

# Sub-Saharan Africa



**Progress Toward  
Achievement of the MDGs**



## One World One Hope

# “The Millennium Development Goals is Common Vision and Global Commitments”

## The Sub-Saharan Africa Countries Needs More Attention and Action to Achieve its Target by 2015

### Overview

Over the last ten years, the Africa region has seen commendable progress in the areas of democratic governance, economic growth and the provision of basic social services. Africa has the highest number of countries with democratic systems to date since the 1960s.

Before the economic crisis hit Africa in 2008, the region boasted impressive growth rates. Many countries were able to capitalize on this trend to allocate considerable sums toward basic social services, making progress toward achievement of the [Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#). Thus, while Sub-Saharan Africa remains the developing region with the highest number of people living in extreme poverty, poverty rates have dropped rapidly since 1990, hovering around an estimated 46 percent in 2008.

Sub-Saharan Africa has also succeeded in reducing by 17.4 per cent between 2001 and 2008 the number of adults and children newly infected by HIV/AIDS, and access to Anti-Retroviral Therapy has been expanded in many countries.

The region continues to show overall progress on gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender parity in primary education will be achieved in most countries in Africa in 2015. The number of seats held by women in parliament has increased in at least 31 countries.

Today, the global economic and financial crisis is threatening to reverse many of these advances. The crisis is likely to add between 7 million (World Bank estimate) and 16 million (UN DESA estimate) people living below US\$1.25 a day in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2009. The World Bank and IMF estimate that the poverty rate of Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to be 38 percent by 2015, rather than the 36 percent it would have been without the crisis, lifting 20 million fewer people out of poverty.

Sub-Saharan Africa may be the lowest emitter of carbon dioxide, but it stands to be the region most affected by climate change, which will compound the environmental and energy challenges that the region faces. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that by 2020, 75-250 million people across Africa could face water shortages and rain-fed agriculture could drop by 50% in some African countries by 2020. If temperatures rise above two degrees Celsius in sub-Saharan Africa, an additional 600 million people in the region could face hunger, new epidemics of mosquito-borne diseases as well as additional agricultural losses of up to US\$26 billion by 2060.

1. Recent evidence suggests that progress in Africa in meeting the [Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#) by the target date has picked up although a lot remains to be done. While Africa remains the developing region with the highest extreme poverty rate, poverty rates on the continent have dropped rapidly since the late 1990s, at least until 2008, when the global food and economic crises hit the region. During that decade Africa, having experienced several years of economic and social stagnation, made important social and economic gains.



According to the 2009 UN MDG report, in 1990, the baseline year for the MDGs, 57% of the population of Africa was living in extreme poverty, earning less than \$1.25 a day in purchasing power parities and 2005 prices. By 2005, the poverty rate had dropped to 51 percent. More recent data are not yet available, but projections suggest that the extreme poverty rate in Africa has continued to drop to about 46 percent in 2008.

In addition, according to UNAIDS, Africa has maintained the progress made in tackling HIV/AIDS. For instance, access to Antiretroviral Therapy for HIV patients has expanded in most countries. Cumulatively, the number of adults and children newly infected with HIV has dropped by 17.4 per cent between 2001 and 2008. African countries continue to show overall progress in gender equality and empowerment of women. Gender parity in primary education for instance, is likely to be achieved by most countries. Progress on achieving gender parity in secondary and tertiary education and ensuring quality education for both genders at all levels have been more problematic. Changes in women's representation in national parliaments from the baseline year of 1990 and to 2009 have been impressive. At least thirty-one countries that have data for 1990-2009 have increased the proportion of seats held by women.

In spite of these developments, major challenges remain. Projections also suggest that there has been little or no progress in reducing the poverty rate in Africa throughout 2009. There has been little advancement in improving maternal mortality. Maternal deaths (per 100,000 live births) stood at 920 in 1990, dropping only slightly to 900 in 2005. On hunger, progress had been slow, with a slight decrease in the proportion of undernourished from 32 percent of the population in 1990-92 to 29 percent in 2008.

Achieving environmental targets will also continue to remain a challenge. Deforestation, for instance, continues unabated with a forest loss in 2000-2005 equivalent to 4.1 per cent[4]. The countries of Africa will also face an uphill battle in providing access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Sub-Saharan Africa may be the lowest emitter of carbon dioxide, but it stands to be the region most affected by climate change, which will compound the environmental and energy challenges that the region faces.

2. The impressive precrisis progress in poverty reduction will slow, particularly in low-income countries in Africa. No household in developing countries is immune. Gaps will persist to 2020. In 2015, 20 million more people in Sub-Saharan Africa will be in extreme poverty and 53 million more people globally. Even households above the \$1.25-a-day poverty line in higher-income developing countries are coping by buying cheaper food, delaying other purchases, reducing visits to doctors, working longer hours, or taking multiple jobs.

The crisis will also have serious costs on human development indicators:

1.2 million more children under age five and 265,000 more infants will die between 2009 and 2015.

350,000 more students will not complete primary education in 2015.

100 million fewer people will have access to safe drinking water in 2015 because of the crisis.

History tells us that if we let the recovery slide and allow the crisis to lead to widespread domestic policy failures and institutional breakdowns in poor countries, the negative impact on human development outcomes, especially on children and women, will be disastrous. The international financial institutions and international community responded strongly and quickly to the crisis, but more is needed to sustain the recovery and regain the momentum in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Developing countries will also need to implement significant policy reforms and strengthen institutions to improve the efficiency of service delivery in the face of fiscal constraints. Unlike previous crises, however, this one was not caused by domestic policy failure in developing countries. So better development outcomes will also hinge on a rapid global economic recovery that improves export conditions, terms-of-trade, and affordable capital flows—as well as meeting aid commitments to low-income countries.



According to the Global Monitoring Report 2010, seventh in this annual series, is prepared jointly by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It provides a development perspective on the global economic crisis and assesses the impact on developing countries - their growth, poverty reduction, and other MDGs. Finally, it sets out priorities for policy responses, both by developing countries and by the international community. [Click here to read the report on MDGs.](#)

The WFWO's framework strategy plan fro 2010/2015 highlighted that , will continue to support to raise public awareness and to contribute to the implementation of the Eight MDGs in Africa and in the developing countries.

Resources: UN/UNDP/WB



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