

One World One Hope



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Global Overview

The world produces enough food to provide every man, woman, and child with enough to eat. Yet, 852 million people suffer from chronic hunger. Why does hunger persist? Often, food does not reach those who need it most. This situation is sometimes referred to as "food insecurity."

Food insecurity can also be caused or exacerbated by "shocks" or circumstances that hinder normal access to food. These include:

- Poverty
- Conflict
- Natural disasters
- Poor Government

Poverty and hunger are intimately intertwined. The poor are often hungry, and the hungry are almost always poor. Today, an estimated 1.2 billion people survive on less than US\$1 per day; three-fourths of them live in rural areas. The poor do not have enough money to buy sufficient food for themselves and their families. Farmers sometimes can't afford seed for their crops. The poor become hungry, and the hungry can be too weak to work. The result is a vicious cycle of poverty and hunger that is hard to break and increasingly difficult to escape.

Conflict has been a cause of hunger throughout human history. Wars displace millions of people from their homes, resulting in some of the world's worst hunger emergencies. In war, food is used as a weapon. Soldiers starve opponents into submission by seizing or destroying food or livestock or destroying local markets. Fields and wells are often mined or contaminated, forcing farmers to abandon their land. This sets agricultural development back years and prevents food cultivation for even local consumption. Over 35 percent of food emergencies in the past decade were caused by conflict and economic problems.

Natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, and drought can drive people from their homes, harm agricultural production, destroy infrastructure and resources, and interrupt markets, all of which make it more difficult to get access to food. Natural disasters are affecting more and more people. In 2003, 608 million people - almost 1 in 10 of the world's population - were affected by natural disasters. Disproportionately, those affected tend to be the poor, who often live in areas more susceptible to environmental destruction and who are already at a heightened risk of being hungry.

Poor government is a key reason behind the spread of hunger and poverty. Most developing countries depend on agriculture, and 60-80 percent of people in developing countries live in rural areas. However, most developing country governments emphasize urban development over traditional agricultural communities. Consequently, there is little investment in key infrastructure like roads, warehouses, and energy supply. The results are high transport costs, a lack of storage facilities, and unreliable water supplies. All of these factors conspire to severely limit agricultural productivity and therefore increase the risk of hunger.

People from over the world have grasped the importance of hearing their own stories in their own voices - and making their own decisions about what affects their lives. They are bolstered by rapidly changing communication technology that has helped bring about wider acceptance information in developing countries. Challenged by widespread globalization of information sources focus on development issues. The developing countries and marginalized communities worldwide ask:

- **How will be our world if we missed the MDG's in 2015?**
- **Are we will be able to achieve our targets by 2015?**
- **How are important the Communications tools and public awareness on MDG's ?**
- **How many countries made progress to implement the MDG's targets by 2015?**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) are the world's time-bound and quantified targets for addressing extreme poverty in its many dimensions—income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter, and exclusion—while promoting gender equality, education, and environmental sustainability. They are also basic human rights—the rights of each person on the planet to health, education, shelter, and security as pledged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Millennium Declaration.

How will the world look in 2015 if the Goals are achieved? More than 500 million people will be lifted out of extreme poverty. More than 300 million will no longer suffer from hunger. There will also be dramatic progress in child health. Rather than die before reaching their fifth birthdays, 30 million children will be saved. So will the lives of more than 2 million mothers.

There's more. Achieving the Goals will mean 350 million fewer people are without safe drinking water and 650 million fewer people live without the benefits of basic sanitation, allowing them to lead healthier and more dignified lives. Hundreds of millions more women and girls will go to school, access economic and political opportunity, and have greater security and safety. Behind these large numbers are the lives and hopes of people seeking new -opportunities to end the burden of grinding poverty and contribute to economic growth and renewal.

Many countries are on track to achieve at least some of the Goals by the appointed year, 2015. Yet broad regions are far off track. Sub-Saharan Africa, most dramatically, has been in a downward spiral of AIDS, resurgent malaria, falling food output per person, deteriorating shelter conditions, and environmental degradation, so that most countries in Africa are far off track to achieve most or all of the Goals. Climate change could worsen the situation by increasing food insecurity, spreading vector-borne diseases, and increasing the likelihood of natural disasters, while a prolonged decline in rainfall in parts of Africa has already wreaked havoc. Meanwhile, for some Goals, such as reducing maternal mortality and reversing the loss of environmental resources, most of the world is off track. The early target for gender parity in primary and secondary education — with a deadline of 2005 — will be missed in many countries.

The Millennium Development Goals are too important to fail. It is time to put them on the fast-track they require and deserve. The year 2005 should inaugurate a decade of bold action.

Based on work conducted by more than 250 of the world's leading development practitioners over the past two years in the context of the UN Millennium Project, this report presents a practical plan for achieving the Goals. Throughout, we stress that the specific technologies for achieving the Goals are known. What is needed is to apply them at scale. To that end, we present 10 key recommendations at the front of the report. More elaborate analysis and recommendations are set out in the 13 thematically oriented task force reports that underpin this plan.

This overview has four parts. The first describes why the Millennium Development Goals are important and the varied progress so far in achieving them. It then offers a diagnosis of why progress has been so mixed across regions and across Goals. The second presents the recommendations to be implemented at the country level, focusing on the processes, investments, policies, and scale-up strategies required to achieve the Goals. The third provides recommendations to guide the international system's support for country-level processes. The fourth estimates the costs and benefits of achieving the Goals, outlining the millions of lives that could be saved—and the billions of lives improved—through a very affordable but substantial increase in worldwide investments.

