



ARAB MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS ATLAS

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Over the past years, tremendous progress has been made toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), specifically in universal primary education, eliminating gender disparities in primary education, increasing access to safe drinking water and reducing the consumption of all ozone-depleting substances.

However, Arab countries require further concerted efforts to improve the situation in such areas as the health and well-being of children and mothers, the early marriage of girls, employment of both women and men, the inclusion of women in decision-making, improvement of sanitation facilities and reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide. This will require, among other things, policy reforms, improved infrastructure and delivery of primary health-care services, increased aid and

trade access, including sustainable support from international financial institutions, in particular to the least developed countries.

With only five years left before the MDG target, there is an urgent need to increase investment in the neglected half of the Arab population; girls and women across the region and in particular, in areas where the lack of parity between women and men is significant.

The Arab MDG Atlas, based on the United Nations Statistics Division 2010 database, provides readers with quick visual comparative mapping of indicators and trends over the past years with brief descriptive analysis of progress and regress. It also highlights needed effort, good practices and achievements made in attaining national targets.

GOAL 1 ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

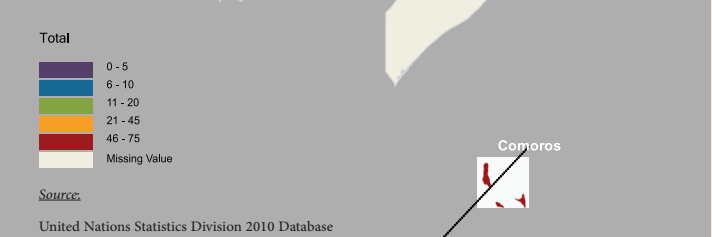
Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption

The Arab region has failed to reduce the percentage of the general population living below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption. In recent years malnutrition increased at the population level in three countries; Yemen experienced a small increase compared to that witnessed by Palestine as a result of the conflict situation there, while malnutrition significantly increased in Comoros.



Undernourishment is a symptom of poverty and a problem which persists from one generation to the next. The Arab Mashreq and Maghreb countries have had low levels of undernourishment since 1990. Kuwait has made tremendous progress in this field and has decreased levels of undernourishment to match those attained by other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries since the Gulf War in 1990. However, the recent food crisis has complicated efforts to fight hunger and malnutrition.

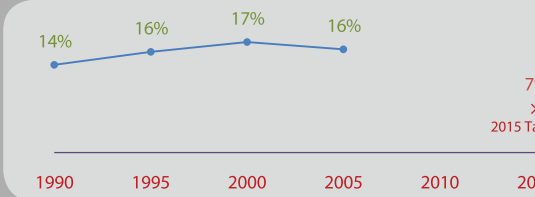


GOAL 1 ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Children under age 5 moderately or severely underweight, percentage

The Arab region has failed to lower levels of child malnutrition which have stagnated at 16 per cent since 1995. Malnutrition among children in the least developed countries (LDCs) has increased to 36 per cent, in spite of a decline in both Mauritania and the Sudan. Both Lebanon and, at a higher rate, Morocco, have witnessed increased child malnutrition over the years. It is worth noting that Oman recorded a high malnutrition rate in comparison to the countries of the Maghreb and Mashreq.



The Arab Mashreq and Maghreb subregions have succeeded in lowering the prevalence of underweight children. In contrast, the Arab LDCs have been suffering from acute child malnutrition as a result of a combination of factors, including rising food prices, drought and conflict. Palestine had the lowest under-five child malnutrition levels of all Arab countries, at less than 5 per cent. Nevertheless, in Gaza, people continue to struggle for survival under military occupation.

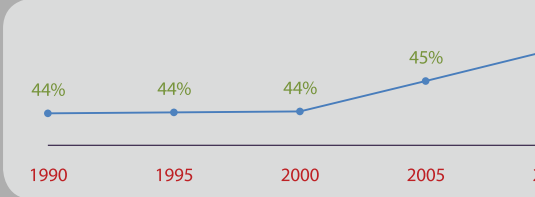


GOAL 1 ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people

Employment-to-population ratio, both sexes, percentage

Despite the slight increase in the employment ratio over the past ten years, labour markets in most Arab countries are characterized by widespread unemployment, in particular for young people and women. There has been a slight increase in ratios of women in employment while employment of men has declined or, at best, stagnated in most countries. Women still face barriers to employment and the gender gap remains significant (23 per cent of women compared to 69 per cent of men).



Although the ratio of employment to population in Algeria for both sexes is low, recent figures indicate that, in contrast to men, the ratio for women has doubled since 1990. It is also interesting to note that employment of women has increased in both Qatar and the United Arab Emirates resulting in the highest rates among Arab countries. In the LDCs, Somalia and Comoros, the employment-to-population ratio for women is more than 50 per cent.

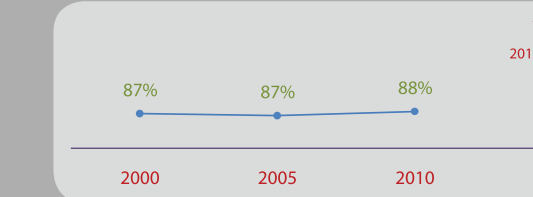


GOAL 2 ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

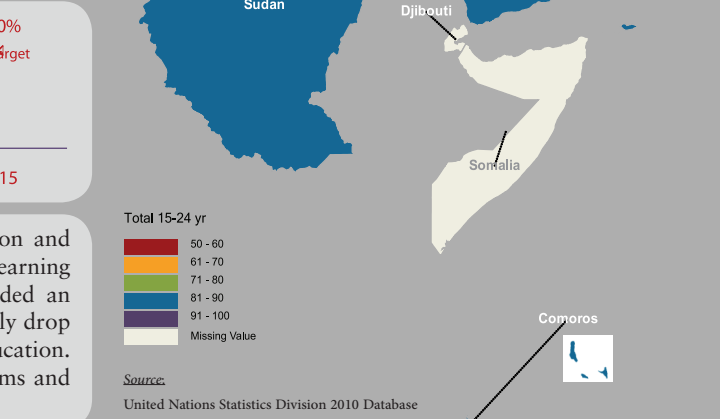
Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Literacy rates of 15-24 year olds, both sexes, percentage

Youth literacy is higher than adult literacy as a result of expanded access to formal schooling. The gains made in enrolment and survival rates over the years have been translated into improved youth literacy rates. High rates are recorded in all countries with the exception of Mauritania and Morocco.



Dramatic improvements in youth literacy have occurred in the Arab region and significant progress has been made over the years. However, across the region, the target of 30 per cent female representation in national parliaments remains a distant objective. Among Arab countries, the highest proportions of seats held by women in national parliaments are in Iraq, Mauritania, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates, while Yemeni women hold less than one per cent of seats. In Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia women do not hold any seats.

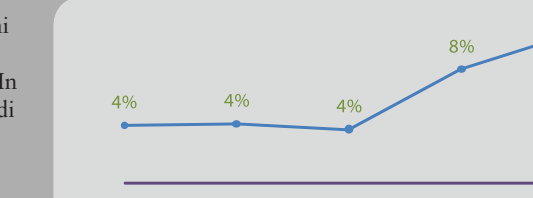


GOAL 3 PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

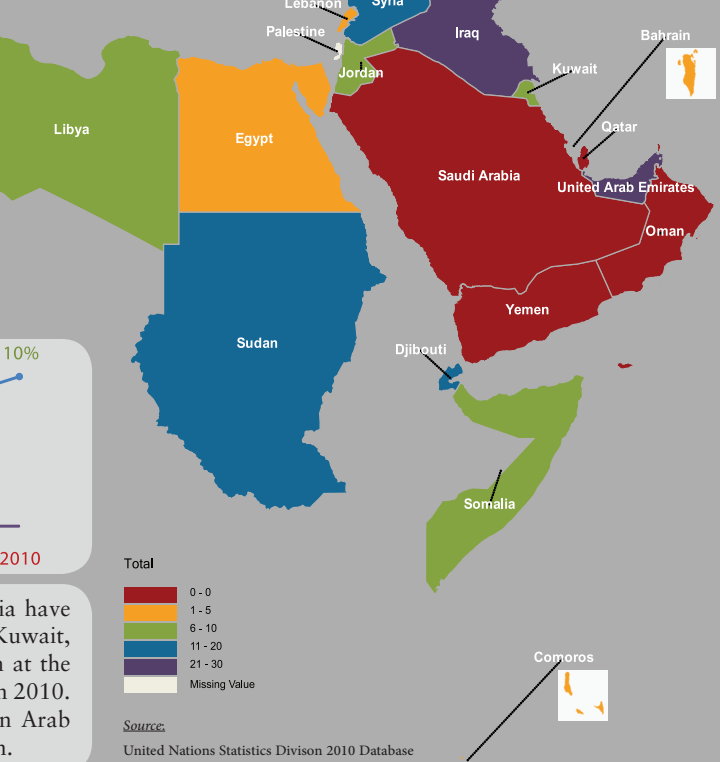
Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

Seats held by women in national parliaments, percentage

The number of seats held by women in national parliaments has increased over the years. However, across the region, the target of 30 per cent female representation in national parliaments remains a distant objective. Among Arab countries, the highest proportions of seats held by women in national parliaments are in Iraq, Mauritania, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates, while Yemeni women hold less than one per cent of seats. In Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia women do not hold any seats.



Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, the Sudan and Tunisia have adopted a quota system to accelerate the de facto equality of women. In Kuwait, the ratification of a law to acknowledge equality between women and men at the ballot box resulted in the presence of women in parliament for the first time in 2010. Nevertheless, cultural attitudes and stereotypes about the role of women in Arab society remain the primary obstacles to the political empowerment of women.

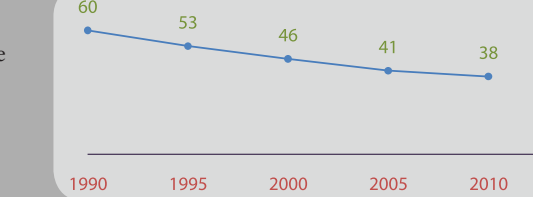


GOAL 4 REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

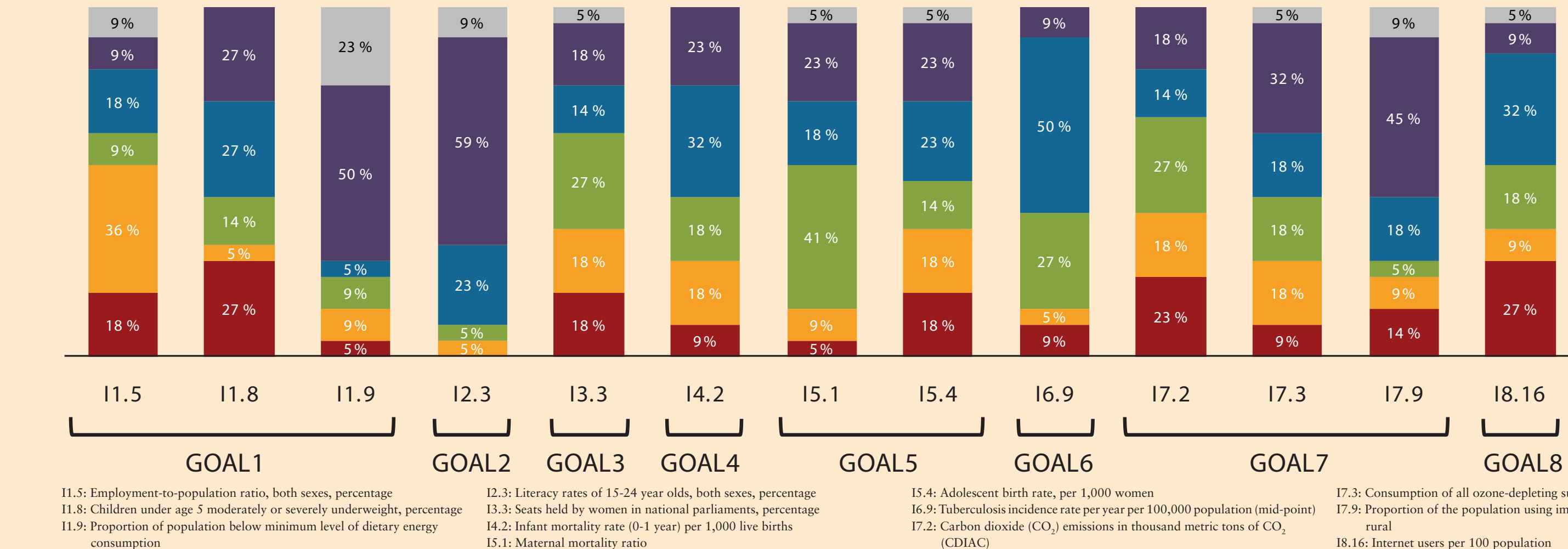
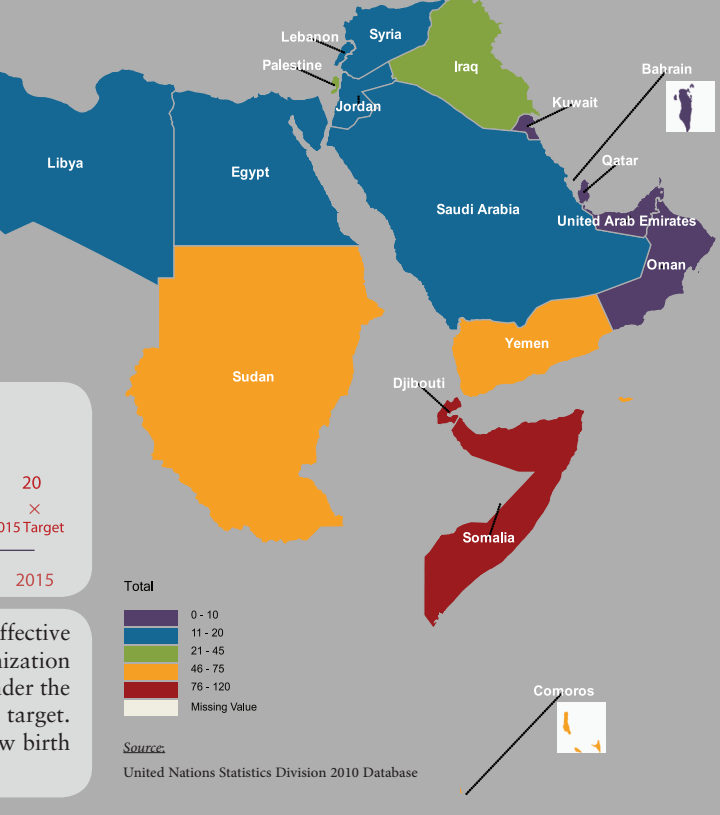
Target 4.A: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Infant mortality rate (0-1 year) per 1,000 live births

A significant decrease in infant mortality has occurred in the Arab region across all countries and reflects the increased interventions in this sphere undertaken by countries in recent years. Concerted efforts to ensure that every child is immunized are, however, still required in the LDCs and in particular the infant mortality rate is the highest in the region. Recent data show that immunization rates in Iraq and Lebanon have deteriorated.



Immunization is widely considered to be one of the most successful and cost-effective public health interventions. Progress achieved in the region towards full immunization coverage has translated into lower mortality rates for infants and children under the age of five years. The region is close to attaining its universal immunization target. More efforts are needed to address the causes of infant mortality, such as low birth weight, diarrhoea and other infectious diseases.

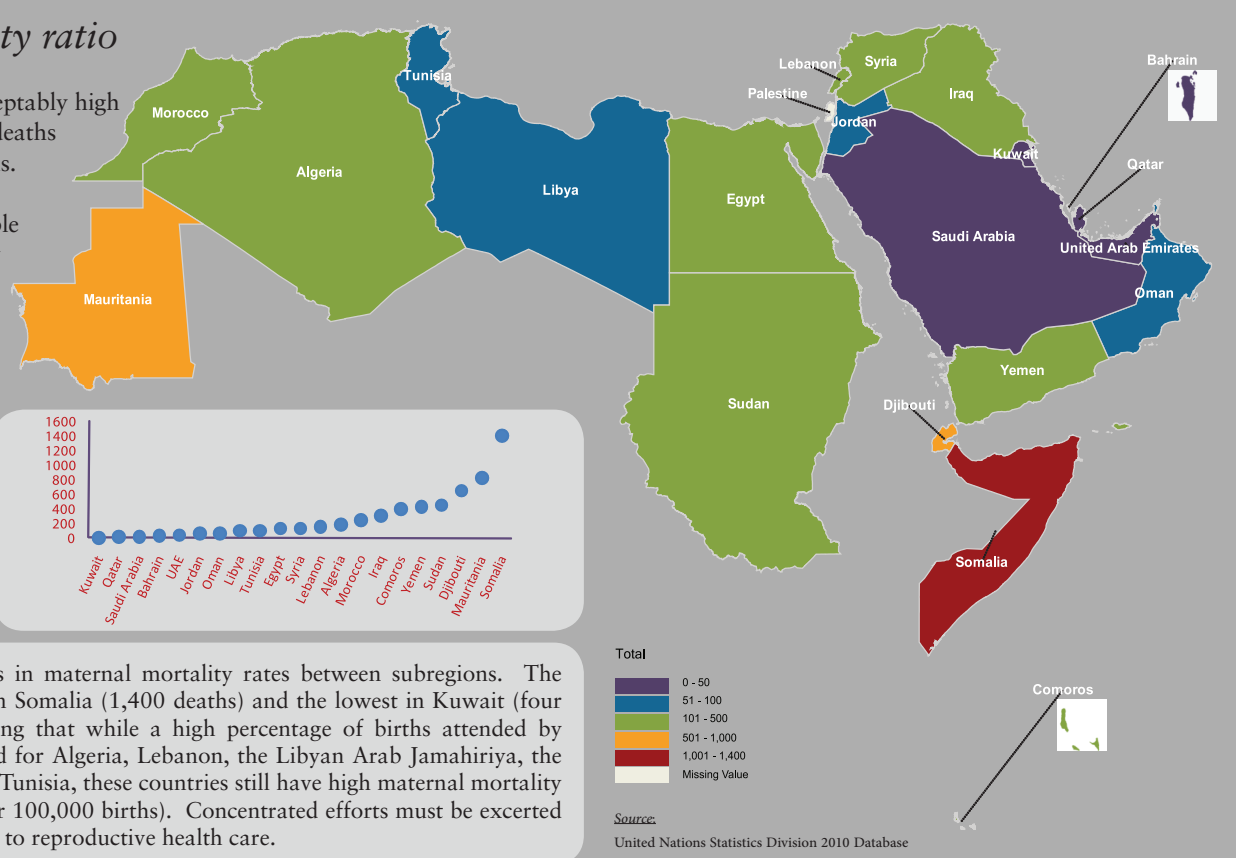


GOAL 5 IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Target 5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Maternal mortality ratio

Recent data indicate unacceptably high maternal mortality at 283 deaths for every 100,000 live births. The risk of a woman dying from treatable or preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth is a major concern in the Arab LDCs where the highest rates are 594 deaths for every 100,000 live births, 27 times the rate of the GCC countries. More than half of the countries have exceeded 100 deaths in maternal mortality.



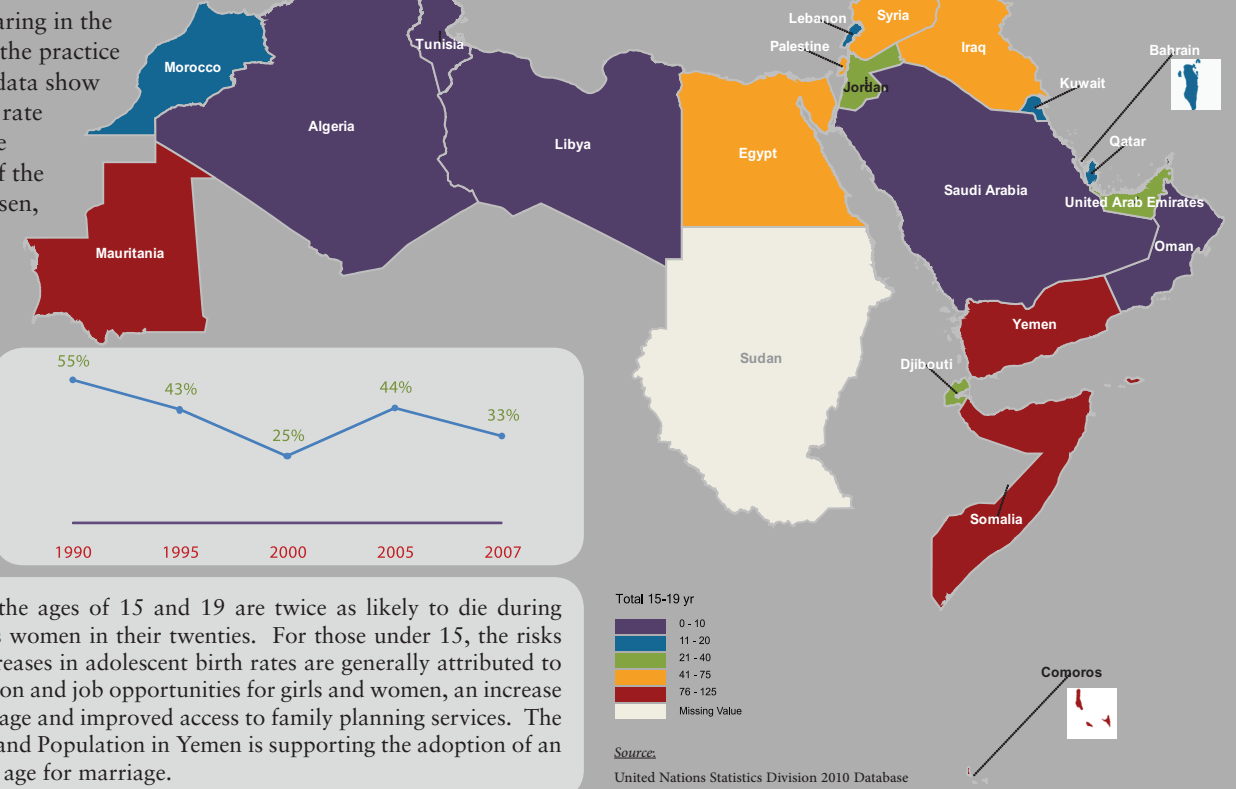
There are clear disparities in maternal mortality rates between subregions. The highest rate is recorded in Somalia (1,400 deaths) and the lowest in Kuwait (four deaths). It is worth noting that while a high percentage of births attended by professionals was recorded for Algeria, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia, these countries still have high maternal mortality ratios (over 100 deaths per 100,000 births). Concentrated efforts must be exerted to achieve universal access to reproductive health care.

GOAL 5 IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Target 5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Adolescent birth rate, per 1,000 women

High rates of early childbearing in the Arab countries result from the practice of child marriage. Recent data show that the adolescent fertility rate has gradually declined since 1990, with the exception of the Arab LDCs, where it has risen, especially in Comoros, in addition to Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Palestine shows a small decline in recent years, although the overall rate remained relatively high. Algeria, Tunisia and the Gulf countries show a notable decrease over the years.



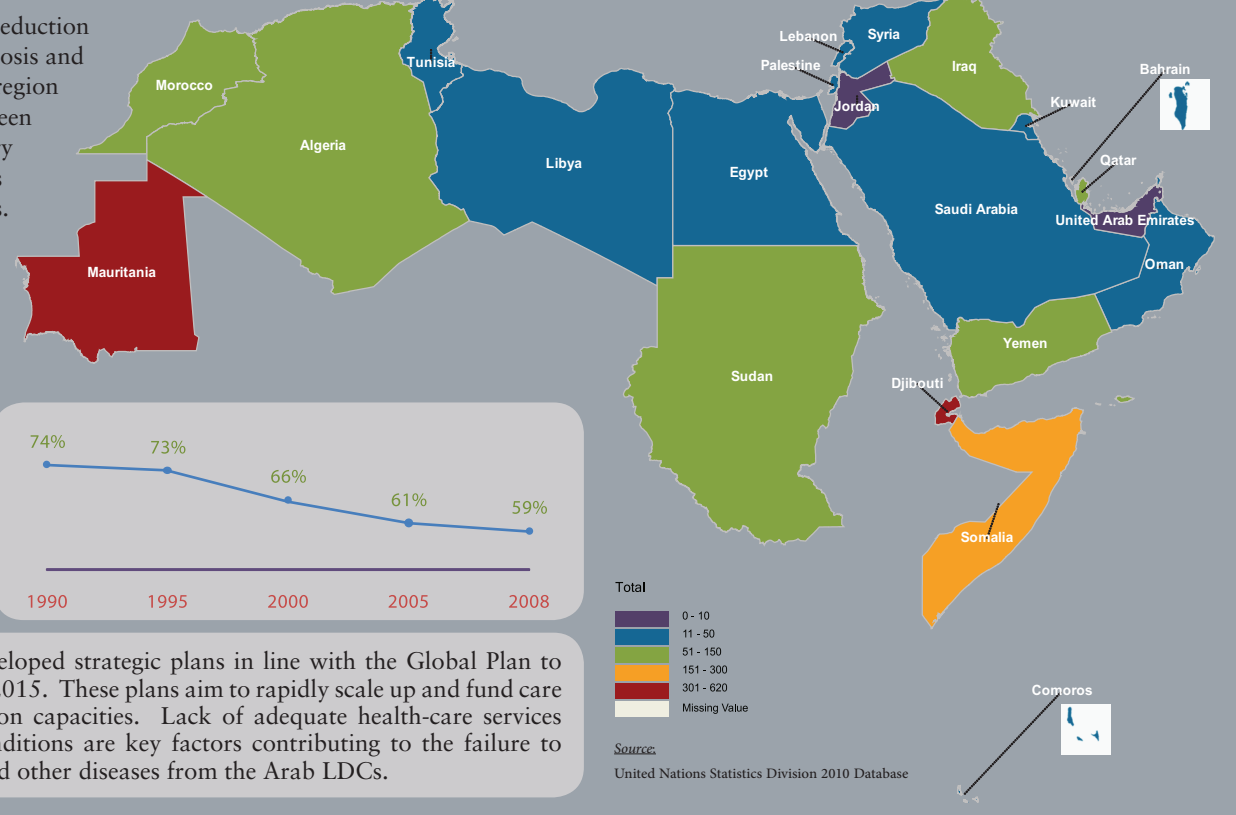
Adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are twice as likely to be during pregnancy or childbirth as women in their twenties. For those under 15, the risks are five times higher. Decreases in adolescent birth rates are generally attributed to improved access to education and job opportunities for girls and women, an increase in the average age at marriage and improved access to family planning services. The Ministry of Public Health and Population in Yemen is supporting the adoption of an act to define the minimum age for marriage.

GOAL 6 COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

Target 6.C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Tuberculosis incidence rate per year per 100,000 population (mid-point)

There has been an overall reduction in the incidence of tuberculosis and related deaths in the Arab region since 1990. Progress has been more variable at the country level, however, where it has stagnated in most countries. Certain countries have recorded a surge in the number of deaths from tuberculosis. The highest death rates were in Djibouti and Mauritania. Yemen recorded the highest decline in the incidence rate since 1990s, achieved through concerted efforts against the disease.



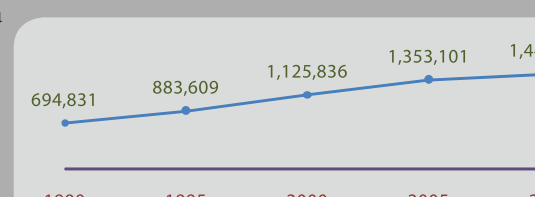
Arab countries have developed strategic plans in line with the Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis 2006-2015. These plans aim to rapidly scale up and fund care services and case-detection capacities. Lack of adequate health-care services and adverse security conditions are key factors contributing to the failure to eliminate tuberculosis and other diseases from the Arab LDCs.

GOAL 7 ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

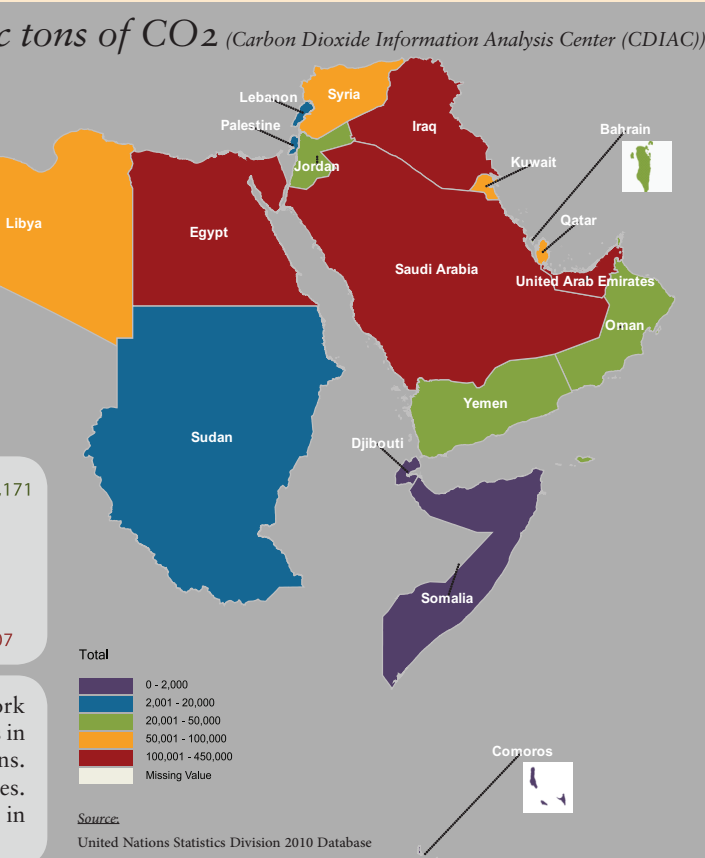
Target 7.A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in thousand metric tons of CO₂

Almost all the countries in the Arab region have increased their carbon dioxide emissions since the early 1990s. Emission levels from the GCC countries, which were already high in 1990, have increased significantly in recent years. The countries with the highest emission levels in the Arab region, according to latest available data, are Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.



Arab countries have established national climate change committees to work toward lowering emission levels, while certain countries have taken concrete steps in adopting renewable energy policies and targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. These countries include Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates. Yemen, for example, is promoting large-scale renewable energy applications in remote areas.

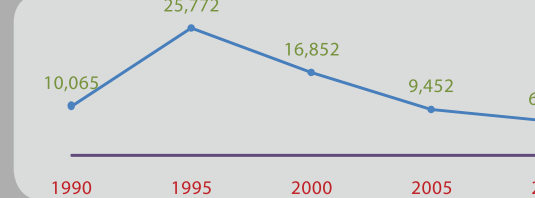


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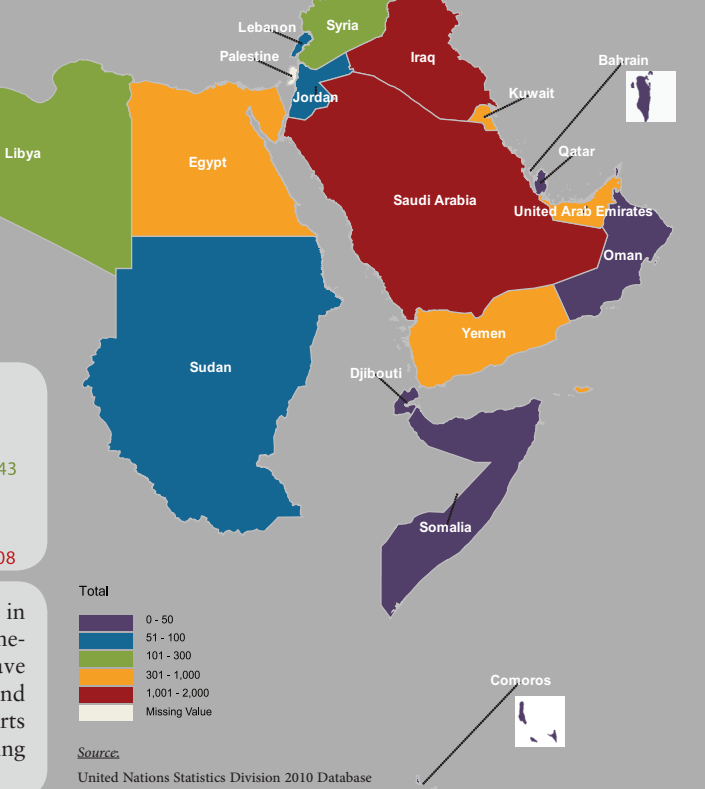
Target 7.A: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Consumption of all ozone-depleting substances in Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP) metric tons

Recent data show that the Arab region has significantly reduced its consumption of ozone-depleting substances since the early 1990s (from 10,065 to 6,843 metric tons). Significant reductions were recorded in all countries with the exception of Iraq, mainly attributable to chlorofluorocarbon production from its refrigeration and foam industries.



Iraq set a target of 1 January 2010 to eliminate ozone-depleting substances in accordance with the Montreal Protocol, through the introduction of new, ozone-friendly technologies. All Arab countries, with the exception of Palestine, have signed and ratified the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Efforts towards reducing the illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances are being exerted by the countries in the region.

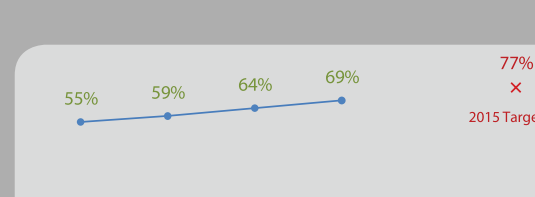


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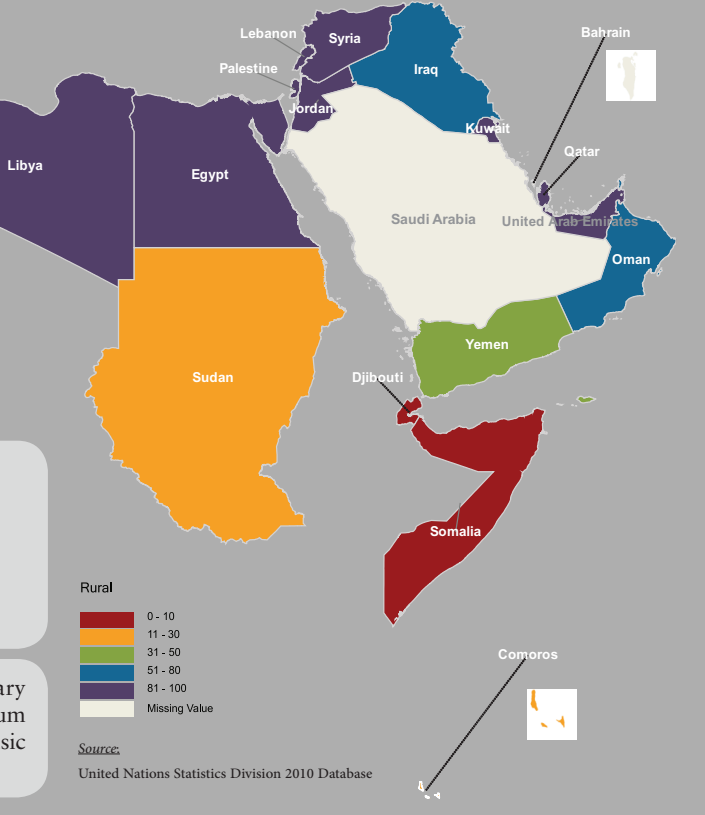
Target 7.C: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

Proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities, rural

Across the Arab region, sanitation poses a much greater challenge than access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas. Tremendous efforts have been exerted to improve years. Significant progress has been recorded in a regional increase in the proportion of the population using improved facilities since 1990. Significant progress has also been recorded in rural areas of Comoros, Morocco and Yemen.



Despite significant gains made by most countries, if current levels of unsanitary conditions in rural areas persist, the region may fail to meet this Millennium Development Goal target. Further concerted efforts to improve access to basic sanitation are needed in Comoros, Mauritania, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen.

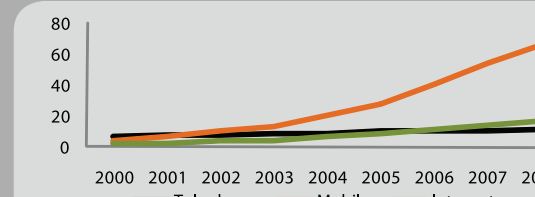


GOAL 8 DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Target 8.F: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Internet users per 100 population

A digital divide persists between rich and poor countries in the use of information and communications technology in the region. The predominant reason for this appears to be the high cost of mobile and Internet services relative to average income, most evident in Iraq, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Sudan and LDCs. Among the GCC countries, Oman has the lowest number of Internet users per 100 people.



There is clear evidence that many people in the Arab region have welcomed and adopted new communication technologies. Growth has been rapid and many who were previously unconnected are now fully connected. The increase in Internet use in the region has more than quadrupled, from four users per 100 inhabitants in 2002 to 17 per 100 inhabitants in 2008.

