population lying just above the extreme international income poverty line in the Arab region, any economic (or sociopolitical) shock on disposal income “can produce a significant impact on poverty in this region.”<sup>13</sup>

Inequality within and among countries has also emerged as a potential central objective in the new development agenda. In particular from a historical perspective, reducing inequalities within countries is a necessary condition for breaking the mechanisms of the intergenerational transmission of poverty, which in turn contributes to higher rates of sustained economic growth. Among other things, high levels of inequality make it harder to reduce poverty through economic growth, and tend to create polarized societies through disarticulated provision of social services (for example, with high-quality education and health for those who can afford it and poorly funded public services for the poor).<sup>14</sup> High

levels of inequality, especially those manifested as disparities among various groups in multi-ethnic societies, may also generate tensions and undermine social cohesion.

#### **(d) Environmental sustainability**

At the global level, increased levels of human activity, particularly since the last century, have cumulated into serious challenges to environmental sustainability. The post-2015 development agenda must be better focused on the sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Climate change has also exacerbated deforestation, soil erosion and degradation of natural coastal protection. The result is an increased likelihood that weather shocks will turn into human disasters, destroying livelihoods and investment and weakening infrastructure. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre reports that there were 36 million people newly displaced by sudden-onset disasters in 2008, 17 million in 2009 and over 42 million in 2010<sup>15</sup>. About 90 per cent of those displacements were due to climate related events (primarily floods and storms). Although other key environmental challenges must be addressed, climate change and biodiversity loss are at the core of environmental sustainability, although they were not effectively addressed in the MDG framework. Climate change is an inherently global issue, but its impact is felt differently across the world. Regions (and countries within regions) vary in their relative vulnerability to changes in temperature, precipitation and extreme weather events and their ability to cope with such changes. The projected impacts of climate change on the regions depend on the specific climatic

experience of each one, its geography and its socioeconomic circumstances. The main sectors affected, albeit to differing degrees, include: agriculture, water resources, human health, terrestrial ecosystems, biodiversity and coastal zones.

Moving beyond climate change, as the UNTT Report on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda suggests, the goals and targets for environmental sustainability need to become broader and more meaningful, encompassing such concerns as “ensuring a stable climate, stopping ocean acidification, preventing land degradation and unsustainable water use, sustainably managing natural resources and protecting the natural resources base, including biodiversity”.<sup>16</sup>

At the regional level, expert reports<sup>17</sup> summarize the main regional vulnerabilities as follows:

- Africa is likely to be the most vulnerable. Two-thirds of the surface area of the continent is desert or dry land. It is also highly exposed to droughts and floods, which are forecast to increase with further climate change. The risk it faces includes declining food security and agricultural productivity, increased water stress, increased exposure to disease and, as a result of all these, increased risks to human health.
- Water is the major vulnerability in the Arab region, the world’s driest region. Per capita water availability is predicted to halve by 2050 even without the effects of climate change. Water scarcity will threaten agriculture and food security severely, and pose an “increasingly binding constraint on Arab development”.<sup>18</sup> Its impact on

agriculture, which supports the bulk of the poor, can heighten social and political tensions. The geopolitical implications of water stress in occupied Palestine are also potentially a major source of conflict in the region.

- A major driver of vulnerability in East Asia and the Pacific is the large number of people living along the coast and on low-lying islands. South Asia has an already stressed and largely degraded natural resource base resulting from geography coupled with high levels of poverty and population density. Approximately 1 billion people are expected to face increased risks from reduced water supplies, decreased agricultural productivity and increased risks of floods, droughts and cholera.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, perhaps over a hundred million people would face increased risk of water stress. Low-lying, densely populated coastal areas are very likely to face risks from sea-level rise and more intense extreme events. The most disastrous impact in the region would likely be the possible dieback of the Amazon rain forest and a conversion of large areas to savannah, with severe consequences for the region and the world.
- The long-term sustainability of SIDS is at great risk from climate change, with sea-level rise and extreme events posing particular challenges on account of their limited size, proneness to natural hazards and external shocks combined with limited adaptive capacity and high costs relative to GDP.



### (e) Urbanization

Another dimension to environmental sustainability has to do with urban growth. The global urban population is projected to increase from 3.6 billion to 6.3 billion between 2011 and 2015, with this growth concentrated in the less developed regions.<sup>19</sup> By 2050, the urban population is projected to have increased by 1.4 billion in Asia, by 0.9 billion in Africa and by 0.2 billion in Latin America and the Caribbean. Similarly, the share of the urban population in the ESCWA region is expected to rise from 54 per cent in 2010 to 72 per cent in 2050. In fact the average urban annual growth rate in the ESCWA region in the 2000-2005 period was higher than the average world rate during that period and is expected to remain higher in subsequent five-year periods up to 2030.<sup>20</sup>

However, Latin America and the Caribbean will continue to be the most highly urbanized region, with an urban ratio of 83 per cent compared to 47 per cent for Africa. Close to one billion people or 33 per cent of the urban population in developing countries currently live in slums in wretched and often life-threatening conditions. Population growth will exacerbate the already heavy strain on the capacity of developing countries to provide employment, housing and basic services. This will also vary by region, but Africa will continue to be particularly vulnerable given its relative poverty and the expectation that in twenty years, the continent's population will exceed one billion, with half that number under the age of 24. In the ESCWA region, key development challenges arising from rapid urbanization include rising levels of urban

poverty and unemployment, lack of access to adequate housing and urban services and increasing social tensions.

### *2. The intellectual context of the post-2015 world development agenda*

The Millennium Declaration reaffirmed international commitment to certain fundamental principles that ought to be the foundation for international relations in the twenty-first century. However, there is growing consensus that the post-2015 development agenda should do better in incorporating these values. Nowhere is this consensus better reflected than in the many-layered conversations within the ambit of the United Nations.

#### **(a) United Nations System Discussions**

At the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, United Nations Member States reaffirmed their commitment to MDGs but also recognized the need to consider a global development agenda beyond 2015. As we approach 2015, several United Nations work streams on the post-2015 agenda have emerged.

##### *(i) The United Nations Economic and Social Council*

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Committee for Development Policy has suggested a re-grounding of the new development agenda in the Millennium Declaration. It recommends that the global development agenda beyond 2015 be anchored on the issues of improvement in human lives, sustainability, equity and security.<sup>21</sup> It specifically recommends, among other things:

- More robust action on reducing inequality among and within nations;
- Sharper focus on carbon emissions as a dimension of environmental sustainability;
- Improved human security and the inclusion of targets on political freedoms.

(ii) *The United Nations System-wide Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda*

UNTT suggests a similar agenda<sup>22</sup>. As discussed in the introduction of this report and in chapter I, the UNTT report recommends a vision for the future that is anchored in the Millennium Declaration's core values of human rights, equality and sustainability, and builds on the three pillars of sustainable development.<sup>23</sup> Specifically, it recommends that the new global agenda be constructed around four dimensions that are integral to the notion of sustainable development: inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmental sustainability, and peace and security.

(iii) *The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Agenda*

The UNTT report will provide the initial basis for the work of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, appointed by the Secretary-General in July 2012, to advise him on the post-2015 development agenda. The Panel was mandated by the 2010 MDG Summit at which Member States called for inclusive consultations involving all key stakeholders at global and regional levels in order to advance the post-2015 development agenda. A report on the work

of the Panel will be submitted to the Secretary-General in May 2013.

(iv) *The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)*

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was convened in Rio in June 2012 to take stock of the results of earlier major conferences and chart new directions. It was following up on the first Rio conference held in 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and on the 2001 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002. The first Rio conference had produced the Rio Principles and Agenda 21. The Johannesburg Summit marked the tenth anniversary of Rio and produced a Plan of Implementation. The 2012 Conference reaffirmed much that had been agreed at the earlier events.

The Rio+20 outcome document<sup>24</sup> discussed some key elements of any future agenda for sustainable development:

- Poverty eradication (described as the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development);
- Integration of economic, social and environmental aspects and recognition of their interlinkages;
- Promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production;
- Protection and effective management of the natural resources and ecosystems that support economic, social and human development and facilitate ecosystem conservation, regeneration and restoration;

- Promotion of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities and raising basic standards of living;
- Fostering equitable social development and inclusion;
- Promotion of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to food, the rule of law, gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- Strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development to enable coherent and effective responses to current and future challenges;
- Nurturing an institutional framework that is inclusive, transparent and effective and promotes common solutions related to global challenges to sustainable development;
- Fostering effective governance at local, subnational, national, regional and global levels;
- Incorporation of national priorities and development strategies as well as regional specificities in the global agenda.

(v) *The Intergovernmental Process on Sustainable Development Goals*

The Rio+20 outcome document also resolved “to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly.” It further states that the future sustainable development process “needs to

be coordinated and coherent with the processes to consider the post-2015 development agenda.”<sup>25</sup>

In July 2012, following Rio+20, the Secretary-General requested DESA and UNDP to make arrangements for UNTT to support an intergovernmental open working group on SDGs. The open working group was set up in January 2013 and is composed of 30 countries from different regions. It will prepare and submit a report to the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly. As noted above, the process on SDGs will be integrated with the post-2015 agenda.

(b) *Youth perspectives*

The 2011 World Youth Report <sup>26</sup> was essentially based on extensive online consultation with young people around the world. The focus of the report was the transition of young people from schools and training institutions into the labour market. The young people who participated in the discussions were concerned about several aspects of their employment circumstances, including:

- Limited availability of decent work, especially in developing countries;
- Job insecurity, given the prevalence of short-term contracts;
- The prevalence of low wages in the face of rising costs of living;
- Difficulties in acquiring adequate practical work experience;
- Limited opportunities for workplace advancement.

While these challenges apply in all regions, their manifestations differ between developed

and developing economies. On the one hand, the core challenge of the industrialized countries is to provide work opportunities for young people who are entering the labour market. On the other hand, young people in developing countries are typically under-employed and are working in the informal economy under poor conditions. The core challenge of those countries is not only to generate new employment opportunities for young people, but also improve the quality of jobs available to them. Young people in developing countries also face additional difficulties. Having no social safety nets to fall back on, they cannot afford to stay out of work for long and often have no choice but to accept any job.

Youth unemployment is thus likely to become an issue of deeper concern in the post-2015 agenda in addition to other youth development dimensions. In fact, the debate on the incorporation of the youth dimension in the new agenda should move well beyond employment to cover other critical areas, such as education, poverty and hunger, the environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, health, girls and young women, HIV/AIDS, information and communications technology, intergenerational issues, armed conflict, the mixed impact of globalization, and the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making.<sup>27</sup> As the recent socioeconomic developments in the Arab region shows, it is essential to create the conditions for the full participation of youth in economic, social, environmental and political affairs.

## C. Regional Priorities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

The regional priorities identified by the United Nations Regional Commissions in the near to medium-term may be summarized as follows:

### 1. *Regional Priorities: Africa*<sup>28</sup>

- Develop productive capacities and create decent employment;
- Design mechanisms to foster economic transformation as well as inclusive and equitable growth;
- Strengthen national governance mechanisms, institutions and capacity;
- Develop capacities in science, technology and innovation;
- Develop a resource framework broader than aid, which would include the mobilization of investment (foreign and domestic), remittances and innovative financing for development;
- Promote “enablers”, including peace and security, and infrastructure development;
- Increase domestic resource mobilization;
- Address issues of climate change mitigation, adaptation and financing, disaster risk reduction, and the effects of climate change on rural-urban migration;
- Foster global security, while ensuring that security considerations do not crowd out development goals;
- Improve global and regional governance, coordination and partnerships.

### 2. *Regional Priorities: Asia and the Pacific*<sup>29</sup>

- Ensure access to basic needs, food security and sovereignty;

- Promote equitable income distribution;
- Provide opportunities for a better life in an inclusive and sustainable way;
- Improve energy access and natural resource management with particular emphasis on the management of marine ecosystems;
- Address the challenges of climate change and provide support specifically for SIDS and farmers;
- Harmonize rapid economic growth with employment generation and environmental sustainability;
- Promote sustainable urban development and transport;
- Enhance ecological carrying capacity;
- Improve water resource management for sustainable development;
- Enhance resilience to climate change and natural disasters;
- Provide the technology, financing and capacity-building to support sustainable development.

### 3. *Regional Priorities: Arab Countries*<sup>30</sup>

- Ensure human rights, freedoms and social justice in order to promote inclusive and equitable development;
- Strengthen governance, effective institutions, democracy and the rule of law;
- End the occupation of Palestine; address the root causes and foster the resolutions of conflict and war, as well as their regional spillover effects;
- Address the different dimensions of poverty and exclusion; reduce the different dimensions of inequality – income, geographical and social (gender, age, ethnic, etc.) – and promote human development;

- Ensure a more comprehensive coverage of gender equality and empowerment of women;
- Promote a comprehensive approach to youth development in its economic, social, environmental and political dimensions;
- Promote employment generation – including for youth and women – through the creation of productive jobs;
- Provide universal access to basic services and innovative mechanisms for more effective social protection;
- Promote inclusive growth and structural transformation through industrial and agricultural policy;
- Promote regional cooperation and integration linkages to help overcome intraregional disparities in levels of development and resource endowment;
- Accelerate access to ICT and strengthen cultural dimensions, such as knowledge and skills;
- Address climate change and sustainable natural resource management, and promote water and food security;
- Act on the challenges and opportunities of rapid urbanization and migration.

### 4. *Regional Priorities: Latin America and Caribbean*<sup>31</sup>

- Promote a global partnership for development especially in the aftermath of the global crisis;
- Incorporate sustainable development principles into the policies and development strategies of countries;
- Bridge gaps in well-being, and inequities that perpetuate the intergenerational transmission of inequality.

- Create productive employment and decent work for all;
- Address extreme poverty and hunger;
- Intensify the diversification of production;
- Promote international development cooperation and strive for the attainment of the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income.
- Identify innovative sources of additional financing for development, such as taxes on financial transactions and tax havens;
- Address climate change and minimize the loss of biodiversity;
- Promote inclusion and effective participation by citizens in economic and social development, especially nurture gender equality and foster respect for ethnic and racial diversity;
- Close productivity gaps between different sectors and strata of the economy, and in the area of social protection.
- Ensure that public pension systems are actuarially fair, equitable and financially sustainable;
- Strengthen governance, democratic institutions and freedom of the press;
- Provide incentives for sustainable production and consumption;
- Promote sustainable urban development and mobility;
- Enhance resilience to climate change and natural disasters;
- Improve regional cooperation and economic integration;
- Contain the HIV/AIDS and multi-drug resistant tuberculosis epidemic in Eastern Europe;
- Promote development cooperation with the region's advanced economies by reaching or exceeding the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income;
- Encourage the region's middle income countries to become aid donors and play a larger role in fostering a global partnership for development.

##### *5. Regional Priorities: Europe and Central Asia<sup>32</sup>*

- Eliminate extreme poverty in all countries of the region and further reduce relative poverty;
- Ensure access for all to decent education, health and social services;
- Address different dimensions of social exclusion and promote inclusive participation;
- Promote a more equitable distribution of income and wealth while targeting explicitly full employment;
- Promote economic diversification in the production structure of the commodity-rich transition economies;
- Ensure that social protection systems are well targeted and compatible with work incentives;

Building on the outcome of Rio+20, these regional priorities may be recast in the language of sustainable development.<sup>33</sup> This would also be in tune with the UNTT discourse on the post-2015 agenda. Accordingly, the regional priorities can be clustered around four themes, namely economic sustainability; social sustainability, environmental sustainability; and governance and institutions. Economic sustainability relates to issues of growth and productivity, employment and poverty and inequality. Social sustainability encompasses issues of human rights and access, the empowerment of women, youth development and social protection.

Environmental sustainability encompasses issues of climate change, disaster risk reduction, urbanization, the management of natural capital and the protection of the ecosystem.

Governance and institutions are included as an overarching category. Democratic governance, effective institutions and accountability at local, national, regional and global levels are critical for advancing sustainable development. At the local and national levels, recent events in several Arab countries have forcefully focused world attention on the critical importance of correcting deficits in governance, freedoms and social justice. In developing the new global agenda, it is important to address issues of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. This would help ensure that the majority of the population would accept the legitimacy of development policies deriving from the new agenda.

Regional governance mechanisms have increased and improved in effectiveness over the last 25 years. This has partly been the outcome of internal dynamics and partly the result of the perception that there are substantial deficits in prevailing global governance arrangements that regional arrangements can correct for. New regional mechanisms have included free trade and common market agreements, financial cooperation arrangements and even broader development cooperation arrangements. Emerging cross-country partnerships include more robust multilateral and bilateral South-South cooperation and Triangular cooperation. These new forms of partnerships should be included in the discussion of global partnerships for the post-2015 global development agenda.

For ease of comparison, these priorities are clustered in table 11 into the four domains described above. All four regions prioritize economic diversification and employment, inclusion and social protection and the building of resilience to economic and environmental shocks. They all stress the importance of democracy, accountability, human rights, peace, security and conflict resolution, and the need to reexamine international governance mechanisms.

It is important to note, however, that while the priorities are broadly similar, there are also important regional nuances that must be considered in the new global agenda. Many of these differences arise from the marked differences in the level of development of countries in each of the regions. As may be seen in table 12, there is significant variation among the regions in social and economic performance. The Human Development Index varies from a low 0.463 for Southern, East, West and Central Africa to a high of 0.731 in Latin America and the Caribbean; it also varies widely within regions, such as the Arab region where some oil-producing countries fall within the very high human development bracket, whereas some LDCs are placed in the low human development one.<sup>34</sup> Correspondingly, there is similar variation in life expectancy and educational attainment. On the economic side, Gross National Income per capita varies from US\$2251 and US\$3319 for Southern, East, West and Central Africa, and South Asia respectively, to US\$9636 and US\$11823 for the Arab region and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Asian region also substantially out-performs other regions in terms of savings and investment.



**Table 11. Regional priorities for the post-2015 development agenda**

	<b>Economic sustainability</b>	<b>Social sustainability</b>	<b>Environmental sustainability</b>	<b>Governance and institutions</b>
<b>Africa</b>	Economic growth and transformation; poverty reduction; employment, especially youth employment; food security; trade, investment and technology; income inequality.	Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection.	Climate change; disaster risk reduction; desertification; biodiversity; urbanization.	Democracy and the rule of law; effective institutions; conflict resolution and citizen security; global governance.
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	Economic growth and diversification; employment; trade, investment and technology; income inequality.	Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection.	Climate change; biodiversity; disaster risk reduction; urbanization.	Democracy and the rule of law; effective institutions; armed violence and citizen security; global governance.
<b>Asia and the Pacific</b>	Economic growth; poverty reduction; employment; food security; trade, investment and technology; income inequality.	Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection.	Climate change; disaster risk reduction; biodiversity; urbanization.	Democracy and the rule of law; effective institutions; citizen security; global governance.
<b>Western Asia<sup>35</sup></b>	Inclusive growth and diversification; adequate mapping and reduction of poverty; employment, especially youth and women; trade, investment and technology; regional cooperation and integration.	Education; health; gender equality and women's empowerment; social protection; social justice.	Climate change; water and food security; desertification; urbanization.	Democracy and the rule of law; effective institutions; rights and freedoms; conflict resolution and self-determination; global and regional governance.
<b>Europe and Central Asia</b>	Full employment; reduction of the informal sector; income and wealth inequality; regional cooperation and economic integration.	Education; health; gender equality; social protection; equitable pension systems.	Climate change; disaster risk reduction; biodiversity; food security; urbanization.	Democracy, free press and the rule of law; effective institutions; citizen security; global governance.

In addition, as indicated in table 10, much better progress has been made in East Asia than in Africa on the challenge of reducing poverty.

Similarly, the integration of the Latin America region into the global economy is currently deeper than that of Africa or the Arab region.



The challenge of economic transformation will thus be qualitatively different in the respective regions. For instance, Africa and the Arab countries need to strengthen their capacity to participate in global trade. Both regions need to diversify their economies and strengthen efforts to add value to raw materials. In particular Africa should be prioritizing a shift from its raw material-based structural transformation path to one based on low-wage manufacturing, services or high-value agriculture. Similarly, the Arab countries should be concerned with shifting from a growth model based on fossil fuels to one based on manufacturing and services, and the expansion of the regional market. As for Latin America, it needs to strengthen its capacity to compete. Indeed, it sees the combination of active industrial policies and the promotion of knowledge-intensive sectors as essential to its international competitiveness. Finally, Asia should be expanding internal demand and moving away from low-wage to high-value manufacturing to place itself even higher up on the value chain.

In the area of social sustainability, all regions are concerned with employment, social protection and the empowerment of women among other issues. However, corresponding policies within this domain are likely to vary because of the different regional contexts. On social protection, for instance, Latin America already has some good practices of putting in place effective social protection mechanisms. But it still aims for the eradication of all kinds of discrimination. As for Africa, it must address the challenges of installing basic social protection systems, even as it copes with a major youth unemployment crisis. Asia also still has further

to go to extend social protection systems to its very large numbers of chronic poor. Finally, the Arab region has much work to do in empowering women and addressing different forms of youth exclusion, including youth employment. In fact, high rates of youth unemployment pose a particular area of sociopolitical concern in the Arab world as a whole.<sup>36</sup> In addition, there remains the long-standing regional demand to end human deprivation under occupation, which has had a negative impact on the implementation of MDGs. In fact, the Palestinian demand for statehood should be considered as part and parcel of the broader struggle for rights and freedom in the region.<sup>37</sup>

In terms of environmental sustainability, the regions and countries vary in their relative vulnerability to changes in temperature, precipitation and extreme weather events and their ability to cope with and adapt to such changes. The World Risk Report 2011<sup>38</sup> indicates that, of the fifteen countries most *exposed* to extreme hazard events globally, seven are in the Asia Pacific region.<sup>39</sup> With respect to vulnerability, which combines susceptibility, coping capacities and adaptive capacities, Afghanistan has the worst performance, followed by eight African countries<sup>40</sup> and then Haiti as the tenth most vulnerable country. Overall, disaster risk is highest for Asian and Pacific countries, which have eleven of the fifteen countries with the highest risk.<sup>41</sup> Three Latin American countries (Guatemala, Costa Rica and El Salvador) and one African country (Madagascar) make up the balance. Comparatively, Africa would probably

emphasize food insecurity induced by slow onset climate related hazards, particularly drought. Latin America and the Caribbean would be most concerned with biodiversity protection and the challenges of SIDS. Asia and the Pacific would be very concerned with large internal displacement caused by floods and storms,<sup>42</sup> and by the possibility of small island inundation due to global warming. Like Africa, the ESCWA region would be most concerned with food insecurity and water stress.

The urban growth dimension of environmental sustainability will also impact the regions differently. While the urban growth rates of Asia, Africa and the ESCWA region

will be higher than that of Latin America and the Caribbean, the latter will continue to be the most highly urbanized, as noted before. Urban population growth will further stretch the capacity of each region to provide employment, housing and basic services. This will also vary by region and should be reflected in defining the new global agenda. In particular, it is probable that Africa would prioritize the problems of urban slum growth; Asia would be most concerned with the logistic and security challenges of its many mega cities;<sup>43</sup> and the ESCWA region would prioritize employment generation and the provision of adequate urban services for all.<sup>44</sup>

**Table 12. Selected indicators by region, 2011**

	Human Development Index	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Mean years of Schooling	Gross National Income per capita (current \$)	Gross capital formation (% of GDP)	Gross domestic savings (% of GDP)
<b>Arab countries</b>	0.641	70.5	5.9	9636.43		
<b>East Asia and the Pacific</b>	0.671	72.5	7.2	7312.15	43.07	46.87
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	0.731	74.4	7.8	11823.41	21.89	21.42
<b>South Asia</b>	0.548	65.9	4.6	3319.10	32.24	26.51
<b>Southern, East, West and Central Africa</b>	0.463	54.4	4.5	2251.06	21.20	17.10

Source: UNDP, Human Development Report 2011, Statistical Annex, available from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2011/download/>; World Bank, World data Bank, available from <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx> accessed on 9 October 2012.

**Table 13. Examples of specific concerns by region**

	<b>Economic sustainability</b>	<b>Social sustainability</b>	<b>Environmental sustainability</b>	<b>Governance and institutions</b>
<b>Africa</b>	Absolute poverty levels; adding value to raw material-based growth; enhancement of resilience to external shocks.	Youth unemployment; provision of basic social safety nets.	Urban slum growth; food insecurity induced by drought.	Reduction of conflict risk; strengthening of state capacity.
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	Income inequality; international competitiveness; promotion of knowledge-intensive sectors.	Reducing inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, age and location; guaranteeing social protection.	Biodiversity protection; floods and storms; small island inundation/sea water incursion internalizing the environmental and social costs (and benefits) of public and private economic decisions.	Efficiency of state and economic governance institutions; need of a social covenant in order to reach a fiscal pact that enables higher social and productive public investments.
<b>Asia and the Pacific</b>	Absolute poverty levels; promotion of high-value manufacturing; building domestic demand.	Strengthening and extension of social protection systems.	Large internal displacement induced by floods and storms; small island inundation/sea water incursion; megacity challenges.	Decentralization and devolution of governmental services.
<b>Western Asia<sup>45</sup></b>	Inclusive growth; employment generation; economic diversification; regional integration.	Reduction of inequalities; strengthening social protection; youth exclusion and unemployment; women's empowerment; broad participation.	Water scarcity; sustainable natural resource management; food insecurity.	Set-up of democratic institutions; strengthening governance; security sector reform and rule of law; freedom of information; managing conflict; ending Israeli occupation of Palestine.
<b>Europe and Central Asia</b>	Income inequality; unemployment; economic diversification; innovation and international competitiveness; population ageing.	Social exclusion; unsustainable and poorly targeted social protection and pension systems; women's empowerment.	Climate change; resource depletion and environmental degradation; water basin management; energy efficiency and security.	Government effectiveness; evolution of democratic institutions; human rights.

In the governance domain, all five regions consider governance and institutions as key elements of a new development agenda. However, while Africa would still be

concerned with installing all the elements of a capable state, Latin America and the Caribbean would be more focused on raising effectiveness and efficiency, especially of economic governance institutions. Asia would probably prioritize decentralization and the devolution of government services. Finally, Africa and the ESCWA region would likely be more concerned with the reduction of conflict risk than the other regions. Recent sociopolitical developments in the broader Arab region show that it would need to pay particular attention to the development of a democratic framework that responds to the aspirations of its people for rights, freedoms and social justice.

Those examples - summarized in table 13 - show that there are significant variations within each domain. It should be emphasized that they are merely indicative. As the United Nations enters the post-2015 development era, each region will need to analyze each dimension in depth through an inclusive process and bring the results to bear on the region's goals and indicators. Examples of emerging perspectives arising from analyses of MDG performance in the ECA, ECLAC, ESCWA and ECE regions – which are relevant to the post-2015 agenda – are presented in boxes 1, 2, 3 and 4 at the end of this section.

#### Box 1. Emerging perspectives from Africa on the post-2015 development agenda

The pan-African institutions - AUC together with ECA, ADB and UNDP- have facilitated subregional and regional consultations with national, subregional and regional stakeholders as mandated by the African Heads of State to develop the African Common Position on the post-2015 agenda.

- Consultations with African member States so far point toward a development agenda that adapts the current framework to new and emerging development challenges.
- The post-2015 agenda must seek to promote the resilience of African countries to socioeconomic and climate-related shocks by addressing associated vulnerabilities. The agenda must be convergent with Rio +20; promote inclusive economic growth and structural transformation; reorient the development paradigm away from externally-driven initiatives towards initiatives that are grounded in national priorities and ownership; and take into account the initial conditions of States. Furthermore, it must prioritize equity and social inclusion and measure progress in terms of both the availability and quality of service delivery.
- The post-2015 development agenda must reflect an appropriate balance of development enablers and outcomes. MDGs have focused largely on development outcomes and less on the means or processes required to achieve the goals. The post-2015 agenda must provide broad indications of development enablers while taking note of country and regional specificities.
- Important enablers for the development of African countries include enhanced peace and security; good governance; human rights for all; strengthened access to justice and equality; a credible participatory process; and enhanced capacity to measure progress and ensure accountability.
- Structural transformation; technology transfer and innovation; and human development were identified as the priority outcomes desired by African stakeholders.
- Sustainable human and social development must be underpinned by economic transformation and inclusive growth.

Source: ECA, 2012a.

### Box 2. Emerging policy directions in Latin America and the Caribbean

The 2010 MDG assessment report in Latin America and the Caribbean identifies six pillars for meeting MDGs with a focus on equality, which are also relevant for the post-2015 agenda.

- 1. Greater cooperation between the developed and less developed countries and, in the case of Latin America in particular, South-South cooperation.** This entails the diversification of production and exports in order to integrate global value chains, decisive action from industrialized countries to reduce agricultural subsidies, the prompt conclusion of the Doha Round, closer partnerships with Asia, fulfilling the agreements adopted at Monterrey and reviewing the operational definition of middle-income countries as a criterion for allocating ODA, among other elements.
- 2. Incorporating sustainable development principles in national policies and programmes and stemming the loss of environmental resources.** This entails imposing appropriate taxes and regulations that take into account the negative externalities of pressures exerted on energy resources, water, forests, protected areas and endangered species, and efforts to internalize the costs of biodiversity loss, the destruction of ecosystems, deforestation, and emissions of carbon dioxide and ozone depletion.
- 3. Closing the principal well-being gaps and addressing factors that perpetuate the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality in order to move towards more egalitarian societies** through affordable and universal access to quality education (including pre-school education and completion of secondary education) and to health services by expansion of the basic level of primary health care. The expansion of health care should be particularly focused on the provision of skilled professional care during delivery and emergency, obstetric care, expanded vaccination programs against pneumococcal disease, greater access to HIV tests, especially for young people at risk, and proper regulation and distribution of generic medicines to low-income sectors. Attention should also be paid to achieving effective economic and physical autonomy for women and their empowerment in decision-making through access to reproductive health, action against labor discrimination, access to care services and quota laws to increase their political representation.
- 4. Achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all** through policies in the area of production and technology in order to close productivity gaps between different sectors and strata of the economy; and through policies in the area of social protection in order to ensure adequate levels of security and well-being in the case of unemployment, and to achieve sufficient income levels for retirement as well as to ensure access to health care.
- 5. Addressing the most extreme situations of poverty, hunger and lack of basic services** by progressively building a social safety net that includes at least: (i) a non-contributory income transfer system to supplement employment income and soften the impact of exogenous or biographical shocks; (ii) a health care system that does not depend on formality or ability to pay; and (iii) an expanded system of basic services for young children and the elderly.
- 6. Establishing a social covenant that leads to a fiscal covenant to support the strategy for achieving MDGs with equality.** The challenge is to agree on an agenda for development that focuses on equality in which universal access to social protection and social security is provided to all segments of the population.

Source: ECLAC, 2012.

### Box 3. Emerging proposals for accelerating the implementation of MDGs in the Arab region

The forthcoming 2013 Arab MDGs report – being prepared in collaboration with the League of Arab States – reviews the progress achieved on MDGs in the Arab region and puts forward four key substantive proposals for the short, medium and long terms (that is, beyond 2015).

1. As a result of the growing food insecurity in the region, the **first** immediate action is to provide relief operations for the population in need of immediate food assistance but not covered by existing programs (mainly in Somalia and Yemen). One way of doing so is to create an Arab Food Security Bank to provide assistance to those countries where food security is a major threat to achieving MDGs. This strategy will be complemented by the already ongoing social protection programmes which provide relief to those who do not have access to enough food by the World Food Programme or other international bodies.
2. However, social protection programmes in the region are (i) not universal in terms of coverage (notably for informal workers, small businesses and other parts of the private sector), (ii) fragmented and poorly coordinated and (iii) characterized by weak institutional frameworks and social dialogue mechanisms linking providers to beneficiaries. Consequently, the **second** proposal put forward in the report is to revise social protection systems in Arab countries to include popular demands of social justice and a social protection floor as recommended by the United Nations and its agencies. This will ensure that there is adequate social transfer to the most vulnerable together with well-functioning public services such as education, health and water supply.
3. Moving to the medium and long terms, the **third** proposal is to revisit the current development monitoring framework and set in motion the much needed political and governance reforms in the region by (a) including governance reform as a key driver and manifestation of development success based on participation, accountability and institutional effectiveness as demanded by the Arab popular uprisings; (b) including subnational inequality as a key driver and manifestation of development failures; (c) including measures to monitor quality of services on health and education as opposed to budget allocation measures; (d) redefining poverty measurements to better reflect the national contexts based on national poverty lines and average per capita expenditure across all developing countries; and (e) adopting a nationally tailored approach to establishing global goals so that it is context specific.
4. Finally, the **fourth** proposal is to redesign and rethink the global and regional partnerships to address the failures in achieving MDGs by including new modalities for financing development. In this respect, financing of development through ODA should be reoriented towards a genuine bottom-up approach which is conducted in a transparent way. This proposal includes the creation of a regional mechanism in the form of an Arab development cooperation agency to provide the necessary development assistance to the countries in need. This agency should help countries in implementing national policies, developing sound macroeconomic policies, planning for development and elaborating a regional response to national and global challenges. Transparency and democratic governance will be central to the functioning of this agency.

*Source:* ESCWA and the League of Arab States, *The Fourth Arab Report on the Millennium Development Goals* (provisional title), forthcoming.

#### Box 4. A vision for the post-2015 development framework for the ECE region

The forthcoming United Nations interagency report on the post-2015 development agenda in the ECE region elaborates on the meaning of the agenda's four dimensions for its regional vision.

- 1. Inclusive social development.** Social protection for all is needed because the erosion of social protection schemes in Western Europe and North America and structural weakness of such schemes in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have moved a large number of families into poverty in recent years. Furthermore, equal access to quality education and universal health coverage is essential because health and education are a precondition for, as well as an indicator and an outcome of, progress in sustainable development. Although the most overt forms of gender discrimination have been addressed in most of the region, more nuanced forms such as gender stereotyping in schools, occupational choice and family roles continue to limit the potential of women throughout the region. Numerous ethnic groups, religious and racial minorities, migrants, the sick and disabled and those with alternative sexual orientations continue to face discrimination in various ways throughout the region.
- 2. Inclusive economic development.** The recent financial crisis hit ECE harder than any other region, manifesting itself in slow or negative growth and rising joblessness in many countries. Extremely high rates of youth unemployment in some European countries threaten social cohesion and may lead to political extremism. Therefore, it is important to boost job creation with the aid of anti-cyclical macroeconomic management, equitable labour market reforms and active employment policies. The ageing of the populations will require a redesign in work patterns, alterations in city planning and transportation networks, and changes in pension systems. Tax reforms are essential for addressing the region's increasing inequality. Moreover, it will be essential to transform production patterns because most countries of the region have lost a large part of their manufacturing, which is largely due to their lack of competitiveness in both domestic and global markets. Economic diversification is needed for the commodity-rich transition economies if they are to become dynamic innovative economies.
- 3. Environmental sustainability.** Most countries of the region have experienced natural resource depletion and environmental degradation while consumption patterns and levels remain unsustainable. Given the acceleration of climate change in spite of the progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing energy efficiency in the region, responsible management of the global commons and a transformation of unsustainable consumer behaviour with the aid of incentives and stricter product standards are needed. Reducing the loss of biodiversity, improving the management of the forest and water basins are also high priorities.
- 4. Peace and security.** Frozen conflicts and political and social tensions persist in a number of countries of the region, discouraging investment and economic development. Other forms of ethnic and regional inequalities and social exclusion more generally are important sources of conflicts and social unrest. The regional experience suggests that in order to effectively address the root causes of human insecurity, it is essential to reform both governance and institutions. An important historical lesson from Europe is the important role that regional economic integration can play in encouraging regional cooperation and thereby containing conflicts.

*Source: ECE and UNDP, Building Inclusive and Sustainable Societies in Europe, Central Asia and North America: A common United Nations vision for the post-2015 development agenda (provisional title), forthcoming, spring 2013.*



## D. Conclusion and Key Messages

As the new agenda unfolds, there is broad agreement on the need to take into account regional specificities and priorities. The key elements of regional priorities may be clustered within the analytical framework that has emerged in the evolving international dialogue. This framework is anchored in the notion of sustainable development and its pillars of governance and effective institutions; economic sustainability; social sustainability and environmental sustainability. The framework permits taking into account many of the key global challenges, including:

- Growth, employment, productivity and economic transformation, the multidimensional essence of poverty, and intra-State and interregional inequality;
- Inclusion, empowerment of women, youth development and social protection;
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction and resilience, ecosystem and natural resource management, and urban growth;
- Democracy, rule of law and accountability, national and international security, international governance and international development cooperation.

The key message is that there are many commonalities among the regions, but their different circumstances strongly suggest a nuanced approach. There are also important

lessons and good practices to be shared across the regions, precisely because of their different circumstances. For instance, the experience of some countries in East Asia in substantially reducing poverty suggests that this can be accomplished, among other means, by maintaining strong economic growth over a long period and ensuring that it is broad-based. Many countries have made substantial progress in instituting mechanisms to increase the proportion of women in decision-making and managerial positions. There are good and scalable examples in the various regions of targeted programmes to build the empowerment of women and enhance their leadership role in research, science, business and politics. Similarly, there are some very good practices of putting in place effective social protection mechanisms in Latin America that could be emulated in other regions. Moreover, the new demands for democratic governance and social justice in several Arab countries point to the need for a new development agenda that goes beyond the current MDG framework. Given those regional differences, the new development agenda should leave space for regional (and subregional) target setting. Regional targets that differ from global targets could be an important link between the global and national level and enhance ownership of Governments and other actors in a region in devising and implementing policies to achieve the new development goals.



# IV.

## *The Way Forward: Main Findings and Recommendations*

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### A. Introduction

This report has drawn on the joint efforts of the United Nations Regional Commissions in presenting recommendations for a new global development framework after 2015. The centerpiece of this publication is its emphasis on how regional perspectives on implementing a post-2015 agenda can make valuable contributions to achieving further progress on human development.

The MDG framework has been marked by many successes. It has succeeded in presenting a clear, simple and transparent set of global goals for human development, motivating policy change at the national level in pursuit of these goals and galvanizing substantially more resources from the aid budgets of developed countries.

Yet one of its often-noted problems is the inherent tension between setting global targets and taking into due account the variety of national development realities. What has often been neglected in the discussions, however, is the practical advantage of taking differing *regional* realities into account. This is an area on which the Regional Commissions command distinctive expertise and can make valuable contributions to the framing of an effective post-2015 development agenda. While global

goals might continue to apply across all regions, the targets might be adjusted to be consistent with regional or subregional conditions. Or certain goals and targets might be accorded added importance in view of the distinctive conditions in certain regions.

The differential rates of progress on achieving the various MDG targets at the regional and subregional level point to important differences in conditions and capabilities that will need to be taken much more into account in the future. For example, progress on such difficult issues as hunger, employment, maternal mortality, access to safe drinking water and the reduction of the number of people in slums has varied significantly across regions. Those differences point to the need for strengthening regional consultation and cooperation in order to make more rapid progress in such areas.

This report maintains that the success of a global post-2015 development agenda will depend, in good measure, on the success of regional efforts in adapting globally agreed goals and policy priorities to nationally specific realities. If this is true, then it makes sense that such regional efforts receive greater prioritization in a new global development

framework of action. Moreover, the institutional means and financing capabilities for stronger regional initiatives should be incorporated into this framework's future plans.

It is also the case that some issues that have become increasingly important in recent years have not been adequately addressed in the MDG framework. They include such problems as rising inequalities (both within and among countries), increasing demographic challenges such as rapid increases in the elderly or the young population, and environmental sustainability, particularly with regard to biodiversity, carbon emissions and energy security. In addition, the issues of democratic governance, human rights, peace and security, and participation have gradually moved to the top of the global and regional development agenda. It is noteworthy that many of these relatively neglected development challenges have had distinctive regional impacts.

## B. A Historical Perspective on the Current MDG Agenda

This report began with a historical perspective on the current MDG agenda. Such a perspective should help us to gain greater insight into both the strengths and the weaknesses of the MDG framework. As chapter I explains, MDGs were developed in the wake of the decisions made at various international development conferences and summits, particularly during the 1990s. Those meetings followed the difficulties of the 1980s, during which many developing countries were obliged to undergo strenuous and lengthy

programmes of stabilization and structural adjustment in response to the debt crisis of the late 1970s. Economic concerns, such as stabilizing economies, reducing inflation and reviving growth were then considered paramount concerns.

A common concern at the time, voiced by developing countries themselves and many international NGOs, was that the preferences of developed countries (particularly through the vehicle of OECD) exerted a disproportionate influence on the framing of international development priorities. In the process, the concrete and more complex array of development priorities at both national and regional levels appeared to be taking a back seat in international discussions. It is therefore essential to adopt a different pattern in the decision-making of a post-2015 development agenda, whereby the objectives and interests of developing countries are fully incorporated and emphasized.

This widespread concern carried over to the follow-up to the Millennium Summit itself, held in 2000. Though the *Millennium Declaration* was unanimously endorsed, the more difficult tasks of identifying global goals, setting concrete targets and developing appropriate monitoring indicators were left to an Inter-Agency Expert Group on MDG indicators formed in 2001 of experts primarily from the OECD/DAC, the World Bank and United Nations organizations. This was the group that created MDGs, which were then approved by the ECOSOC Statistical Commission.

Though there was considerable discussion within this inter-agency group on how to

implement MDGs at the national level, the goals and targets that emerged from its deliberations were primarily regarded as global in nature. While this global orientation succeeded in mounting a powerful advocacy campaign and mobilizing a substantial increase in ODA, it still exhibited some practical weaknesses of implementation at both the national and the regional level, where there remained a wide diversity of development challenges.

Irrespective of their diverse circumstances, the economic strategies that developing countries have been encouraged to adopt since at least the 1990s have fit into a fairly uniform mould. These strategies have usually involved fairly restrictive fiscal and monetary policies along with the liberalization of the economy and privatization of public assets and services. As a result of the adherence to such policies, there has been a lack of policy space for evaluating various alternatives and thus a lack of genuine national ownership of development strategies.

Regional organizations, such as the United Nations Regional Commissions, have the potential to play an invaluable role in highlighting the diversity of development challenges and policy options at the regional and subregional level and thus helping to open up more policy space for national Governments—and emerging organizations of regional cooperation—to tailor their economic and social strategies to address the concrete practical problems that they face in advancing human development in response to their particular concrete circumstances.

## C. Review of the Progress in Implementing MDGs

Chapter II documents that progress in attaining MDGs has been unequally distributed across regions, subregions and countries. This is one reason why addressing inequality among countries (and within countries) is now being emphasized as an important dimension of a post-2015 agenda. Most Governments in developing countries are convinced that there are structural inequalities in the economic and political relationships between developed countries and developing countries. This deep-seated concern cuts across issues of trade, finance, migration and environmental sustainability.

This concern also applies to institutions of global governance (such as the Bretton Woods institutions in particular) because developing countries feel that they are still unable to wield the kind of influence in those organizations that is commensurate with their growing weight in the global economy. Those concerns have been heightened in the wake of recent economic and financial crises. Such trends appear to be one reason that many countries are now attaching greater importance to building-up viable organs of regional cooperation. For addressing common regional and subregional development challenges, such an effort holds considerable promise.

Such considerations underline the importance of conducting a thorough review of the progress in implementing MDGs. Chapter II also provides comprehensive information on progress towards the MDG targets in each of the major regions of the world. This

information is drawn largely from both global and regional MDG reports. Those reports are important because they highlight both the common regional development challenges and the differential rates of progress experienced by each region in its efforts to implement the MDG agenda. The key findings of the regional reports – produced by the Regional Commissions in conjunction with other development organizations – point toward the need for more concentrated cooperation at the regional level in order to accelerate progress towards any new set of post-2015 MDG targets.

Chapter II focuses much of its attention on how the achievement of MDGs has been unequally distributed across regions, subregions and countries, as well as across different population groups within countries. The regional disaggregation of progress on MDGs presented in this report helps to clarify that although an MDG target could be reached at the global level, this overall achievement can mask considerable disparities within and among different regions. This implies that more concerted efforts need to be made in the regions where the lack of progress on certain MDGs presents a major problem. But the reporting of MDG progress at the broad regional level can also conceal progress, or the lack of it, at the subregional level.

Chapter II also offers some practical suggestions on devising more realistic targets for the post-2015 MDG framework. One of the innovations that it emphasizes is the use of the ‘acceleration method’ in assessing MDG progress. It argues that when the global targets were chosen (such as halving extreme income poverty), adequate attention was not paid to

differences in the starting points across countries, that is, their initial development conditions. In response, the chapter recommends that greater consideration should be given to those countries that achieve the greatest ‘acceleration’ in their progress towards the global targets, even if they do not succeed in reaching them because of their disadvantaged starting points. When this method is applied to analyzing MDG progress, the results confirm that many countries in Africa, for example, should be considered as ‘success stories’ even if they still confront large development shortfalls relative to global MDG targets.

Thus, it is important that any post-2015 MDG agenda adopt a set of complementary evaluation tools that can provide a more comprehensive and meaningful assessment of progress towards any agreed global goals and targets. Such assessment tools will play an especially important role at the regional and subregional level.

## D. Institutional Mechanisms for Regional Cooperation

The development of statistical assessment tools along with the improved efforts to gather data for the MDG indicators also underline the importance of capacity-building for advancing the post-2015 MDG agenda, particularly at the regional level. In fact, the Regional Commissions have been playing a leading role in this area in tandem with other regional institutions. As a result, considerable progress on statistical capacity building has already been made since 2000.

In Asia and the Pacific between 2004 and 2010, for example, all of the member States of ESCAP except one succeeded in meeting the minimum data requirements to track MDG progress. In Africa, where data have often not been available for key MDG indicators, regional organizations such as AUC, ECA and AfDB have embarked on a substantial effort to build up statistical capacities at the national level. In Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC has developed a special MDG Statistical Programme, in collaboration with the Statistical Conference of the Americas, to increase the availability of high-quality MDG-related data for the purposes of monitoring country progress. Similarly, ESCWA has closely monitored the statistical capacity of Arab countries since 2008, which has been accompanied by considerable progress in national MDG data collection, dissemination and monitoring.

All of those efforts point to the importance of enhanced coordination at the regional and subregional level in advancing the current MDG development agenda. For the post-2015 agenda, such regional efforts should receive even greater prioritization, and the institutional means should be set up to strengthen such regional coordination. Those efforts also underline the importance of identifying institutional vehicles or mechanisms for advancing MDG achievement at the regional level. Such mechanisms could operate at several levels. Greater consultation and cooperation among the Regional Commissions – such as that evidenced in preparing this report – could form an important foundation for future progress at the regional level. This is

also likely to include similar joint efforts in the future, including with regard to SDGs.

The continuing efforts of the Regional Commissions to link up in each region with other United Nations organizations – such as UNDP and other specialized agencies – and with regional development banks represent another level of cooperation that could help advance regional MDG initiatives. Particularly important manifestations of such efforts have been the various capacity-building initiatives on gathering data, developing indicators and monitoring MDGs.

The efforts of the Regional Commissions and other development agencies to link up with independently emerging institutions of regional cooperation, such as ASEAN, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Southern African Development Community and the League of Arab States, appears to represent the most promising avenue for strengthening regional perspectives, initiatives and forms of financing for a post-MDG agenda. This report has helped to illuminate the need for such forms of regional cooperation, and the consequent need for strengthening institutional mechanisms at the regional level and adequately financing them. If there is indeed significant variance in development conditions across regions and subregions, then it makes sense to forge the needed vehicles at the regional level to advance the post-2015 development agenda.

The Regional Commissions can play a critical role in advancing regional MDG-related initiatives. They have already demonstrated their ability to initiate capacity-building efforts to gather data, develop

statistics and monitor MDG progress. They can also play a prominent role in adapting any new set of global development goals to regional and subregional conditions. This role will undoubtedly involve engaging in a policy advisory function, helping Governments to translate global goals into realistic national targets and identifying the policy and financing means to help reach those targets. This function should not be prescriptive but instead should afford national Governments the policy space to consider various potential options and help them select those policies and programmes that are deemed most appropriate to their concrete conditions and to addressing their specific challenges. Conversely, the Regional Commissions are also perfectly positioned to inform the global debate on regional priorities and specificities that can make the post-2015 agenda more easily adaptable to regional realities.

## E. Regional Priority Development Issues beyond 2015

The Regional Commissions have been active in contributing to both global and regional consultations on the post-2015 development agenda. This has led to the identification of regional priorities within the existing global development agenda. As elaborated in chapter III, this contribution can be divided into four broad areas: (i) economic sustainability; (ii) social sustainability; (iii) environmental sustainability; and (iv) governance and institutions.

### 1. *Economic sustainability*

Many of the economic challenges that different regions face are common: the need to maintain rapid but sustainable rates of economic growth, diversify their economies, raise their labour productivity, enhance their international competitiveness and translate their economic gains into widespread productive employment. However, there are marked differences in the level of economic development both across and within regions. Regional (and sometimes subregional) strategic priorities are therefore inevitably bound to differ to a significant degree.

For example, Africa and the ESCWA region need to strengthen their capacity to make gains from international trade as both face the demanding challenge of succeeding in diversifying their economies. Africa needs to shift out of its prolonged dependence on exporting raw materials; and the ESCWA region needs to shift progressively over time away from its heavy reliance on exporting fossil fuels. Both regions have to find ways to build up higher-productivity sectors in manufacturing and services, and even in agriculture.

In contrast, while Latin America and the Caribbean is more industrialized than either Africa or the ESCWA region, it still needs to find ways to compete more effectively internationally (particularly with Asia) and to build up a more successful export sector. This region might well be able to make progress on using active industrial policies and promoting knowledge-intensive sectors to sharpen its international competitiveness.

Asia is likely to need a different route: it needs to emphasize stimulating more growth within its domestic markets in order to overcome its over-reliance on exports and its unbalanced growth path. In the process, it would have to move away from its reliance on low-wage manufactured exports and attempt to position itself higher up on the international manufacturing value chain. Asia has a generally impressive record on generating fairly rapid rates of economic growth, often based on an intensive investment model of development. However, its record on employment is less stellar. Vulnerable employment is still widespread in the region and only relative minorities of workers in most Asian countries are engaged in formal wage employment and receive decent pay. Moreover, minimum wage guarantees are virtually non-existent. Thus, it is not surprising that inequality appears to be on the rise throughout the region.

Although living standards are generally high in the pan-European region, growth has been relatively slow, especially in the advanced economies. Although growth over the last decade has been better in the transition economies given the large declines in their GDPs during the 1990s, per capita income today is not significantly higher than in 1989 in many of these economies. A significant increase in inequality throughout the region has meant that average living standards have improved even less than national income. Unemployment has been exceedingly high in much of South-East Europe.

## *2. Social sustainability*

While all regions are faced with formidable challenges in continuously generating

widespread productive employment, they also need to build effective systems of social protection and address social inequalities. Some regions have indeed made more progress than others in these areas.

Although certain countries, such as China and Vietnam in Asia, have recently made important strides in setting up universal systems of social protection, in most countries such systems remain underdeveloped, particularly in contrast to the impressive economic strides that countries have made.

On social protection, Latin America and the Caribbean is significantly ahead of Asia, partly because it industrialized much earlier, basing its initial success on import-substitution models of development, domestically-oriented economic development and the growth of wage employment. In recent years, the region has also managed to begin practically addressing its relatively high levels of inequality by introducing some successful forms of social protection, such as large cash transfer programmes and basic non-contributory pension schemes. While such programmes have proven to be valuable initiatives, further progress is still needed to build a comprehensive social protection system that ensures minimum levels of well-being against a spectrum of shocks, such as economic downturns, natural disasters and food and financial crises.

In the past, the Arab region had somewhat extensive social protection systems, including widespread food subsidies. The public sector also managed to provide employment security to a substantial proportion of the workforce. However, these advantages have progressively



eroded and the popular uprisings in the Arab region have exposed serious developmental and governance failures that include an outdated social contract based on unsustainable national development strategies, insufficient job creation and weak political participation. The private sector has been unable to provide alternative avenues for productive employment. And the region's job crisis has become more concentrated among the growing population of young workers. This problem has been exacerbated by the stark difficulties which women face in finding gainful employment.

In terms of social protection, Africa continues to lag significantly behind other regions. Like the Arab region, Africa faces the huge problem of a rapidly growing working-age population coupled with an endemic inability to generate jobs that can employ this group productively. Not surprisingly then, the forms of social protection in Africa remain rudimentary, often confined to the small pockets of formal-sector workers employed by the government or a few large private enterprises. Where cash transfer programmes have been implemented, they are usually small-scale and experimental in scope.

The social protection systems in East and South-East Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia went through major reforms in the 1990s. As a result, large segments of the poor have been left with little social support. Although some progress has been made in reestablishing social protection systems over the last decade, they still need to be better designed to reach the most vulnerable while remaining financially sustainable.

### *3. Environmental sustainability*

Some experts regard Africa as being the most environmentally vulnerable region. Two-thirds of its continental surface area is desert or dry land. It has been highly exposed not only to droughts but also to floods, and its vulnerability in this respect is projected to intensify. As a result, it faces the challenge of a widespread decline in food security and agricultural productivity.

The lack and inefficient use of water – together with drought and desertification – is the dominant vulnerability in the Arab region. These two areas are considered the world's driest. Without even taking into account climate change, the per capita water availability in Africa and the Arab region is predicted to fall by half by 2050. Rapid population growth has also contributed to increase the environmental vulnerability of those two regions.

The major vulnerability in the region of Asia and the Pacific derives from the condition that a large number of people in its countries live along the coast and on low-lying islands. In South Asia, in particular, the resource base is largely degraded due to its low-lying geography, high levels of poverty and high density of populations.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, probably over one hundred million people face the risk of water stress. And low-lying, densely populated coastal areas face the risk of rising sea levels and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events. Deforestation and land degradation could also pose serious environmental challenges.



While the pan-European region has made some progress in reducing carbon emissions, it is not on track to achieve the level of reductions consistent with environmental sustainability. The region's progress in halting biodiversity loss has also been poor. Most countries in the region have made significant progress in providing access to safe water and basic sanitation but problems remain in a few countries, especially in rural areas.

These growing environmental problems and related natural disasters underline the importance of agreeing on a post-2015 development agenda that more assertively addresses the need for the sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services. For instance, the incidence of natural disasters is reported to have increased five-fold since the 1970s. In 2010 alone, over 42 million people were displaced by sudden-onset disasters (such as floods and storms).

#### *4. Governance and institutions*

The recent sociopolitical developments in Arab countries have brought to the fore the various economic, social and political exclusions that prevail in the Arab region, as well as the governance and development failures of the past decades. It is remarkable to observe that the countries that triggered the Arab uprisings (Tunisia and Egypt) are in some respects among the best MDG performers for the region, while Syria was among the leading MDG achievers. Since the existing MDG agenda has been unable to effectively incorporate the critical exclusion and governance dimensions, progress in achieving MDGs also appears to have been accompanied

by popular discontent with the existing development model in the region, which contributed to the uprisings.

The popular uprisings against a development model characterized by socioeconomic exclusion and political repression have provided evidence to show that democratic governance (free and fair elections, citizen participation, public sector accountability and institutional effectiveness), social justice and, ultimately, human rights are prerequisites for achieving a sustainable path to development. Indeed, the broad-based nature of mobilizations in the context of the Arab uprisings which included youth, women and, in many instances, better-off segments of the middle classes who benefited from the previous economic policies, also highlight the vital importance of political reforms to the process of development. In the absence of basic rights such as freedom of expression and information, or self-determination, development gains may not be maintained and could in fact be reversed.

In addition, the gender dimension must be taken into consideration in this context. As discussed in previous chapters, the empowerment of women is a critical development dimension that needs to be seen from human rights and democratic governance perspectives. Beyond the issue of bridging the gender gap in various dimensions, gender relationships are rooted in social, cultural and political norms at the national and regional levels. Women and youth must be praised for their contribution to triggering the process of democratic change in the region and should be supported to participate fully in decision-making at all levels.

The popular uprisings and process of democratic transition in such countries as Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen are likely to have an adverse impact on progress in achieving the several goals and targets in those countries, at least in the short term and possibly in the lead-up to 2015. Looking beyond those countries in democratic transition, one can also trace a series of spillover effects across the region. At one level, neighbouring countries face increasing pressures on their limited resources and declining revenues. Jordan and Lebanon both have, for instance, hosted successive waves of refugees fleeing from Syria, while simultaneously witnessing declines in remittances from tourism and foreign investment levels. At another level, as some regimes have sought to stem similar processes of change in their countries, they have been redirecting resources away from investment to consumption and security needs, thereby jeopardizing long-term development goals. It is thus fair to assume that inadequate attention to democratic governance in the current MDG framework might have undermined its implementation. These lessons should be taken seriously into consideration as the international community moves forward with the formulation of a post-2015 development agenda.

## F. Key Regional Messages

Building on the historical perspective on the adoption of MDGs and the evaluation of the progress in achieving them to date, this report

identifies the key regional issues in need of emphasis in a post-2015 MDG development agenda. This effort started with an analysis of how the global political and intellectual environment has changed since the adoption of the MDGs in the year 2000.

In this regard, some emerging issues highlighted in this report include: (a) changes in population dynamics; (b) transformations in relations between developed and developing countries in terms of political economy; (c) increased instability in global food and financial markets; and (d) the importance of rights, freedom and social justice. More specifically, the report contributes key messages to the ongoing debate of the post-2015 UN development agenda centered on four key areas: employment, inequality, environmental sustainability, and democratic governance.

### *1. Emerging regional issues for a post-2015 agenda*

This report maintains that any new global development framework will have to take into account regional demographic differences. Overall, the global population is projected to increase by 2.3 billion people between 2011 and 2050, reaching a total of 9.3 billion. But some regions, such as East Asia and Europe, will have to confront problems associated with the rapid ageing of their populations. Africa and the Arab region will have to respond to dramatic increases in their young populations, potentially placing intense pressure on their economies to create new jobs rapidly.

Partly as a result of the ‘youth bulge’ in Africa, the Arab region and other parts of Asia,

a major challenge that cuts across many developing countries is the need to create *productive* and *sustainable* employment. According to ILO, for example, about 40 per cent of workers worldwide do not earn enough to maintain their families at an income level of above US\$2 a day per person. These are the ‘working poor’. Since industry does not act as a “growth sector” in most developing countries, it offers only meager opportunities for decent work. Hence, the lack of the traditional industry-driven kind of structural change that can lead to higher-productivity employment for a majority of the workforce in most developing countries poses daunting challenges for the success of a post-2015 development strategy.

This challenge is compounded by the rapid process of urbanization that is occurring across the developing world, but particularly in less developed regions. Around one third of the urban population in the developing world already lives in slums. Even during the period 1990-2015, the number of people living in slums is expected to increase rather than decrease, thus falling short of MDG targets. These population dynamics will exert incredible pressures on the capacity of economies to generate employment and on the abilities of Governments to provide essential urban basic services such as health, education, housing, access to water, and sanitation. As discussed in chapter II, the use of ICT applications and e-services can provide an efficient tool to enhance service delivery and support capacity building efforts.

The growing economic and political influence of such large developing countries as

China, India and Brazil suggests that new organizations that can more effectively take the power of those countries into account (such as G-20) could gain additional influence while less representative ones, the Bretton Woods institutions for example, are likely to lose influence. One of the potentially promising aspects of such a shift would be the opening up of greater policy space for new approaches to development. Such a trend would be especially important at the regional level, and the Regional Commissions are well placed organizations to respond to such a positive trend.

The instability of global financial markets and the resultant recessionary conditions in the developed world cast a dark cloud on future economic prospects at the global level. Any future progress on a new MDG agenda will have to deal with these powerful headwinds, particularly in terms of mobilizing additional development financing.

Last but not least, recent sociopolitical developments in the Arab region have reminded us that economic, social and political exclusions must be addressed in any future agenda by paying adequate attention to the close interaction between human development and democratic governance.

## *2. Four key regional messages*

It has become increasingly apparent over time that the MDG framework has not been able to address adequately some of the most important development challenges that have recently risen to prominence. In assessing the priorities for a post-2015 development agenda, the Regional Commissions are well positioned to

highlight the different regionally-based challenges that developing countries will continue to face after 2015. By drawing on their diversified experience, the Commissions can also make important contributions in identifying a new set of global development priorities.

In evaluating the degree of progress on the MDG agenda and assessing obstacles encountered along the way, all five Regional Commissions have highlighted in this report the need to formulate such new priorities. As noted in the previous section, key messages proposed by this report can be encapsulated into four areas: (a) employment generation; (b) tackling inequality; (c) environmental sustainability; and (d) democratic governance.

#### **(a) Employment generation**

Most of the developed world has experienced recession, economic stagnation or slow growth (or a combination of all three patterns) since the global financial crisis; however, many parts of the developing world have continued to register historically above-average rates of economic growth. Nevertheless, there remain serious questions about the economic sustainability of those growth rates. One of the fundamental problems seems to be that the growth rates of GDP of many developing countries is not translating into a commensurate increase in productive employment.

In fact, employment was only added as an important issue to the MDG framework several years after the 2000 Millennium Summit. Moreover, the objective of “achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all” was only incorporated as a target under

MDG-1. Given its central importance as a critical means to achieve overall human development, productive employment should become a broad goal (with separate targets) in its own right in a post-2015 development framework.

According to ILO estimates<sup>1</sup>, unemployment continues to increase globally and is projected to define the economic condition of 206 million workers in 2016. The ratio of employment-to-working age population currently stands at about 60 per cent. This signifies that 40 per cent of the world’s working age population is unemployed, inactive or discouraged from finding work, bearing in mind that many of the world’s poor cannot ‘afford’ to be unemployed. They have to engage constantly in some kind of economic activity in order to survive, many of them obliged to engage in ‘vulnerable employment’, as own-account or contributing family workers, often earning pitifully low incomes. The latest global estimates suggest that there are 1.5 billion vulnerable workers in this category. Also, according to ILO estimates, there are 910 million ‘working poor’ in the world. These are defined as workers who are members of households with incomes per person lower than US\$2 per day.

One of the likely reasons why the current MDG framework has not given sufficient attention to increasing productive employment is that its goals and targets have focused on advances in social sectors such as health and education. Thus, it has overlooked the deteriorating conditions in the productive sectors of many developing countries. The lack

of progressive structural change in the majority of such countries has implied that many workers have been pushed into low-productivity and low-paid employment. Jobs in higher-productivity sectors and access to adequate social protection should have been secured instead.

Only a new global development agenda can give the issue of productive employment and decent work the critical importance it deserves. As boldly proposed above, achieving productive employment should become a goal in its own right, with separate targets focusing on different development dimensions of employment, including youth employment, and social protection. As discussed in previous chapters, the post-2015 agenda should include appropriate mechanisms to target and monitor universal social protection – currently missing from the MDG framework – in order to guide rights-based policies that are also able to mitigate the impact of recurrent global and regional crises, and promote greater equality.

Greater attention should also be paid to developing the kind of indicators and targets that are most appropriate for reaching employment goals. Much more attention will need to be devoted, for instance, to improving existing employment indicators. Additionally, in order to monitor effectively the progress made on productive employment, more informative employment modules will have to be incorporated as regular, essential features of all income and expenditure surveys. In this way, the employment information about household members could be tied directly to their income flows, and thus could provide a basis to judge how many working members of

a household are ‘working poor’ and how many of them are trapped in ‘vulnerable employment’.

#### **(b) Tackling inequality**

Since 1990, many developing countries have made substantial progress in health and education. This progress is reflected in many of the MDG indicators, such as the under-five mortality rate or the primary school enrolment rate. Developing countries have also succeeded, as a whole, in reducing extreme income poverty, defined as the US\$1.25 per day international poverty line. Numbers of the extreme poor were reduced, for example, from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 1.3 billion in 2008.

Yet while poverty has been decreasing, inequalities in income and wealth have been on the rise since the 1990s. Such trends have been reflected in indicators such as the Gini coefficient of income distribution, which has risen in many countries. For example, while China has had undoubted success in reducing extreme poverty, its income inequality has shot up dramatically since the late 1980s. Such trends suggest that a larger grouping of the population than the poor per se is being put at a development disadvantage. Some of the standard measures of income inequality, such as the Gini index, can be used in a post-2015 development framework to identify pronounced upward or downward trends in such inequality. But there is no meaningful measure for income inequality in the sense of reducing it to a universally-agreed level.

A supplementary indicator to the Gini, which measures inequality across all household members, could be the income share of the poorest 60 per cent of the population (that is,

the bottom three quintiles or three fifths of the population). These bottom three quintiles invariably have an income share that is smaller than their population share (that is, they receive less than 60 per cent of total household income). In other words, they are at a relative strategic disadvantage in terms of their access to economic assets and opportunities. If their income share declines over time, this is a serious warning that a country's income distribution is becoming more regressive.

While inequality in access to income is an important barometer in its own right of improvement in the conditions conducive to human development, the lack of equity in the access to economic assets and opportunities also results in disparities in access to social resources such as health care, education and social protection in general. This is why it is important for any post-2015 development agenda to closely monitor disparities in basic achievements in human development, starting with the disparities between the poor and the non-poor and, if possible, between income quintiles. For example, the richest quintile (and often especially the richest tenth of the population) usually registers much more improvement in human development outcomes, such as health conditions and educational attainment, than the poorest 60 per cent of the population. When such a gap in achievement widens appreciably, this should be a matter of grave concern.

Hence, a post-2015 development agenda should take into account both income and non-income inequalities, including multidimensional approaches to poverty. Most importantly, it should strive to disaggregate

overall achievements in human development, such as reductions in under-five mortality rates or increases in access to adequate sanitation or safe water, at least into the respective achievements of the poor and the non-poor and, preferably, into the comparative achievements of the quintiles of the income distribution. Also critically important would be gender-based disaggregation of achievements in human development since in some domains, such as employment or political representation, the achievement of women tends to fall significantly short of the achievement of men.

As chapter II shows, the MDGs focus on global and even regional averages conceals disparities both among and within countries. It is widely recognized that high levels of inequality can have detrimental consequences not only on poverty reduction and social development but also on economic growth and political stability.<sup>2</sup> There is thus a strong case for effectively addressing equality of opportunities and equality of outcomes in the post-2015 agenda through either a specific goal on inequality or measuring inequality systematically in other human development related goals.

### **(c) Environmental sustainability**

It is widely recognized that the MDG framework has not adequately addressed the environmental challenges that the world now faces. Among its goals have been the objective of "integrating the principles of sustainable development in country policies and programmes" (Target 7.A) and "[reducing] biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss" (Target 7.B). However, there has been no real target, for example, on such related environmental



conditions as carbon dioxide emissions or the proportion of land covered by forest.

Moreover, among the goals for environmental sustainability are “halving, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation” (Target 7.C). But such a goal can be understood more directly as an achievement in the area of human development. Lastly, Target 7.D focuses narrowly on the number of urban dwellers living in slums as a key indicator of environmental sustainability. In addition to using a poorly conceived indicator, this target is narrowly framed for the purposes of tracking environmental conditions. Unfortunately, since available statistics suggest that *the number* of urban slum dwellers has been clearly on the rise since 1990, there has been a setback in meeting this MDG target. If, on the one hand, it is possible to achieve improvements in the lives of 100 million slum dwellers at the global level, on the other hand, the global urban slum population is expected to radically increase by 2020.

In other words, only a relatively confined subset of environmental issues has been addressed by the MDG framework, and some of those issues have been poorly framed. Various important issues, such as desertification, land degradation and the sustainable management of natural resources, have not been adequately addressed. Those weaknesses suggest that more work will need to be undertaken to strengthen the dimension of environmental sustainability in a post-2015 development framework. As noted in chapter III, global environmental risks are already

appearing to exceed the earth’s capacity to absorb them in several critical dimensions, such as greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity loss and ocean acidification.

There is thus a growing global consensus that the current MDG agenda has not made enough progress on environmental issues. There is also an acute awareness that the global environmental agenda and the MDG development agenda must be made compatible in order to create one internally coherent strategic framework at the global, regional and national levels. The Regional Commissions have consistently emphasized that environmental impacts are not solely global in character. Instead, the regional impact of global environmental trends depends very much on each region’s specific climatic experiences, its particular geography, and its distinctive socioeconomic circumstances and capacity to cope with environmental challenges. Thus regions (as well as individual countries) vary in important ways in their relative vulnerability to changes in temperature, precipitation and extreme weather events, and in their ability to cope with such changes.

As discussed in chapter III, future environmental sustainability goals and targets should be more comprehensive and encompass such issues as ensuring a stable climate, reducing ocean acidification, and preventing land degradation and unsustainable water use. The urgent need to manage natural resources sustainably and protect the natural resources base, including biodiversity and ecosystem services should also be addressed. Just as importantly, realistic but ambitious targets need to be set for many of those critical dimensions.

The Regional Commissions are confident that significant progress can be made on these fronts. It is crucial that the human development imperatives and sustainable development imperatives be brought together in a powerful, internally consistent and synergistic development framework. The theoretical basis for doing so was established some time ago by Amartya Sen for the Human Development Report series. The idea is that environmental sustainability be framed in terms of intergenerational equity on human development. However, attention should also be paid to development dimensions that go beyond the conventional economic, social and environmental ones, such as governance, peace and security.

The international development community cannot afford to be governed by two overarching development strategies, running in parallel. SDGs will have to be integrated into the broader post-2015 development agenda, and the resultant goals and targets will have to be internally consistent and mutually supportive. To this end, the Regional Commissions are keen to contribute to the merging of SDGs and post-2015 processes through (i) continued participation in the UNTT Technical Support Team on SDGs; (ii) the provision of analytical support and policy options to the development of SDGs, including inputs to the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly; and, in the process, (iii) support for the outcome of the recently established open working group on SDGs. The role of the regional commissions in facilitating regional consultations and cooperation should also be highlighted since

they have already conducted and will continue to conduct such consultations to assist both SDG and post-2015 processes..

#### **(d) Democratic governance**

The *Millennium Declaration* pays particular attention to human rights, democracy and good governance. It stresses that “men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice” and concludes that “democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.”<sup>3</sup> However, these critical development dimensions have not been adequately reflected in the MDG framework.

At the national level, governance can be broadly defined as the use of administrative and political authority based upon two key dimensions: (i) the work of accountable and effective public administration institutions and (ii) democracy and the rule of law, including “rights-based claims to equality before the law, judicial independence, participation in the conduct of public affairs, electoral integrity, political plurality, freedom of expression and media independence.”<sup>4</sup>

The more effective incorporation of democratic governance dimensions in a post-2015 agenda will require a thorough debate on how those dimensions could be reflected – and measured – in a global development framework. This debate will include the alternative options for the consideration of member States, ranging from the incorporation of a set of non-binding governance principles to the formulation of a practical governance goal in a future global development framework.



As the post-2015 debate moves forward, the Regional Commissions and other key regional institutions can play a constructive role in advancing the democratic governance agenda by developing regional governance architecture options. One good example was the transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the African Union with the aim of “unifying its member States politically, socially and economically, while promoting adherence by its members to democracy, human rights and good governance.”<sup>5</sup> The expansion of the European Union is another example of a regional institution that has successfully promoted democratic governance among its member States. In a different way, the on-going socio-political developments in the Arab region will also contribute to the formulation of a new governance dimension of the future global development agenda. In fact, as the Arab countries in democratic transition develop their new development paradigms, they are likely to become particularly relevant to the four key development dimensions of the new agenda: inclusive economic development, inclusive social development, environmental sustainability, and peace and security.

Moving from the national to the global level, this report has also shown the importance of a more equal approach to global governance in both the existing MDG framework and in a future development agenda. It is essential to adopt a different pattern in the decision-making of a post-2015 development agenda, whereby the objectives and interests of developing countries are fully incorporated and emphasized. Once again, there is a critical role for regional institutions such as the Regional

Commissions to link increasingly influential regional governance mechanisms to global governance arrangements. Instead of considering this increasing ‘regionalism’ as a challenge to global arrangements, the international community in general, and the United Nations system in particular, should build on its potential contribution to multilateralism. As concluded in one of the main recommendations of a previous joint Regional Commissions report, “the rising importance of the regional dimension of development, and its critical role as a vital effective and efficient link between the global and national levels, has to be acknowledged and taken into account in all global development processes.”<sup>6</sup> This includes, of course, the formulation of the post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

### *3. Summing Up*

This chapter has attempted to highlight some of the key challenges, including incorporating new dimensions, which confront the formulation of a post-2015 United Nations development framework. Drawing on the expertise of the Regional Commissions, it has also striven to point out some of the key differences in the development challenges that are faced by regions in attempting to achieve economic sustainability, social sustainability, environmental sustainability, and improved governance. The differences that have been showcased are meant to be indicative only.

It is important to stress that, as the United Nations leads further high-level discussions on the broad parameters of a post-2015 development agenda through different work

streams and processes, the Regional Commissions will strive to play a critical role — along with other regional institutions — in carrying out in-depth consultations at the regional level on the MDG goals, indicators and targets considered most relevant to each region and the corresponding strategies and policies that stand the greatest chance of success.

Finally, the report also identifies several regional priorities and the following four key messages to inform the global debate:

- The importance of placing employment generation at the centre of the post-2015 agenda;
- The need for more effective approaches to tackle inequality;
- The need to incorporate a more comprehensive approach to environmental sustainability;
- The effective incorporation of democratic governance into the post-2015 debate.

## The Millennium Development Goals, Targets and Indicators

Effective 15 January 2008

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Indicators for monitoring progress
<b>Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</b>	
Target 1.A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	1.1 Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) per day <sup>a/</sup> 1.2 Poverty gap ratio 1.3 Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people	1.4 Growth rate of GDP per person employed 1.5 Employment-to-population ratio 1.6 Proportion of employed people living below \$1 (PPP) per day 1.7 Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment
Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	1.8 Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age 1.9 Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
<b>Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education</b>	
Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	2.1 Net enrolment ratio in primary education 2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary 2.3 Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men
<b>Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women</b>	
Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	3.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 3.2 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 3.3 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Indicators for monitoring progress
<b>Goal 4: Reduce child mortality</b>	
Target 4.A: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	4.1 Under-five mortality rate 4.2 Infant mortality rate 4.3 Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles
<b>Goal 5: Improve maternal health</b>	
Target 5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	5.1 Maternal mortality ratio 5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Target 5.B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	5.3 Contraceptive prevalence rate 5.4 Adolescent birth rate 5.5 Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits) 5.6 Unmet need for family planning
<b>Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</b>	
Target 6.A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	6.1 HIV prevalence among population aged 15-24 years 6.2 Condom use at last high-risk sex 6.3 Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS 6.4 Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years
Target 6.B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it	6.5 Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs
Target 6.C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	6.6 Incidence and death rates associated with malaria 6.7 Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide-treated bed nets 6.8 Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate anti-malarial drugs 6.9 Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 6.10 Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Indicators for monitoring progress
<b>Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability</b>	
Target 7.A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	7.1 Proportion of land area covered by forest 7.2 CO <sub>2</sub> emissions, total, per capita and per \$1 GDP (PPP) 7.3 Consumption of ozone-depleting substances
Target 7.B: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss	7.4 Proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits 7.5 Proportion of total water resources used 7.6 Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected 7.7 Proportion of species threatened with extinction
Target 7.C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	7.8 Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source 7.9 Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility
Target 7.D: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	7.10 Proportion of urban population living in slums <sup>b/</sup>
<b>Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development</b>	
Target 8.A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system	<i>Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.</i>
Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally	<u>Official development assistance (ODA)</u> 8.1 Net ODA, total and to the least developed countries, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income
Target 8.B: Address the special needs of the least developed countries	8.2 Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
Includes: tariff and quota free access for the least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction	8.3 Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied 8.4 ODA received in landlocked developing countries as a proportion of their gross national incomes 8.5 ODA received in small island developing States as a

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Indicators for monitoring progress
Target 8.C: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)	<p>proportion of their gross national incomes</p> <p><u>Market access</u></p> <p>8.6 Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duty</p> <p>8.7 Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries</p> <p>8.8 Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their gross domestic product</p> <p>8.9 Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity</p> <p><u>Debt sustainability</u></p> <p>8.10 Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)</p> <p>8.11 Debt relief committed under HIPC and MDRI Initiatives</p> <p>8.12 Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services</p>
Target 8.D: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term	
Target 8.E: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries	8.13 Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis
Target 8.F: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications	<p>8.14 Fixed telephone lines per 100 inhabitants</p> <p>8.15 Mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 inhabitants</p> <p>8.16 Internet users per 100 inhabitants</p>

The Millennium Development Goals and targets come from the Millennium Declaration, signed by 189 countries, including 147 heads of State and Government, in September 2000 (<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>) and from further agreement by member States at the 2005 World Summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1, <http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/60/1>). The goals and targets are interrelated and should be seen as a whole. They represent a partnership between the developed countries and the developing countries “to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and the elimination of poverty”.

Source: <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/OfficialList.htm>.

a/For monitoring country poverty trends, indicators based on national poverty lines should be used, where available.

b/ The actual proportion of people living in slums is measured by a proxy, represented by the urban population living in households with at least one of the four characteristics: (a) lack of access to improved water supply; (b) lack of access to improved sanitation; (c) overcrowding (three or more persons per room); and (d) dwellings made of non-durable material.

### The International Development Goals

1. **Economic well-being:** The proportion of people living in extreme poverty in developing countries should be reduced by at least one-half by 2015.
2. **Social development:** There should be substantial progress in primary education, gender equality, basic health care and family planning, as follows:
  - (a) There should be universal primary education in all countries by 2015;
  - (b) Progress toward gender equality and the empowerment of women should be □demonstrated by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005;
  - (c) The death rate for infants and children under the age of five years should be □reduced in each developing country by two-thirds the 1990 level by 2015. The rate of maternal mortality should be reduced by three-fourths during this same period;
  - (d) Access should be available through the primary health-care system to reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages, including safe and reliable family planning methods, as soon as possible and no later than the year 2015.
3. **Environmental sustainability and regeneration:** There should be a current national strategy for sustainable development, in the process of implementation, in every country by 2005, so as to ensure that current trends in the loss of environmental resources – forests, fisheries, fresh water, climate, soils, biodiversity, stratospheric ozone, the accumulation of hazardous substances and other major indicators – are effectively reversed at both global and national levels by 2015.





## Annex III

### Complete statistical analysis of acceleration in MDG progress

#### Results

<b>a:</b>	accelerated the rate of progress
<b>m:</b>	maintained the rate of progress
<b>s:</b>	slowed down the rate of progress

	\$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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation	
Developing North Africa																						
Algeria		a	s	s	a	s	s		m	a	s	s	s	s	a	a	s	s	s	s	s	
Egypt	s	a	s		a	s	s	a	m	a	s	s	a	a	a	s	s	s	a	a	s	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya						s		a	m	a	s				m	s	m	m	a	a	m	
Morocco	a		s	s	a	s	a	s	m	a	s			a	m	s	a	s	a	s	s	
Tunisia	a	s	m	s	s	s	s	a	m	a	s	s	s	a	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	
Western Sahara																	m	m				
Developing Southern, East, West and Central Africa																						
Angola								s	a	a	m	a	s		a	m	a	m	m	a	a	s
Benin		s		s	s	s	a	s	m	m	a	a	a	a	a	m	s	a	m	s	s	s
Botswana		s	a	s	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	s			a	a	a	s	s	a	s	s
Burkina Faso	a	a	a	s	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s	a
Burundi			s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a				a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s
Cameroon	s	s		a	a	a	s		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	s	s	s	s
Cape Verde			s		a	s			a	a	a					m	a	s	m	a	a	a
Central African Republic	s	s			a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	s	
Chad		s	a	s	a	s	s		m	m	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	m	s	m	a	

	\$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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation
Comoros			s		s	s	s	a	m	m	s		a	s	m	m	s	m	s	s	s
Congo				a	a	s		s	m	m	a			s	a	a	a	s	s	a	s
Cote d'Ivoire	a	s	s	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	s	a	a	a	s	m	s	a	m
Democratic Republic of the Congo		a			a	a	s		a	a	a				m	a	s	s	s	a	s
Djibouti		a	a		a	a	a	s	m	m	a			a	s	s	m	m	a	a	s
Equatorial Guinea		a			a	s	s		m	m	s			a	s	s	m	s	a	m	m
Eritrea			s	a	s	a	s	a	m	m	s			a	m	s	m	a	a	s	a
Ethiopia	a	a	s	s	s	a	a	a	a	a	a				a	a	s	a	a	s	s
Gabon						s			a	a	a			a	s	s	s	a	s	s	s
Gambia		s	a	s	a	s		s	m	s	a	s		a	m	s	m	s	s	s	a
Ghana		a	s	a	a	s	s		a	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	s
Guinea	a	a	s	s	a	s	a	a	a	m	a	s	s	a	m	s	s	m	s	s	s
Guinea-Bissau			a		a	a		m	a	m	a	s		a	m	a	s	s	s	s	a
Kenya		s	s			a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	m	s	a	s	a
Lesotho		s	a	s	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	m		s	s
Liberia						a			a	a	a			a	m	a	s	a	s	a	a
Madagascar	a		a	s	a	a		a	a	m	a	a	a	m	m	s	s	s	a	s	a
Malawi		a	s	a	s	s	s	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	m	s	s	s
Mali	s	a	s	s		s	a	s	m	s	s	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s	m
Mauritania	s	a	a		a	s	s	a	s	s	a	s	m	a	m	a	s	m	s	s	s
Mauritius			a	a	a	a	a	a	s	m	s			a	s	s	s	s	s	m	m
Mayotte																	s	s			
Mozambique	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	s	s
Namibia		a	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	s	s
Niger	a	a	a	s	a	a	s		a	a	a	a	s	a	m	s	a	m	s	s	s
Nigeria	s	s	s			a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	s
Réunion																	a	a			
Rwanda		a		a	a	a	s		a	a	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	a	s	s
Sao Tome and Principe			s		s	a		a	s	s	a				m	m	s	m		a	a

	\$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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation
Senegal	a	a	s		a	a	a		a	a	m	s	a	a	m	m	m	a	s	m	s
Seychelles				a	a	s	s	s	s	s					a	s	s	s	a		
Sierra Leone		a				a			a	a	a			a	m	s	s	m	a	m	a
Somalia									m	a	a	a		s	s	a	s	m		a	s
South Africa	a	a	s	s	a	a	m		a	a	a		a	a	a	s	s	s	a	a	a
Sudan		a							m	m	a		a	m	m	s	a	m	s	s	s
Swaziland	a		a	a	a	a	s	s	a	a	a	s		a	a	a	s	m	a	s	a
Tanzania (United Republic of)	a	a	a		a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	m	s
Togo		a	s	s	s	s	a		m	s	a	a	a	a	m	s	s	m	a	s	a
Uganda	a	a				s		a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	s	a	s	s	a
Zambia	s	a	a		a	s			a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	m	a	a	a
Zimbabwe									a	a	a	s	s	a	a	a	s	a		s	m
Developing Caribbean																					
Anguilla								a							a	s	s	s		s	m
Antigua and Barbuda									a	a		a	s		a	m	s	a	s	a	s
Aruba			s	a	a	a	a	s								s	a	m		m	
Bahamas		a			s	a	s		s	s	a	s		s	a	a	s	a	s	a	m
Barbados		a			s	s	a	s	s	s	s	a	a	a	a	a	s	m	s	m	m
Br. Virgin Isds		a			s	s	s	s							s	a	s	s		m	m
Cayman Isds			s		s	s	s	s							s	s	s	a		a	m
Cuba			s	s	s	a	a	a	s	s	s	s	m	s	s	s	s	a		s	s
Dominica					m	s	s		a	a		s	s		a	a	s	s	a	a	a
Dominican Republic	a	s	s		s	s	a		m	m	s	s	s	a	m	s	s	m	a	s	s
Grenada							s		s	s	s	s	a		a	a	s	s	a	a	m
Guadeloupe																	a	s		s	
Haiti		s							s	s	s	s	s	a	a	a	s	m	a	a	s
Jamaica	a	s	s		s	s	a		m	m	a	s	a	a	s	s	m	s	a	m	m
Martinique																	s	s			
Montserrat					a	s	s	a					m		a	a	a	s		m	m

	\$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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation
Neth. Antilles					s	m	a	s							s	a	m	s			
Puerto Rico											a				a	a	s	s			
Saint Kitts and Nevis									a	a		a	s		a	a	s	m	a	m	m
Saint Lucia			s		a	s	s		s	s	s	s	a		a	a	s	m	a	m	s
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines						a	s	a	s	s	a	s	s		a	a	s	m	s		
Trinidad and Tobago		m			a	s	s	s	m	m	s	a		a	a	m	s	s	a	m	a
Turks and Caicos Islands												s	a		a	a	s	s		m	a
United States Virgin Islands																	s	a	s		
<b>Developing Latin America</b>																					
Argentina	a		s	s	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	s	a	s	m	s	a	s	s	s	s
Belize			s		s	a	s		s	s	a			a	m	s	m	s	a	s	a
Bolivia	a	a	s	a	s	s	s		a	a	s	s	s	a	m	s	s	s	s	s	s
Brazil	a	a	a			s	a	s	a	a	s		s		m	a	m	s	s	s	s
Chile	m	a		a	s	s	a	a	s	s	s	s		a	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Colombia	a	s	s	a	s	a	a	s	m	a	a	a	s	a	m	a	m	a	s	s	s
Costa Rica	a			s	s	a	s		s	s	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	s	s	a	s
Ecuador	a		s	s	s	a	a		s	s	s			a	m	s	s	s	a	s	s
El Salvador	a	s		s	s	a	a	a	a	a	m	a	s	a	s	a	s	a	a	s	s
Falkland Isds (Malvinas)																	a	m			
French Guiana																	s	s		m	a
Guatemala	s	a	s		s	a	s		s	m	s	a	s	a	m	a	s	s	a	s	s
Guyana		s	s		s	a	s		a	a	s	a		s	a	a	s	s	a	a	a
Honduras	s	a	a	a	a	s		s	m	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s
Mexico	a		s	s	s	s	a	s	a	a	a	s		s	a	a	a	s	s	s	s
Nicaragua	a	a	s	s	s	a	a	s	m	m	a	a	s	a	m	a	s	s	a	s	s
Panama	a	a	s	a	s	m	a	s	m	m	a	s		a	s	s	a	s	a	s	s
Paraguay	a		s	s	s	a	a	a	m	m	a	a	s	a	s	s	m	s	a	s	s
Peru	a	s	s	a	a	s	a		m	a	a	a	s	a	m	a	s	a	s	s	s
Suriname						s	s		m	a	a		s	a	s	s	s	s	a	a	s

[illegible]

	\$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	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation
Brunei Darussalam				s	s	a	s	a	a	a	s				a	a	s	s	s		
Cambodia	a	a	s		s	a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	s	a	m	s
Indonesia	a	s	a	s	a	a	s		m	m	s	s	s	s	m	a	a	s	a	s	s
Lao PDR	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	s	m	m	m			s	s	a	m	s	s	a	a
Malaysia	a		s	s	a	a	s	s	s	s	m	s		a	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
Myanmar		s			s	s	s		m	m	s	s	a	a	a	a	a	s	a	a	a
Philippines	s	s	a		s	s	s	s	m	a	s	s	a	a	m	a	s	s	a	s	s
Singapore									s	s	a			a	a	a	m	s	s	m	s
Thailand	a					a	a	s	s	s	a		s	a	m	a	a	s	a	s	s
Timor-Leste									a	a	a	a	a				s	s		a	a
Viet Nam	a	s	s	s	s	s	a	a	m	a	s	a	a	a	a	s	s	s	a	s	s
<b>Developing Western Asia</b>																					
Bahrain			a	s	a	s	s		s	s	a				s	m	a	a	a		
Iraq		a	a		a	a	a	a	a	a	a		a		m	s	s	m	s	a	a
Jordan	a	a	s	s	a	s	s	m	m	m	s	s	s		s	s	m	s	s	a	s
Kuwait		a	a	s	a	s	s	a	s	s	s				a	a	s	m	s	m	m
Lebanon								s	a	a	a			a	s	s	a	s	a	m	s
Occupied Palestinian Territories			a	a	a	s	s	s	s	s	s	s			a	a	m	s	s	s	a
Oman			s	s	a	s	s	a	a	a	s	s	s	s	s	s	a	s	s	a	a
Qatar			s		s	s	a	a	m	m	a			a	a	a	a	s	s	m	m
Saudi Arabia								s	m	a	s				a	a	m	s	a		
Syrian Arab Republic		s	a	s	a	a	s		s	s	s		s		m	s	s	a	s	a	a
Turkey	a	a	s		a	a	a	s	a	a	a	a	m	a	a	a	a	s	s	s	m
United Arab Emirates			a	s	a	a	a	s	m	m	s				a	a	s	a	s	m	a
Yemen			s		s	s	s	a	m	m	a	a	m		a	a	m	s	a	a	s
<b>Developing Oceania</b>																					
American Samoa															s	s	s	a			
Cook Islands			s			s	s		a	a		a			a	a	s	s		s	s
Fiji			s	s	a	a	s		m	m	a	a		s	s	s	a	s	s	s	s

	\$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 ( $\geq 1$ visit)	HIV prevalence	TB incidence	TB prevalence	Forest cover	Protected area	CO2 emissions	Safe drinking water	Basic sanitation
French Polynesia															a	a	s	s		m	m
Guam															s	s	s	s		m	m
Kiribati		a		a	a	s			m	m		s			a	a	s	a	s	s	s
Marshall Islands				s	a	a			m	m					m	a	s	s		s	s
Micronesia (F.S.)									m	m	a	a			m	a	s	s	s	s	a
Nauru									m	a					s	s	a	m		s	s
New Caledonia															s	s	s	a			
Niue				s	s	a			a	a		s			a	a	m	s		m	m
Northern Mariana Is.															a	a	s	a		m	s
Palau					s	a			a	s		s			a	a	s	s	a	s	s
Papua New Guinea					a				m	m	a			a	m	s	m	s	a	a	s
Samoa		a		a	s	s	a		s	s	s				a	a	s	a	s	m	a
Solomon Islands					s	s			m	m	a				m	a	m	s	a	s	s
Tokelau								s							a	s	a	s		a	s
Tonga		s		s	a	s	s		m	m	a	a			a	m	m	s	s	m	m
Tuvalu					s				a	a		s			m	a	s	s		s	s
Vanuatu		s		s	s	s			m	a	s				m	a	s	s	s	s	a

Source: ESCAP, based on data from the United Nations MDG Database, accessed on 16 October 2012.

Notes: Western Asia in this context refers to the region used for MDG monitoring purposes. See also footnote 20.





## Annex IV

### National adaptation of MDGs

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
Afghanistan	In 2004, the country committed to pursue the MDGs, and made the target date 2020 instead of 2015. Besides the direct implication of this change of date on the goals, there were further changes, both in targets (e.g., maternal mortality) and in goals (new goal added – MGD9 on “Enhance security”).
Armenia	In the MGD 2010 country progress report, there was a refinement of the MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators to update and address the main challenges of the country, such as: target 1 of MDG1 aiming to reduce the poverty level to lower than in 1990 by 2015; MDG2 changed to “Achieve Universal High Quality Secondary Education”; target of MDG3 changed to “Increase, by 2015, of women’s participation in political decision making”; MDG4, immunization rate modified to cover other major diseases, such as measles; MDG7 has two new indicators added “Number of towns served by wastewater treatment plants”, and “average duration of water supply in the small and medium towns of the country”; MDG8 was revised to include good governance principles.
Azerbaijan	The country developed a “State Programme on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2008-2015” (SPPRSD), adopted by Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in September 2008, as the Government’s principal instrument for addressing the main development challenges and meeting the MDGs by 2015.
Bahrain	During the past few years, Bahrain has been able to develop its perspective of the MDGs by making them more suitable to specific national conditions. It introduced a new target to reduce adult illiteracy by half, as well as proxy and disaggregated indicators, such as: average monthly wages of Bahrainis, number of Bahrainis with low salary, wage gap between Bahrainis and expatriate workers, number of beneficiaries from the Unemployment Insurance Scheme, ratio of women in senior management positions, and average wages of women in Bahrain as compared to those of men

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
Bangladesh	MDGs with targets have been incorporated into first PRSP (2005) and Medium Term Budgetary Framework ; MDGs were extended to 2021
Bhutan	Refinement of the nationalized MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators to update and address the main challenges of the country, such as: MDG1, the indicators changed to below national poverty line (%), the human poverty index (HPI-1), the percentage of under height under-five children; MDG2, an indicator of pupils who reach grade 7 was added; MDG4, has been changed to include children covered under the immunization programme; MDG6, changed indicator to HIV/AIDS cases detected.
Cambodia	MDGs were incorporated into the National Strategic Development Plan.
China	China has formulated the 12th Five-Year-Plan (2011-2015), the goals for which far exceed the MDGs. The plan focuses on the disparities that have emerged in China as it has developed, in particular the income gap and the inequality of access to quality medical care and educational services.
Egypt	Egypt has added new indicators in its 2010 national MDG report relating to communicable diseases such as the occurrence of Schistosomiasis and that of Hepatitis B and C which form major health threats in Egypt. The national report made use of national surveys data and provided disaggregated data by sex, age and region (governorates/directorates) for example on poverty, undernourishment, child mortality rates, contraceptive use. The report has also included over 45 additional, proxy and disaggregated indicators.
Ethiopia	Ethiopia adopted its Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) to guide its strategic framework for poverty eradication for 2005/06-2009/10. PASDEP is outcome oriented and defines Ethiopia's overall development strategy and vision to reach the level of middle income countries through an aggressive programme to bring about accelerated and sustained development, with a major focus on sustainable growth of the agriculture, industry and private sector development, and scaling up of efforts to achieve the MDGs.
Fiji	In the 2004 National Report, there was a refinement of the MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators to update and address the main challenges of the country, such as: MDG1, changed to reduce poverty by 5% each year; MDG2, added a programme to promote food and income security affected by 2003; MDG3, added women's access to micro-credit assistance improved by 50% by 2004 and access to formal credit through affirmative action programmes improved by 30% by 2004; MDG4, added health promotion activities

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
	integrated into rural and community health programmes; MDG5, added health promotion activities integrated into rural and community health programmes; MDG6, added sustained prevention and control of HIV/AIDS; MDG8, redefined targets by removing target 8a, 8b, adjusting 8c to address the special needs of small island developing states, added the target of “in cooperation with developing countries, and develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth”.
Georgia	Refinement of the MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators, such as: MDG1, halve the proportion of people that have unbalanced diets and ensure socio-economic rehabilitation and civil integration of population affected and displaced as a result of conflicts and natural calamities; MDG2, ensure coherence of Georgian education systems with educational systems of developed countries through improved quality and institutional set-up; MDG3, promote gender equality and empower women, ensure gender equality in employment, ensure equal access to activity in the political domain and all levels of management; MDG7, harmonization of the housing sector with international standards, including the development of municipal (social) tenure component; MDG8, added targets that deal comprehensively with Georgia’s debt problems, to ensure improved accessibility to communication systems countrywide, and to minimize digital inequality between urban and rural areas.
India	The Eleventh National Plan (2008-2012) had 27 monitorable targets, 13 of which were disaggregated at the State level.
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	There were changes in the indicators, including: MDG6, added indicator of condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate and number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS; MDG8, added target of develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth and added target of to make available the benefits of new technologies especially ICT.
Iraq	Iraq has integrated MDGs into the national strategy for poverty alleviation. A new target has been set (reduce poverty by one third). In addition, special groups included in the national strategy for the relief of unemployment (youth, people affected by internal migration and business owners affected by conflicts). Iraq included over 15 additional and proxy indicators in its last MDG Report of 2010. Lately Iraq produced MDG reports for each of its governorates.
Jordan	Jordan has included over 40 additional and proxy indicators in its last 2010 MDG report such as Gini index, Youth literacy rate analyzed by governorate, Female to male ratio in

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
	<p>Jordanian universities and community colleges across various major specialties, Percentage of women representation in various leadership positions, Proportion of individual borrowers from micro-credit funds, holders of securities, owners of land and holders of land possession disaggregated by sex, Proportion of the population with high cholesterol levels, Proportion of total water resources used for agriculture, industry and drinking water, Consumption of basic energy, National exports growth rate, Remittances to GDP ratio, FDI to GDP ratio, and Outstanding external public debt balance to GDP ratio.</p>
Kazakhstan	<p>There was a refinement of the nationalized MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators, such as: MDG1, changed to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is below the subsistence minimum; MDG2, added national goal to achieve universal secondary education; MDG3, added national goals of to ensure adoption and implementation of measures aimed at increasing representation of women in legislative and executive bodies, to ensure legislative and enforcement measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women, and to ensure sustainable gender mainstreaming of national planning and budgeting, especially aiming at minimizing the gender wage gap.</p>
Kuwait	<p>The 2010 national MDG report features two additional sections: the impact of the global financial crisis on progress towards achieving the MDGs in Kuwait; and, the possible impact of climate change on attaining the various relevant aspects of MDGs. Kuwait also included additional, proxy and disaggregated indicators in such as : Average consumption expenditure of the poorest, Percentage of heads of households who are self-employed, Number of HIV/AIDS cases disaggregated by sex and for the age group 15 to 29 years, ratio of ODA to Gross National Product.</p>
Kyrgyzstan	<p>The Country Development Strategy (2009-2011) includes 19 key MDG indicators. In 2009, it established a Coordination Committee to oversee implementation of the MDG agenda by all government bodies.</p>
Lao PDR	<p>The 6th Five Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan includes MDGs.</p>
Mongolia	<p>A parliamentary resolution in 2005 established Mongolia-specific MDG targets.</p>
Morocco	<p>Engendered MDG implementation</p>

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
Nepal	The Tenth PRSP strategic framework (2002/03-2006/07) includes MDGs.
Pakistan	<p>There was a refinement of the MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators, such as: MDG1, changed the indicators to proportion of population below the calorie based food plus non-food national poverty line; MDG3, changed the indicators to Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary, secondary and tertiary education, youth literacy GPI, and proportion of seats held by women in National Assembly and Senate, provincial assemblies and local councils; MDG4, indicators now include proportion of children under five who suffered from diarrhea in the last 30 days and received Oral Rehydration Therapy and Lady Health Workers' coverage of target population; MDG5, indicators now include total fertility rate, and proportion of women 15-49 years who had given birth during last 3 years; MDG6, indicators now include HIV/AIDS prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women, HIV/AIDS prevalence among vulnerable groups (e.g., active sex workers), proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures, incidence of tuberculosis per 100,000 population, and proportion of TB cases detected and cured under Directly Observed Treatment Short Course; MDG7, indicators of forest cover including state-owned and private forest and farmlands, land area protected for the conservation of wildlife, GDP per unit of energy use (as a proxy for energy efficiency), number of vehicles using compressed natural gas fuel, sulphur content in high speed diesel (as a proxy for ambient air quality), proportion of urban and rural population with access to improved sanitation and proportion of katchiabadis (slums) regularized.</p>
Palestine	An advanced MDG adaptation process is undertaken in order to develop a national MDG action plan in line with the National Development Plan 2011-2013.
Papua New Guinea	<p>There was a refinement of the MDGs, with changes of targets and indicators, such as: MDG1, the target is to decrease the proportion of people below the poverty line by 10 per cent, increase by 10 per cent the total amount of agriculture commercially produced and the amount of subsistence agriculture production by 34 per cent using 2004 as the base year; MDG2, the national target is to achieve a Gross Enrolment Rate of 85 per cent at the primary level by 2015, a retention rate at this level of 70 per cent by that year, and an increase in the youth literacy (15-24) to 70 per cent by target year; MDG3, the goal is to eliminate gender disparity at the primary and lower secondary level by 2015 and at the upper secondary level and above by 2030; MDG4, target of reducing the infant mortality rate to 44 per thousand, and the Under Five Mortality Rate to 72 per thousand by 2015; MDG5, tailored target in the National Health Plan aiming to reduce maternal mortality</p>

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
	rate to 274 per 100,000 live births.
Qatar	Qatar's national MDG report stresses the need to integrate MDGs into national planning processes and strategies. Goal 8 has been extensively enriched with additional and proxy indicators such as: FDI flows, Proportion of ODA to GDP , Geographical distribution of assistance offered by Qatar, List of the non-governmental national donors of aid and development assistance, and Total assistance provided by Qatar by sector to total assistance
Russian Federation (the)	The Russian Federation has developed the MDGs for its national context, entitled the MDGs+ Agenda, adapted in 2005 in the Human Development Report, with the report analyzing human development in the country through the prism of MDGs.
Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia's Eighth and Ninth Development Plans seek to effectively link national and global efforts aimed at creating a world of peace, security and development, within the framework of the MDGs. In its latest report on MDG, Saudi Arabia included over 25 additional and proxy indicators.
Tanzania	In 2005, Tanzania adopted its National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, (known by its Swahili acronym as MKUKUTA) to provide a development framework for 2005-2010. MKUKUTA forms part of the Tanzania's efforts to deliver on its national Vision 2025. MKUKUTA is organized around three broad clusters of outcomes: growth and reduction of income poverty; improved quality of life and social well-being, and governance and accountability. The strategies of MKUKUTA are MDGs-based and its goals are aligned to the MDGs. Key to the implementation on MKUKUTA is government budgeting. To ensure that MKUKUTA priority outcomes are adequately financed, the Tanzanian government has linked MKUKUTA to the national budget through its Strategic Budget Allocation System. Successful implementation of MKUKUTA has required the strengthening of the Public Expenditure Review/Medium Term Expenditure Framework process to ensure resource allocation reflects poverty reduction priorities, reforming the monetary and financial sectors to ensure macro-economic stability and an investment-friendly environment, and initiating programmes aimed at ensuring financial access to disadvantaged communities.
Thailand	Commitments to a set of more ambitious targets, called MDG Plus, beyond the global MDGs in areas such as: MDG1, new goal is to reduce poverty to below 4 per cent; MDG2, aims to achieve universal secondary education; MDG6, the target is to reduce

Country	MDG adaptation strategy
	incidence of HIV/AIDS among productive adults to 1 per cent.
Turkmenistan	Turkmenistan has adopted the MDGs but developed its own targets suitable for its national context, and has 13 national MDGs.
Uzbekistan	National MDG goals and indicators have been incorporated into the 2005 <i>interim - Welfare Improvement Strategy Paper(i-WISP)</i> , which includes: Goal 1, improve living standards and reduce malnutrition; Goal 2, improve the quality of primary and general secondary education while maintaining universal access; Goal 8, Uzbekistan and Global Partnership for Development.
Yemen	The 2010 national report serves as a key reference document in the preparation of the fourth National Development Plan (2011-2015), the implementation of which will coincide with the last five years of the MDGs remaining cycle (2010-2015). The report highlights the problem of educational efficiency (repetition of classes is a major problem in Yemen) and illiteracy of women.

Source: For Asia and the Pacific region, MDG country reports available from <http://www.undg.org/> accessed on 22 August 2012, and UNDP (2009). For the ESCWA region, Arab MDG country reports are available at ESCWA Virtual Library on the following link: [http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/scu/coun\\_report.html](http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/scu/coun_report.html).





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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Interoffice Memorandum No. 11-08757. 19 September 2011.

<sup>2</sup> UNTT, 2012b.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., paragraphs 137-138.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 2012b.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 43 for a definition of the ‘Washington Consensus’.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/55/2 on *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, adopted on 8 September 2000 and published on 2 August 2001.

<sup>7</sup> The internationally recognized strengths (and weaknesses) of the MDG framework are identified in UNTT (2012).

<sup>8</sup> See Manning, 2010; Hulme, 2009 and Melamed, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> The perceived weaknesses and quotes in this section are sourced from UNTT, 2012b: Annex 2.

<sup>10</sup> UNTT, 2012b, Annex 2.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, 2012a.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, 2012b.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> See United Nations, 2012, *The Future We Want*, available from <http://www.uncsd2012.org/content/documents/727The%20Future%20We%20Want%2019%20June%201230pm.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Saith, 2006; McKinley, 2005; Watkins, 2008; Vandemoortele 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Hulme, 2009:5.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>18</sup> Saith, 2006:1168.

<sup>19</sup> See for example, United Nations, 2010a; Oberdabernig, 2010; Cavanagh, et al., 2000; Easterly, 1999; Garuda, 2000; Handa and King, 1997; Chowdhury, 2012 and United Nations, 2009a.

<sup>20</sup> This report uses the following different country groupings: (i) “the Arab countries” is used to cover all 22 Arab countries; and (ii) the ESCWA region is used to cover the 14 Arab countries members of ESCWA (before 2012). These countries are: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. In 2012, three other Arab countries joined ESCWA (Libya, Morocco and Tunisia). In ESCWA publications and analyses (before 2012), the term “Western Asia” is used to cover the 14 above-mentioned countries that were members of ESCWA before 2012. However, all data for “Western Asia” derived from global MDG databases excludes Egypt and the Sudan (and the other three countries that recently joined ESCWA) and includes three non-ESCWA countries. “North Africa” refers to the Arab countries geographically located in the region, usually including Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. Finally, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is often used to refer to most Arab countries (with the exception of Comoros, Djibouti and, sometimes, Mauritania and the Sudan), together with non-Arab countries such as Iran and Turkey.

<sup>21</sup> McKinley, 2005: 12.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>23</sup> These involve the United Nations General Assembly agreeing that an ad hoc conference should be convened to look at an issue of particular international importance. Four such conferences were held in 1990: the World Conference on Education for All, the United Nations World Summit for Children, the UNCTAD Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the Children's Summit.
- <sup>24</sup> See United Nations, 2007 for a comprehensive summary of United Nations Conferences and Summits, leading to the Internationally Agreed Development Goals.
- <sup>25</sup> See United Nations, 1993.
- <sup>26</sup> At Cairo, debates became heated, as many delegates adopted rights-based approaches promoting the ideas of sexual and reproductive health and women's empowerment, which were opposed by others on moral grounds.
- <sup>27</sup> OECD currently has 34 members, including countries in Asia and Latin America that are sometimes also considered as developing countries. Its DAC groups together the following 23 major donor countries (in addition to the European Union): Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States.
- <sup>28</sup> Hulme, 2009:17.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 19-20.
- <sup>30</sup> The 2005 Millennium Summit agreed to incorporate new targets to the MDG framework, dealing with reproductive health, HIV treatment, employment and biodiversity. In 2007, the framework was revised to include 21 targets and 60 indicators, which became effective in January 2008. The new framework also recommended that all indicators be disaggregated by sex and urban/rural areas as far as possible.
- <sup>31</sup> In January 2008, Goal 8 was revised to include 6 targets and 16 indicators.
- <sup>32</sup> See United Nations, 2003.
- <sup>33</sup> PRSPs were required by the World Bank and IMF to consider the provision of debt relief to low-income countries.
- <sup>34</sup> The Millennium Project was commissioned by the Secretary-General in 2002 to develop a concrete action plan to achieve MDGs.
- <sup>35</sup> Vandemoortele, 2010:3.
- <sup>36</sup> Vandemoortele, 2010:3. See Jomo and Chowdhury (eds.) 2012 for a critique of the "good governance" agenda.
- <sup>37</sup> See World Bank, 2012.
- <sup>38</sup> UNDP, 2010.
- <sup>39</sup> See Burnside and Dollar, 1997; 2004.
- <sup>40</sup> Manning, 2010:8.
- <sup>41</sup> Rockström, J. et al. 2009.
- <sup>42</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, 2011.
- <sup>43</sup> The concept of the 'Washington Consensus' was originally developed by Williamson (1989) to include a set of ten policy recommendations. A broader definition was later developed from different perspectives and tended to emphasize a general move from State-led to market-based development approaches. Some leading economists have proposed that this broader interpretation of the Washington Consensus was still present (though not as dominantly as in the 1990s) as late as the onset of the recent (2008-2009) financial crisis (Skidelski, 2009).
- <sup>44</sup> United Nations, 2010a.
- <sup>45</sup> See United Nations, 2010a.
- <sup>46</sup> See for example, UNDP, 2004.
- <sup>47</sup> United Nations, 2010a.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>49</sup> McKinley (2005: 14) argues that slow economic growth and low employment – compared with inflation – can be particularly detrimental to the poor

more than anyone else. In fact, while moderate inflation can be compatible with economic growth, it can also be argued that “low inflation can be as harmful as high inflation. When low-inflation policies keep the economy mired in stagnation or drive it into recession, the poor lose out, often for years thereafter, as their meagre stocks of wealth are wiped out or their human capabilities seriously impaired.”

<sup>50</sup> See Rodrik (2006), which identifies a set of ten new policy areas not covered by the original ten components of the ‘Washington Consensus’.

<sup>51</sup> United Nations, 2010a.

<sup>52</sup> See also United Nations, 2009b and 2010b.

<sup>53</sup> Vandemoortele, 2009:355-56.

<sup>54</sup> UNTT, 2012b:47.

<sup>55</sup> D. Rodrik, “After the Millennium Development Goals”, 10 October 2012, available from <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/after-the-millennium-development-goals-by-dani-rodrik>.

<sup>56</sup> UNTT, 2012b: annex 2.

<sup>57</sup> See for example, Anand, Segal and Stiglitz (eds.), 2010; Sala-i-Martin, 2006; Deaton, 2005, 2006; McGillivray, 2006; and Pogge and Reddy, 2006, and Jomo and Chowdhury (eds.) 2011. The initial MDG-1 threshold for extreme poverty was US\$1 per person per day but this international poverty line was revised upwards to US\$1.25 in 2008 (in 2005 PPPs) by the World Bank because new data revealed that the cost of living in the developing world had been higher than previously estimated.

<sup>58</sup> United Nations, 2009a.

<sup>59</sup> See Sen, 2000; 1999.

<sup>60</sup> UNDP and Oxford University introduced a Multidimensional Poverty Index in the 2010 edition of UNDP’s *Human Development Report*. The multidimensional poverty index measures critical deprivations at the household level and comprises ten

indicators in the areas of education, health and standard of living. In addition, UNRISD (2010) has formulated an alternative framework to combat poverty and inequality based on three components of an inclusive development strategy: (i) patterns of growth and structural change that create decent jobs, (ii) comprehensive social policies focusing on human rights, social cohesion and democratic governance, and (iii) protection of civil rights.

<sup>61</sup> See UNDP, 2011. The reports also stresses that severe rural poverty is closely associated with the failure of rural policies in the region: while around half of the Arab population lives in rural areas, agriculture accounts for only 15 per cent of the region’s GDP.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. This UNDP report thus recommends a different methodology that “allows poverty lines to vary according to the country’s level of income.”

<sup>63</sup> United Nations, 2012b.

<sup>64</sup> United Nations, 2009a: 154.

<sup>65</sup> Kabeer, 2010:6.

<sup>66</sup> United Nations, 2010a

<sup>67</sup> Saith, 2006:1184.

<sup>68</sup> See United Nations, 2010a.

<sup>69</sup> Antrobus, 2003.

<sup>70</sup> Saith, 2006: 1190.

<sup>71</sup> See Amin, 2006:5.

<sup>72</sup> UNTT, 2012b: 25.

<sup>73</sup> UNTT, 2012b:9.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> UNDP, 2011. The report also shows that the region’s youth employment growth rate was the second highest among developing country regions.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> United Nations and the League of Arab States, 2010. See also UNDP, 2011.

- <sup>79</sup> See UNTT, 2012b.
- <sup>80</sup> United Nations, 2012b.
- <sup>81</sup> See ECA, 2012a.
- <sup>82</sup> See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/>.
- <sup>83</sup> ESCAP, ADB, UNDP, 2012.
- <sup>84</sup> The information provided in this section is based on the ECE 2012 MDG report, which is available from: [www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/publications/oes/UN\\_ECE\\_MDG\\_Report\\_2012.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/publications/oes/UN_ECE_MDG_Report_2012.pdf).
- <sup>85</sup> United Nations, 2010b.
- <sup>86</sup> For more information on the method to calculate the progress towards MDGs, please see [http://www.eclac.cl/publicaciones/xml/5/39995/2010-623-ODM\\_INGLES\\_statisticalannex.pdf](http://www.eclac.cl/publicaciones/xml/5/39995/2010-623-ODM_INGLES_statisticalannex.pdf).
- <sup>87</sup> See ESCWA, 2012b.
- <sup>88</sup> E/ESCWA/SD/2009/Technical Paper.5.
- <sup>89</sup> Arab Mashreq, Arab Maghreb, Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab least developed countries.
- <sup>90</sup> ESCWA, 2011d.
- <sup>91</sup> See Annex I for the respective MDG indicators.
- <sup>92</sup> See also United Nations, 2012b.
- <sup>93</sup> See Easterly (2009).
- <sup>94</sup> Please refer to footnote 20 for the definition of Western Asia for MDG monitoring purposes.
- <sup>95</sup> ESCWA, 2011e, *Regional Initiative for the Development of a Mechanism to Monitor the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals Related to Water and Sanitation in the Arab Region (MDG+)*, E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/4.
- <sup>96</sup> Please refer to footnote 20 for the definition of Western Asia for MDG monitoring purposes.
- <sup>97</sup> There are 50 countries in Southern, East, West and Central Africa classified in the official Millennium Development Goals Indicators website.
- <sup>98</sup> United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 2012.
- <sup>99</sup> ESCWA, 2012b.
- <sup>100</sup> ESCAP, ADB and UNDP, 2012.
- <sup>101</sup> ECLAC, 2010.
- <sup>102</sup> See, for example, ESCWA, 2011c.
- <sup>103</sup> Vandemoortele, 2007.
- <sup>104</sup> Clemens et al., 2004.
- <sup>105</sup> Easterly, 2009.
- <sup>106</sup> See Sicherl, 2004.
- <sup>107</sup> Go and Quijada, 2011.
- <sup>108</sup> Fukuda-Parr and Greenstein, 2010.
- <sup>109</sup> See Hailu and Tsukada, 2011.
- <sup>110</sup> See UNICEF, 2012. Also used in Fukuda-Parr and Greenstein, 2010.
- <sup>111</sup> It is worth noting, however, that data availability for SIDS, especially in the Caribbean and in Oceania subregions, is very limited.
- <sup>112</sup> Please note that for MDG monitoring purposes, Western Asia is different from the ESCWA region. See also footnote 20.
- <sup>113</sup> United Nations, 2012.
- <sup>114</sup> See Watkins, 2008; Manning, 2009.
- <sup>115</sup> See also table 1 in chapter I for more detailed information on ODA allocation among different sectors covering the period between 1980 and 2008.
- <sup>116</sup> See OECD, n.d.
- <sup>117</sup> ESCAP, 2002.
- <sup>118</sup> <http://www.nepad.org>.
- <sup>119</sup> <http://www.ecowas.int/publications/en/macro/srrp.pdf>.
- <sup>120</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/devaccount/projects/2006/0607AL.html>.
- <sup>121</sup> <http://www.aseansec.org/documents/19th%20summit/MDG-Roadmap.pdf>.
- <sup>122</sup> [http://www.saarc-sec.org/uploads/publications/file/TAKING%20SDGs%20FORWARD%20\(saarc-sec-20100616032736.pdf](http://www.saarc-sec.org/uploads/publications/file/TAKING%20SDGs%20FORWARD%20(saarc-sec-20100616032736.pdf).
- <sup>123</sup> See ESCAP, 2012.
- <sup>124</sup> ESCAP, 2011a & 2011b.

- <sup>125</sup> Please refer to footnote 20 for the definition of the MENA region.
- <sup>126</sup> Asia Pacific Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (APCoP-MfDR), 2012.
- <sup>127</sup> UNICEF, 2009; World Health Organization, World Food Programme, United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition and UNICEF, 2007.
- <sup>128</sup> Zohir, 2010; ESCAP, ADB and UNDP, 2012.
- <sup>129</sup> The World Bank, 2004; Janvry, et al., 2004.
- <sup>130</sup> See Jordan and United Nations, 2010 and also Roggemann and Shukri, 2010.
- <sup>131</sup> UNICEF, 2010.
- <sup>132</sup> Lane, 2004.
- <sup>133</sup> Smit, 2012.
- <sup>134</sup> United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), 2011.
- <sup>135</sup> ESCAP, 2010.
- <sup>136</sup> <http://www.unescap.org/stat/>.
- <sup>137</sup> See ESCWA, 2010.
- <sup>138</sup> Capacity of member countries to produce relevant MDG indicators is measured by having 4 or more data points during the period 1990-2011.
- <sup>139</sup> Geneva Plan of Action, First Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, (10-12 December 2003, Geneva). WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/0005, action line “C7”, available from [http://www.itu.int/dms\\_pub/itu-s/md/03/wsis/doc/S03-WSIS-DOC-0005!!MSW-E.doc](http://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/03/wsis/doc/S03-WSIS-DOC-0005!!MSW-E.doc).
- <sup>140</sup> DESA 2012.
- <sup>141</sup> United Nations 2012a.
- <sup>142</sup> See, for example, Sarihan, 2012.
- <sup>143</sup> UNDP, 2011.
- <sup>144</sup> UNDP, 2011. Despite the number of jobs created, simultaneous population growth means that a smaller proportion of the population are actually working.
- <sup>145</sup> ILO, 2012b.
- <sup>146</sup> ILO, 2012a.
- <sup>147</sup> ILO, 2012a.
- <sup>148</sup> ESCWA, 2012a.
- <sup>149</sup> Please refer to footnote 20 for the definition of the MENA region.
- <sup>150</sup> United Nations 2012b. However, the aggregate value is based on only 5 countries. See also ESCWA, 2009.
- <sup>151</sup> ESCWA, 2012b.
- <sup>152</sup> UNDP, 2011.
- <sup>153</sup> ECE, ESCAP, DESA, UNICEF, UNRISD and UN Women, 2012.
- <sup>154</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), 2011.
- <sup>155</sup> UNTT, 2012b, paragraphs 72-79.
- <sup>156</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007; World Bank, 2010b.
- <sup>157</sup> UNDP, 2011.
- <sup>158</sup> DESA, 2012.
- <sup>159</sup> ESCWA, 2011c.
- <sup>160</sup> ECOSOC, 2012.
- <sup>161</sup> UNTT, 2012b.
- <sup>162</sup> UNTT, 2012b.
- <sup>163</sup> Contained in the General Assembly resolution 66/288 of 11 September 2012 entitled “The Future We Want”.
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid., paragraphs 248 and 249 respectively.
- <sup>165</sup> DESA, 2012.
- <sup>166</sup> Together with employment, these are the 15 priority areas of the United Nations’ World Programme of Action for Youth, designed to provide a framework for national action to improve the well-being and livelihood of young people. See General Assembly resolution 50/81 of 13 March 1996 on the World Programme of Action for Youth for the Year 2000 and beyond and resolution 62/126 of 5 February 2008 on Policies and programmes involving youth: youth in the global economy – promoting youth participation in social and economic development.
- <sup>167</sup> Key documents include ECA, 2012b and ECA, 2012c.
- <sup>168</sup> Key documents include ESCAP, 2011c.
- <sup>169</sup> Key documents include ESCWA, 2011a; ESCWA, 2012b; and UNDP, 2011.

- <sup>170</sup> Key documents include ECLAC, 2010 and ECLAC, 2012.
- <sup>171</sup> These priorities do not come from a regional consultation of the post-2015 agenda but from a regional preparatory meeting for the Rio+20 Conference (ECE, 2011b), from a forthcoming publication by the pan-European Regional Consultation Mechanism on the post-2015 agenda (ECE and UNDP, 2013), and from previous MDG reports of the region (ECE, 2011a; ECE, 2012).
- <sup>172</sup> The most widely recognized definition of sustainable development is still the one proposed in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development, popularly called the Brundtland Commission. That Commission had defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is now generally held that there are three pillars to the concept, namely economic sustainability, social sustainability and environmental sustainability.
- <sup>173</sup> UNDP, 2010.
- <sup>174</sup> Western Asia here is used to refer to the 17 member countries of ESCWA.
- <sup>175</sup> ESCWA, 2011b.
- <sup>176</sup> See, in particular, UNDP, 2011:21, Box 1 on human deprivation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- <sup>177</sup> The *World Risk Report* is published annually by Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft (Alliance Development Works). The report includes the World Risk Index, which attempts to capture the risk to natural hazards that countries face. The index combines indicators in four areas: (i) exposure, (ii) susceptibility, (iii) coping and (iv) adaptation.
- <sup>178</sup> Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.
- <sup>179</sup> Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, Liberia, Mozambique, Niger and Sierra Leone.
- <sup>180</sup> Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu.
- <sup>181</sup> Of 16.7 million newly displaced in 2009, 87 per cent were in Asia, with the rest almost equally located in Africa and the Americas. (IDMC, 2011: 8).
- <sup>182</sup> Eleven of the world's 19 megacities (cities with population > 10 million), including 6 of the world's 10 largest cities, are in Asia and the Pacific.
- <sup>183</sup> See ESCWA, 2011c.
- <sup>184</sup> Western Asia is used here to refer to the 17 member countries of ESCWA.
- <sup>185</sup> ILO, 2012b.
- <sup>186</sup> See, for example, ECE, ESCAP, DESA, UNICEF, UNRISD and UN Women (2012), "Addressing inequalities: The heart of the post-2015 agenda and the future we want for all", UNTT Thematic Think Piece, available from [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam\\_undf/them\\_tp.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/them_tp.shtml).
- <sup>187</sup> United Nations General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000 on *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, paragraph 6 (see also paragraphs 13, 24 and 25).
- <sup>188</sup> See DESA, UNDP, UNESCO, 2012, "Governance and Development", UNTT Thematic Think Piece, available from [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam\\_undf/them\\_tp.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/them_tp.shtml).
- <sup>189</sup> ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA, 2011, *The Regional Dimension of Development and the United Nations System*, United Nations, New York, p.5.
- <sup>190</sup> Ibid., paragraph 14.