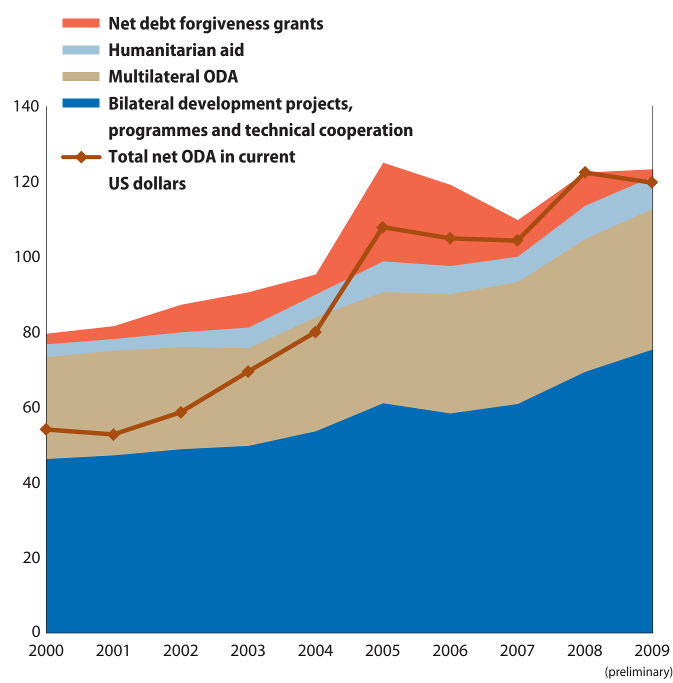
Goal 8

Develop a global partnership for development

Aid continues to rise despite the financial crisis, but Africa is short-changed

Official development assistance (ODA) from developed countries, 2000-2009 (Constant 2008 United States dollars and current United States dollars)



In 2009, net disbursements of official development assistance (ODA) amounted to $119.6 billion, or 0.31 per cent of the combined national income of developed countries. In real terms, this is a slight increase (of 0.7 per cent) compared to 2008 even though, measured in current US dollars, ODA fell by over 2 per cent—from $122.3 billion in 2008.

If debt relief is excluded, the increase in ODA in real terms from 2008 to 2009 was 6.8 per cent. If humanitarian aid is also excluded, bilateral aid rose by 8.5 per cent in real terms, as donors continued to scale up their core development projects and programmes. Most of the increase was in new lending (20.6 per cent), but grants also rose (by 4.6 per cent, excluding debt relief).

At the Gleneagles Group of Eight (G-8) Summit and the UN World Summit in 2005, donors committed to increasing their aid. Many of these pledges were made in terms of a share of gross national income (GNI). Based on expectations of future GNI, these pledges, combined with other commitments, would have lifted total ODA from $80 billion in 2004 to $130 billion in 2010 (at constant 2004 prices). However, the slowdown in economic growth since 2008 has reduced the previously expected level of GNI in the developed countries and the dollar value of the commitments for 2010 to around

$126 billion (at constant 2004 prices). Moreover, the economic slowdown has put pressure on government budgets in the developed countries. While the majority of the initial commitments remain in force, some large donors have reduced or postponed the pledges they made for 2010. On the basis of current 2010 budget proposals, as well as the lower GNI forecasts, total ODA for 2010 is projected to be $108 billion (at 2004 prices).

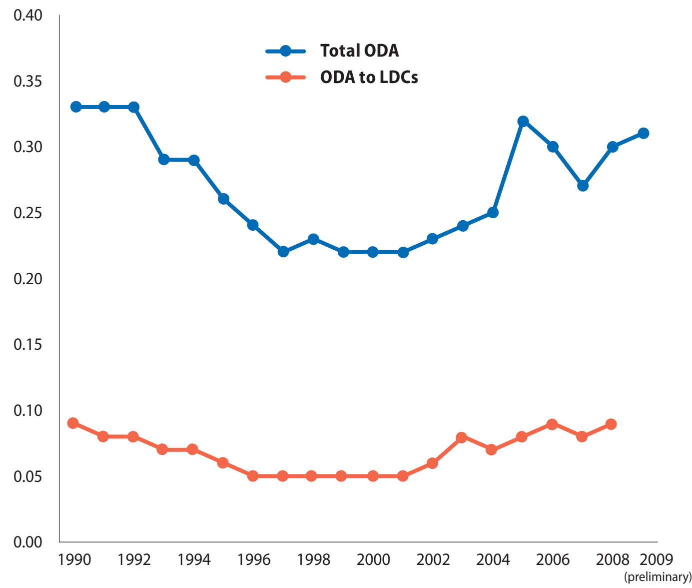
The shortfall in aid affects Africa in particular. At the 2005 Gleneagles Summit, G-8 members projected that their commitments, combined with those of other donors, would double ODA to Africa by 2010. Preliminary data for 2009 show that bilateral ODA to Africa as a whole rose by 3 per cent in real terms. For sub-Saharan Africa, bilateral aid increased by 5.1 per cent in real terms over 2008. It is estimated that Africa will receive only about $11 billion out of the $25 billion increase envisaged at Gleneagles, due mainly to the underperformance of some European donors who earmark large shares of their aid to Africa.

TARGET

Address the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing states

Only five donor countries have reached the UN target for official aid

Net official development assistance from OECD-DAC countries as a proportion of donors' gross national income, 1990-2009 (Percentage)



Aid remains well below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for most donors. In 2009, the only countries to reach or exceed the target were Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The largest donors by volume in 2009 were the United States, followed by France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Japan.

This year is a milestone for European Union members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In 2005, DAC-EU member states agreed to reach a collective total of 0.56 per cent of GNI in net ODA in 2010, with a minimum country target of 0.51 per cent.

Some countries will achieve or even surpass that goal: Sweden, with the world's highest ODA as a percentage of GNI (1.01 per cent), is followed by Luxembourg (1 per cent), Denmark (0.83 per cent), the Netherlands (0.8 per cent), Belgium (0.7 per cent), the United Kingdom (0.6 per cent), Finland (0.56 per cent), Ireland (0.52 per cent) and Spain (0.51 per cent).

But others are unlikely to reach the target: ODA as a percentage of GNI is estimated at between 0.44 and 0.48 per cent for France, 0.40 for Germany, 0.37 for Austria, 0.34 for Portugal, 0.21 for Greece, and 0.20 for Italy.

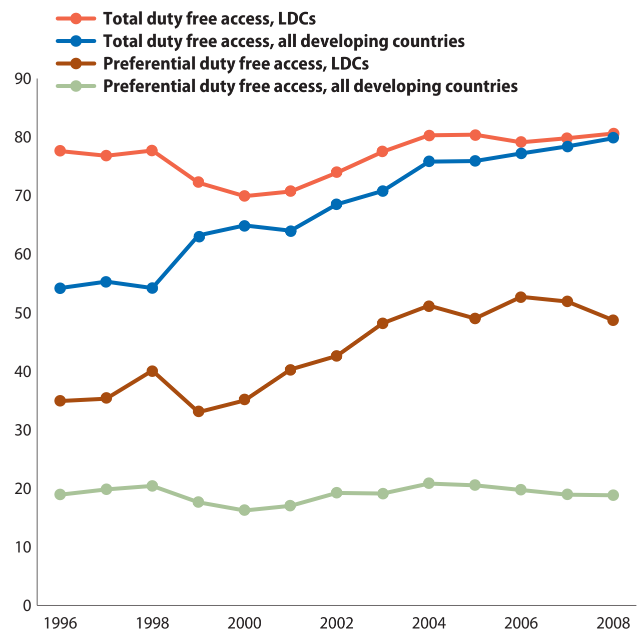
This year is also special for DAC-EU donors because it represents the midpoint between their 2005 commitments and the 2015 target date for meeting the 0.7 per cent GNI target.

Aid concentrates increasingly on the poorest countries, with the least developed countries (LDCs) receiving about a third of donors' total aid flows. In 2007-2008, out of an average total of $71.6 billion of bilateral ODA that was allocated for specific purposes, $15.2 billion focused on achievement of MDG 3—the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

TARGET
Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system

Developing countries gain greater access to the markets of developed countries

Proportion of developed country imports from developing countries and from the least developed countries (LDCs) admitted free of duty and admitted free of duty while their competitors' products were subject to a tariff under MFN (preferential duty free access), 1996-2008 (Percentage)

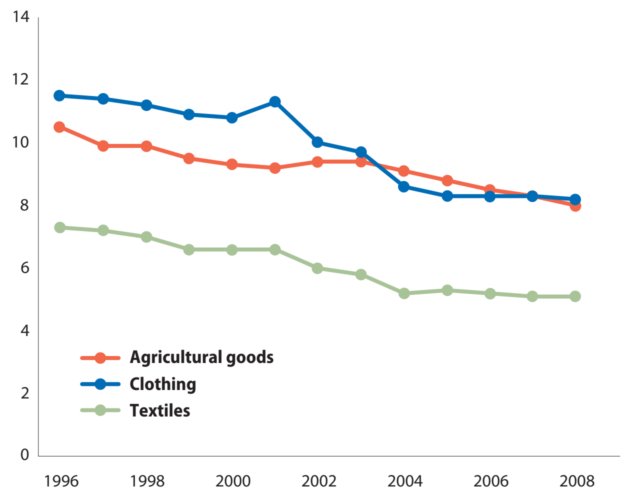


Over the last decade, developing countries and LDCs have gained greater access to the markets of developed countries. The proportion of imports (excluding arms and oil) by developed countries from all developing countries admitted free of duty reached almost 80 per cent in 2008—up from 54 per cent in 1998. For the LDCs, this proportion increased only marginally from 78 per cent in 1998 to almost 81 per cent in 2008.

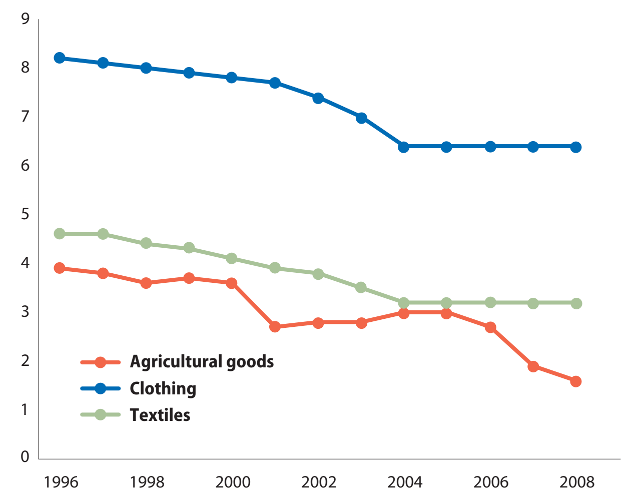
For the developing countries as a whole, increased market access is attributable mainly to the elimination of tariffs under 'most favoured nation' (MFN) treatment, notably before 2004. Since then, no significant tariff reduction has been made by developed countries in terms of MFN treatment.

Least developed countries benefit most from tariff reductions, especially on their agricultural products

Developed countries' average tariffs on imports on key products from developing countries, 1996-2008 (Percentage)



Developed countries' average tariffs on imports on key products from least developed countries (LDCs), 1996-2008 (Percentage)



Despite preferences, developed countries' tariffs on imports of agricultural products, textiles and clothing from developing countries remained between 5 per cent and 8 per cent in 2008 and were only 2 to 3 percentage points lower than in 1998. However, least developed countries continue to benefit from larger tariff reductions, especially for their agricultural products. Preferential tariffs on agricultural imports from LDCs are 1.6 per cent (versus 8 per cent for other developing countries), though tariffs on clothing and textiles from LDCs are only 2 to 3 percentage points lower than those for developing countries as a group.

Reflecting the advantages over other competitors that preferential tariffs created for LDCs, these countries have increasingly concentrated their exports on products in which they have high preference margins. Further liberalization of the developed countries' trade policies under the Doha Development Agenda would be beneficial for developing countries overall, but it would erode the preferential advantages currently enjoyed by LDCs. However, the preferential treatment granted to LDCs is largely unilateral and the Doha agreement would have the advantage of consolidating these arrangements. In addition, it is expected that preference erosion would be addressed through special implementation procedures within the Doha Development Agenda and through dedicated Aid for Trade.

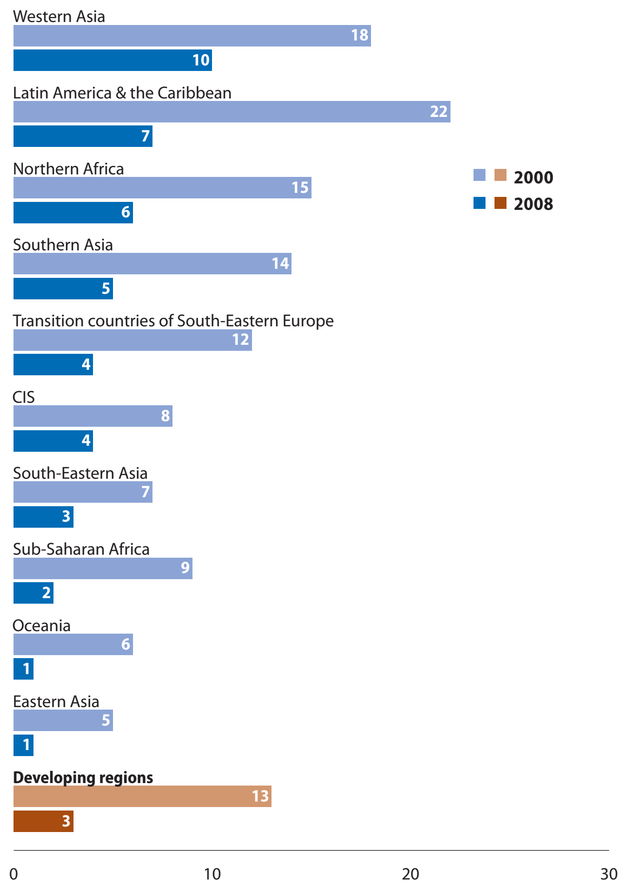
For the developing countries in general, the main benefits expected from the Doha agreement with respect to access to the markets of developed countries (where most average tariffs are already low) would be the reduction of tariff peaks in agriculture, textile and clothing and the lowering of market-distorting subsidies in agriculture. By reducing high tariffs more than proportionally, the Doha agreement would also decrease the widespread 'escalation' of tariffs (namely the higher tariffs that are applied as the degree of processing of a product increases) that occurs in many instances in both the agriculture and non-agriculture sectors.

In 2008/2009, the financial crisis caused a drop in the value and volume of trade for almost all developing countries. LDCs were especially adversely affected by the drop in the international prices of oil and minerals, their main exports. The value of their oil exports declined by 46 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2008 and continued to drop in early 2009. Despite a recovery in commodity prices starting in the second quarter of 2009, developing countries still suffered a 31 per cent decline in the value of their exports in 2009 (compared to a world average drop of 23 per cent). Faced with this setback, the multilateral trading system played an important role in preventing a widespread retreat into protectionism.

TARGET
Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt

Debt burdens ease for developing countries and remain well below historical levels

External debt service payments as a proportion of export revenues, 2000 and 2008 (Percentage)



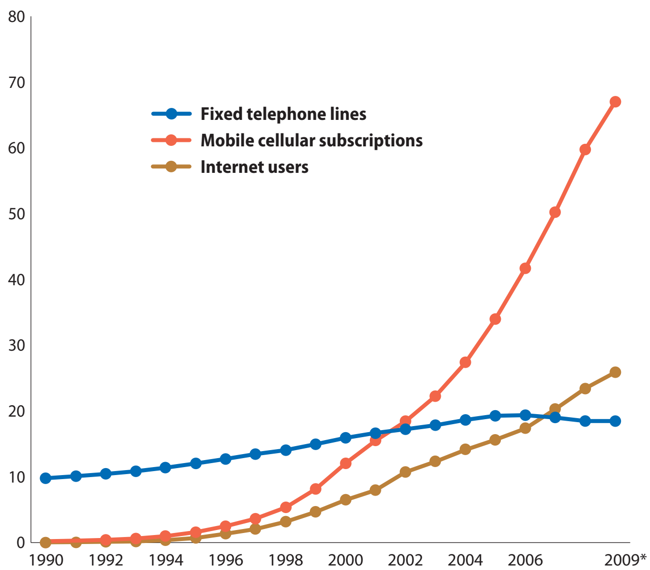
A country's external debt burden affects its creditworthiness and vulnerability to economic shocks. Better debt management, the expansion of trade and, for the poorest countries, substantial debt relief have reduced the burden of debt service. Despite the setback to exports caused by the global economic crisis, the ratio of debt service to exports remained stable or again fell in most developing regions in 2008. Between 2007 and 2008, the ratio increased only in Southern Asia, from 4.8 to 5.4, and in the countries of the CIS, from 3.1 to 3.9. Despite further losses of export earnings in 2009 and, for some countries, declining growth, debt burdens are likely to remain well below historical levels.

Forty countries are eligible for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. Of these, 35 countries have reached the 'decision point' stage in the process and have had future debt payments reduced by $57 billion; 28 countries that have reached their 'completion point' have received additional assistance of $25 billion under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. The debt burdens of countries included in HIPC initiative are below the average for all least developed countries.

TARGET
In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Demand grows for information and communications technology

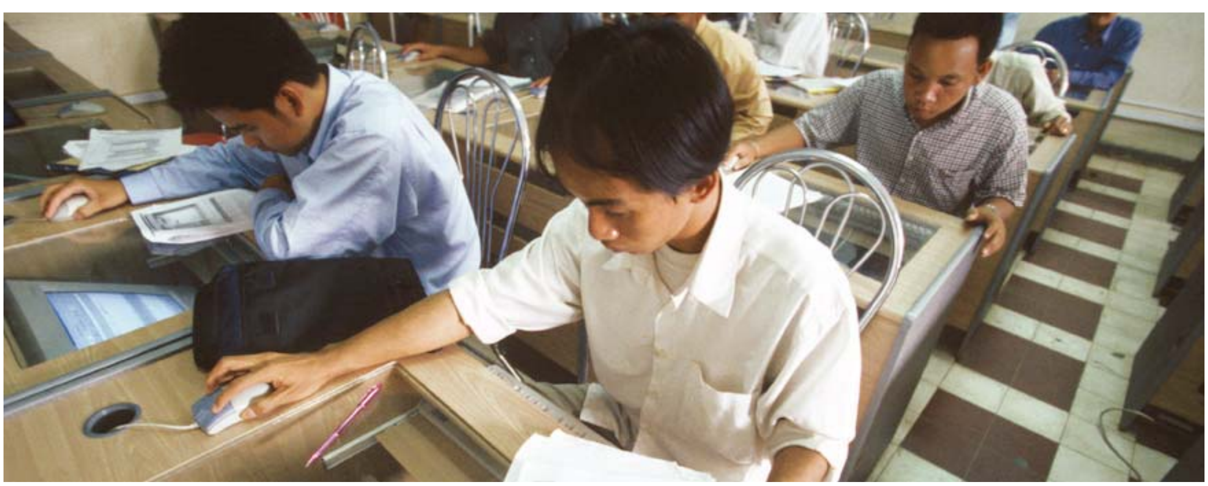
Number of fixed telephone lines, mobile cellular subscriptions and Internet users per 100 population, world, 1990-2009



Note: * Data for 2009 are estimates.

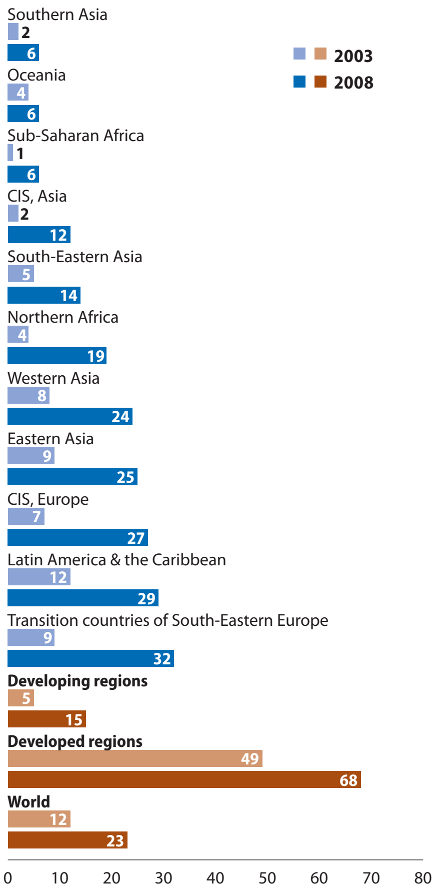
Despite the recent economic downturn, use of information and communications technology (ICT) continues to grow worldwide. By the end of 2009, global subscriptions to mobile cellular services had ballooned to an estimated 4.6 billion—equivalent to one mobile cellular subscription for 67 out of every 100 people. Growth in mobile telephony remains strongest in the developing world, where, by end-2009, mobile penetration had passed the 50 per cent mark.

Mobile telephony is offering new and critical communications opportunities to regions that used to be without access to ICT. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, a region where fixed telephone line penetration remains at around 1 per cent, mobile penetration has well exceeded 30 per cent. Mobile technology is also increasingly being used for non-voice applications, including text messaging, m-banking and disaster management, and its role as a development tool is widely recognized.



Access to the World Wide Web is still closed to the majority of the world's people

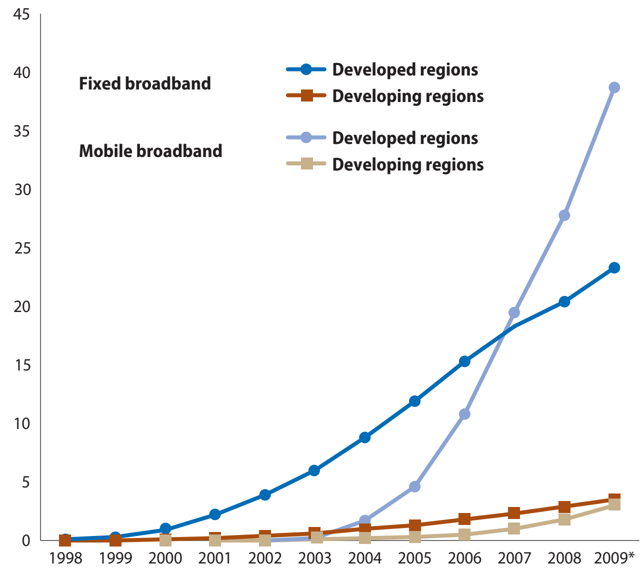
Number of Internet users per 100 population, 2003 and 2008



Internet use has also continued to expand, albeit at a slower pace over the last year. By the end of 2008, 23 per cent of the world's population (or 1.6 billion people) were using the Internet. In the developed regions, the percentage remains much higher than in the developing world, where only 1 in 6 people are online.

A large gap separates those with high-speed Internet connections, mostly in developed nations, and dial-up users

Fixed broadband subscriptions per 100 population, 1998-2009, and mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 population, 2000-2009



Note: * Data for 2009 are estimates.

A challenge in bringing more people online in developing countries is the limited availability of broadband networks. Many of the most effective development applications of ICT, such as telemedicine, e-commerce, e-banking and e-government, are only available through a high-speed Internet connection. But a significant divide exists between those who enjoy fast access to an online world increasingly rich in multimedia content and those still struggling with slow, shared dial-up links.

By the end of 2008, fixed broadband penetration in the developing world averaged less than 3 per cent and was heavily concentrated in a few countries. China—the largest fixed broadband market in the world—accounts for about half of the 200 million fixed broadband subscriptions. In most least developed countries, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions is still negligible; service remains prohibitively expensive and inaccessible to most people. However, the introduction of high-speed wireless broadband networks is expected to increase the number of Internet users in developing countries in the near future.


100 %
001809
50

A note to the reader

Measuring progress towards the MDGs

Progress towards the eight Millennium Development Goals is measured through 21 targets and 60 official indicators.[1] This report presents an accounting to date of how far the world has come in meeting the goals using data available as of May 2010.[2]

Most of the MDG targets have a deadline of 2015, and 1990 is the baseline against which progress is gauged. When relevant and available, data for 2000 are also presented, to describe changes since the Millennium Declaration was signed. Country data are aggregated at the subregional and regional levels to show overall advances over time. Although the aggregate figures are a convenient way to track progress, the situation of individual countries within a given region may vary significantly from regional averages. Data for individual countries, along with the composition of all regions and subregions, are available at http://mdgs.un.org.

The basis for this analysis

Regional and subregional figures presented in this report are compiled by members of the United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG). In general, the figures are weighted averages of country data, using the population of reference as a weight. For each indicator, individual agencies were designated as official providers of data and as leaders in developing methodologies for data collection and analysis (see inside front cover for a list of contributing organizations).

Data are typically drawn from official statistics provided by governments. This is accomplished through periodic data collection by ministries and national statistical offices around the world. To fill data gaps, which occur frequently, many of the indicators are supplemented by or derived exclusively from data collected through surveys sponsored and carried out by international agencies. These include many of the health indicators, which are compiled, for the most part, from Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS).

In some cases, countries may have more recent data that have not yet become available to the relevant specialized agency. In other cases, the responsible international agencies must estimate missing values or make adjustments to national data to ensure international comparability. Data from international sources, therefore, often differ from those available within countries.

The United Nations Statistics Division maintains the official website of the IAEG and its database (http://mdgs.un.org). In an effort to improve transparency, the country data series in the database are given colour codes to indicate whether the figures are estimated or provided by national agencies; they are also accompanied by metadata with a detailed description of how the indicators are produced and of the methodologies used for regional aggregations.

[1] The complete list of goals, targets and indicators is available at mdgs.un.org
[2] Given the time lag between collecting data and analysing them, few indicators can be compiled for the current year. Most of them are based on data from earlier years—generally up to 2008 or 2009.

Reconciling national and international data

Reliable, timely and internationally comparable data on the MDG indicators are crucial for holding the international community to account. They are also important in encouraging public support and funding for development, allocating aid effectively, and comparing progress among regions and across countries. Discrepancies among sources and gaps in national data have raised concerns in the statistical community and troubled country data producers who find themselves dealing with different figures for the same indicator.

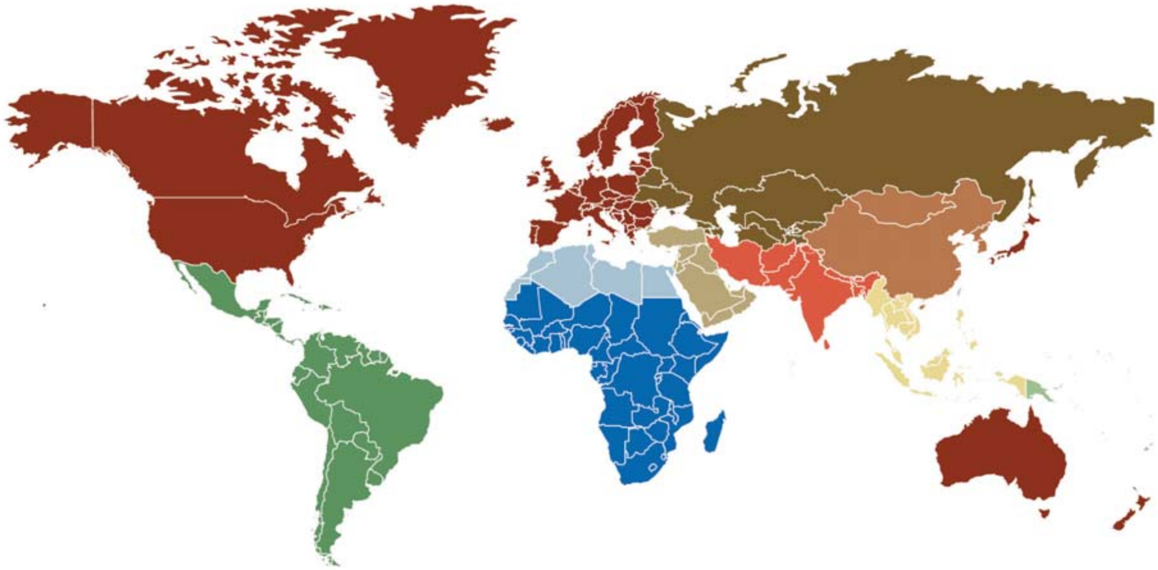
A number of initiatives have been launched to reconcile national and international monitoring and to resolve differences in methods and definitions used. These efforts are beginning to yield results. The IAEG has promoted a dialogue between national and international agencies to improve the coherence of national and international data and to ensure the quality and transparency of methodologies and data produced. The IAEG has also provided training on the production of indicators to national statistics experts in more than 40 countries.

Improving monitoring systems

Improved data and monitoring tools are crucial for devising appropriate policies and interventions needed to achieve the MDGs. Although some progress is being made, reliable statistics for monitoring development remain inadequate in many poor countries, and the challenge of building in-country capacity to produce better policy-relevant data is enormous. Since periodic assessment of the MDGs began almost ten years ago, activities have been under way to improve data availability in countries and reporting mechanisms to international organizations. As a result, data production in countries is increasingly aligned with internationally agreed-upon recommendations and standards. Moreover, international agencies have developed a better understanding of countries' data availability and of how to work with national experts to produce and estimate indicators.

More data are now available in the international series for the assessment of trends for all MDGs. In 2009, 118 countries had data for at least two points in time for 16-22 indicators as compared to 2003, when only four countries had the same data coverage. This is the result of increased national capacity to venture into new data collection initiatives as well as to increase the frequency of data collection. For instance, the number of countries with two or more data points on contraceptive prevalence increased from 50 in the period 1986-1994 to 94 in 1995-2004. At the same time, the number of countries with no data on this indicator decreased from 106 to 63. The production of quality data is also expanding in other areas, such as monitoring the spread of HIV, leading to a better understanding of the epidemic. Between 2003 and 2008, 87 developing countries had conducted nationally representative surveys that collected data on comprehensive and correct knowledge of HIV among young women, compared to 48 countries in 1998-2002 and only five prior to 1998. Even in areas with less well-established data collection tools, like the environment, major improvements have been made in obtaining data from national and regional authorities. For example, the number of sites included in the World Database on Protected Areas has increased from just over 1,000 in 1962 to more than 102,000 in 2003 and 134,000 in 2009.

Regional groupings



- Developed regions
- Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
- Northern Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- South-Eastern Asia
- Oceania
- Eastern Asia
- Southern Asia
- Western Asia
- Latin America & the Caribbean

This report presents data on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals for the world as a whole and for various country groupings. These are classified as 'developing' regions, the transition economies of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Asia and Europe, and the 'developed' regions.[1] The developing regions are further broken down into the subregions shown on the map above. These regional groupings are based on United Nations geographical divisions, with some modifications necessary to create, to the extent possible, groups of countries for which a meaningful analysis can be carried out. A complete list of countries included in each region and subregion is available at mdgs.un.org.

1 Since there is no established convention for the designation of 'developed' and 'developing' countries or areas in the United Nations system, this distinction is made for the purposes of statistical analysis only.