The 2009 Basic Capabilities Index (BCI), constructed by Social Watch shows that, even without the not-yet-registered impact of the world economic crisis, most countries in the world are not at all on track of achieving the goals set for the year 2015 in the Millennium Development Goals agreed internationally in the year 2000. Consequently, the cost required to increase the human capabilities of the world’s people is enormous, and so are the factors that hamper progress. However, BCI shows that significant progress has been made in terms of improving people’s human capabilities in different regions and countries. Only in Latin America and the Caribbean are not progressing and only 1% of the countries that have regressed on the BCI are in sub-Saharan Africa. The number of countries a maximum deviation of global impact.

BASIC CAPABILITIES INDEX

All Quiet on the Poverty Front 2009

In 2009, about half the countries of the world have a BCI value that is very, very low, at 84.7% or below of the current rate of progress, to say the average BCI value of the countries in the United Nations and Latin America will hardly ever be very low, and all the other regions of the world are examples of countries that will see further increases in the value of this acceptable level.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the situation is truly critical, as shown by an average BCI value of only 62.7 points, and the average BCI of the world is 79.5 points. The country that would later come to achieve the most would be Latin America, which is characterized by a combination of the two factors in progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (Spreads). In the year 2000, only 18 countries in the world made progress (43%) and almost one fourth have regressed (11.6%) and another 26.3% have made no progress at all.
The BCI uses an alternative methodology to measure the progress—or lack of progress—towards compliance with the Millennium Development Goals. This index constitutes a new methodology that complements in numerous respects the human development index most commonly used.

To reach an acceptable BCI does not imply a high level of social development. It merely signifies that the country has achieved universal coverage of minimum essential needs that are a prerequisite for advancing towards greater wellbeing. It is a departure point, not a destination.